

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



**Belfast
City Council**

28th May, 2021

SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The Council will meet both in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Belfast on a proportional representational basis and also, remotely, via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 1st June, 2021 following the Annual Meeting of Council, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Summons**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Chief Executive's Decisions taken under Delegated Authority**
 - (a) Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 1 - 64)
 - (b) People and Communities Committee (Pages 65 - 94)
 - (c) City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 95 - 142)
 - (d) Licensing Committee (Pages 143 - 148)
 - (e) Planning Committee (Pages 149 - 168)
 - (f) Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee (Pages 169 - 176)

- (g) Brexit Committee (Pages 177 - 182)

5. **Motions**

- (a) Private Members Bill to provide Safe Access Zones around all facilities providing sexual and reproductive health care services and information (Pages 183 - 184)
- (b) The Employment Rights (NI) Order 1996 (Pages 185 - 186)
- (c) Request to the Irish Government and the UK Government to expel from office Israeli Ambassadors (Pages 187 - 188)
- (d) Ballymurphy Massacre (Pages 189 - 190)
- (e) Local Government Pension Scheme - Responsible Investment Strategy (Pages 191 - 192)
- (f) End Child Poverty (Pages 193 - 194)
- (g) PEACE IV to PEACE PLUS Programmes (Pages 195 - 196)



HIEF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 21st May, 2021

Final CX Decision Register: 27th May, 2021

Compilation of Committee:

Recommendations sent to CX: 27th May, 2021

Call-in Deadline: 10 am on Friday, 4th June, 2021

CX's Comments Received: 27th May, 2021

	Topic	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call-in
<u>Restricted Items</u>			
2a	UK Community Renewal Fund and Levelling Up Fund	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report and to approve any eligible projects which might come forward in relation to the investment in communities and place category, in advance of the submission date.	Yes
2b	UNESCO City of Music	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes
<u>Matters referred back from Council/Motions</u>			
3a	Motion - Statue of Mary Ann McCracken	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the motion.	Yes
3b	Motion - War Years Remembered	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the motion.	Yes

3c	Motion - Proposed Bank of Ireland Closures - Response from Managing Director Northern Ireland	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the response.	-
3d	Motion - 10 Per Cent Pay Increase for Council Workers – Response from HM Treasury	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the response.	-
3e	Motion - Support for Sign Languages Act and the Addition of Sign Languages to School Curricula - Response from Ministers	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the responses.	-
<u>Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues</u>			
5a	Update on Belfast Region City Deal	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the contents of the report.	-
5b	Update on Customer Focus Programme	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. adopt the recommendations contained within the report; and ii. submit to the Party Group Leaders a report on the operation of the street cleansing service, including staffing and rota arrangements. 	Yes
5c	Update on Summer Programme	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the contents of the report	-

5d	Fairtrade in Belfast	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. adopt the recommendations contained within the report; and ii. approve the Council's participation in a "Toilet Twinning" initiative, similar to that which had been adopted in the Northern Ireland Assembly, whereby the Council would, by making a donation to have one or more of its toilets twinned, help to fund projects in underdeveloped regions, to provide families with access to toilet facilities, clean water and information on hygiene. 	Yes
5e	EU Exit - Proposed Economic Study and Briefing	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes
<u>Physical Programme and Asset Management</u>			
6a	Update on Physical Programme	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report and to move City Hall Statues – Mary Ann McCracken to Stage 2 Uncommitted on the Capital Programme.	Yes
6b	Update on Phase 5 of the Alleygates Programme	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes
6c	Asset Management	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes

6d	Update on Area Working Groups	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes
<u>Finance, Procurement and Performance</u>			
7a	Update on Contracts	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes
<u>Equality and Good Relations</u>			
8a	Installations - City Hall/City Hall Grounds	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to approve the installation of a statue of Mary Ann McCracken in the grounds of the City Hall, the final form of which would be submitted to the Committee in due course for approval, as part of the Capital Programme; and ii. to refer to the Party Group Leaders the requests for the installation of a statue of Isabella Tod in the grounds of the City Hall and for a tile to be inscribed marking the spot in the entrance area of the City Hall where Sir Edward Carson stood when signing the Ulster Covenant. 	Yes
8b	Update on Decade of Centenaries Programme	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes
8c	Request for Funding – Polish Heritage Flight Visit	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.	Yes

8d	Equality and Diversity - Equality Screening and Rural Needs Outcome Report – Quarter 4 2020-21	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the contents of the report.	-
8e	Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 10th May.	-
<u>Operational Issues</u>			
9a	Minutes of the Meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 13th May.	-
9b	Minutes of the Meeting of the Social Policy Working Group	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Social Policy Working Group of 27th April.	-
9c	Minutes of the Meeting of the Customer Focus Working Group	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Customer Focus Working Group of 21st April.	-
9d	Requests for Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to approve the recommendations made in respect of those applications received up to 7th May, 2021.	Yes

<u>Issues Raised in Advance by Members</u>			
10a	Belfast City Council to join the Crohn's and Colitis UK 'Invisible Disability Employer Scheme'	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to accede to a request from Councillor McMullan that the Council join the Crohn's and Colitis UK 'Invisible Disability Employer Scheme'.	Yes

Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link:

<http://www.internalminutes/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=163&MId=10229&Ver=4>

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 21st May, 2021

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Black (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff (Councillor Long);
Aldermen Dorrian, Haire, Kingston and Sandford; and
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Carson, Garrett,
Groogan, Heading, Lyons, McAllister, McDonough-Brown,
McLaughlin, McReynolds, Murphy, Pankhurst and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillor McMullan.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational
Strategy;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 23rd April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th May, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

The High Sheriff (Councillor Long) declared an interest in respect of items 3d – 10 Per Cent Pay Increase for Council Workers, on the basis that the response from HM Treasury made reference to the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration, which was relevant to his profession, and left the meeting whilst that item was being discussed.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following two items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of these items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**UK Community Renewal Fund
and Levelling Up Fund**

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy reminded the Members that the Government had, in its Budget in March, as part of its commitment to “levelling up” prosperity across the United Kingdom, announced a number of investment funds.

He submitted for, their consideration, a report which provided details of two of funds which were of particular relevance to the Council, namely, the Community Renewal Fund and the Levelling Up Fund and set out the Council’s approach and bidding plans in relation to them.

He provided information on the level of funding which Northern Ireland was likely to receive under the Community Renewal Fund and pointed out that support would be available for investment in skills, local businesses, community and place and/or supporting people into employment. Officers were currently preparing funding bids around skills development for the green economy, information technology and digital transformation for small businesses, details of which would be presented to the Committee ahead of the formal submission of an application by 18th June. Discussions were also taking place with SOLACE and with other councils to determine if a collaborative bid was possible ahead of the application deadline, with adjustments to be made, if required, to prevent duplication.

He highlighted the fact that officers had explored the potential for submitting bids in the investment in communities and place category, however, no projects were sufficiently advanced to allow for a submission by the deadline date. Funding for projects in this category could, he pointed out, be explored through other funding opportunities.

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy went on to provide details of the Levelling Up Fund, which would allow for investment in infrastructure, local transport and cultural and heritage assets which would have a visible effect on people and communities. He confirmed that the themes for the first three rounds of funding would focus upon investment in transportation, regeneration and town centres and culture and outlined a number of challenges being faced by the Council for round one, primarily around the submission of applications, the challenging timeframe, the funding allocation and the need for clarity around the eligibility for future rounds.

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He recommended that the Members of the Committee:

- i note the contents of the report;
- ii endorse the three Community Renewal Fund bid proposals, as outlined, and agree that they be moved forward to application stage for submission by 18th June, 2021;
- iii grant approval for officers to adjust the number and scope of proposed Community Renewal Fund bids, should discussions with other councils on collaborative bid(s) provide the opportunity to provide improved outcomes for Belfast citizens; and
- iv agree that officers continue the development work to prepare suitable bid(s) for future bidding rounds of the Levelling Up Fund and that the Council does not submit a bid under Round 1 of the Levelling Up Fund, in light of the considerations which he had outlined.

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations and to approve any eligible projects which might come forward in relation to the investment in communities and place category, in advance of the submission date.

UNESCO City of Music Status

(Ms. E. Henry, Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, attended in connection with this item.)

The Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism informed the Members of the Committee that, in order to become a Member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, candidate cities were required to submit a detailed application outlining clearly their willingness, commitment and capacity to contribute towards the objectives of the Network. The Network covered seven creative fields, namely, Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts and Music.

She reported that, following an initial scoping exercise and assessment against the criteria, it had been agreed that music represented the most appropriate designation for Belfast and referred to the ten-year cultural strategy 'A City Imagining', which included a commitment to bid for UNESCO City of Music status by 2021.

She explained that the strategy sought to recognise the transformative power of music for individuals, communities and the City as a whole and referred to the positive results of an economic impact assessment of the cultural and creative industries and the music sector on Gross Value Added, employment and job creation.

The Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, reported further that a City of Music Steering Group, with representation from different sectors and genres, had been formed

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to design and implement the process, in conjunction with the Council, and she reviewed the wider engagement which had taken place to date. In addition to setting out the detail on the City's sustainable agenda and details on the creative profile of the City, the application for City of Music status also included a commitment to deliver six cross-cutting initiatives, focusing on the themes of City Development, Creativity and Learning, Inclusion and Access and Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility. She provided an overview of three initiatives which would be delivered at a local level and of three internationally and outlined the next steps in the process, which would lead ultimately to the submission of an application to UNESCO by 30th June, 2021.

She then provided a breakdown of the annual programme and one-off project funding requirements which, in terms of the Council, would total £650,000 and confirmed that provision had been made within the current Departmental budget and estimates for future years.

After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the contents of the report and approve the allocation of funding to support the initiatives set out within the application for City of Music status.

Matters referred back from Council/Motions

(The Members of the Committee agreed, given that the following three reports were closely linked, to consider them simultaneously.)

Motion - Statue of Mary Ann McCracken

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th May, the following motion had been proposed by The High Sheriff (Councillor Long) and seconded by Councillor Nicholl:

"This Council resolves to install a statue of Mary Ann McCracken in the grounds of the City Hall."

The High Sheriff explained that Mary Ann McCracken was a Presbyterian, a member of the United Irishmen and eminent business woman who was renowned for her work on women's rights, child education and living conditions, prison reform and the anti-slavery movement in the City, as well as her promotion of traditional music.

He pointed out that the grounds of the City Hall were not reflective of modern day Belfast, in terms of recognising women and those from a nationalist/republican background, and highlighted the need to address this imbalance, in the context of the recommendations resulting from the Equality Impact Assessment which had, in 2012, been undertaken in relation to the City Hall and the City Hall Grounds.

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to adopt the motion and that it be considered further in the report later in the meeting on installations in the City Hall/City Hall Grounds.

Installations - City Hall/City Hall Grounds

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1** In November 2012, the Council received an independent Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) relating to the City Hall and City Hall grounds. This EQIA was carried out in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Council’s Equality Scheme. This EQIA underpinned the decision to relocate memorabilia into the exhibition, allowing it to be seen and understood in a different way. Whilst the relocation of the artefacts and memorabilia from various parts of the City Hall into the exhibition space addressed the issue of the City Hall itself, in terms of the EQIA, the EQIA also applied to the City Hall grounds, in respect of which no steps have been taken to address the report’s findings that there is a need to provide a contemporary image of the City, reflective of its vibrancy and diversity.

The purpose of this report is to seek approval on a number of issues related to installations and future installations in City Hall and City Hall grounds.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1** The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:
- i** approve the installation of a statue of Winifred Carney, the final form of this statue to be brought back to Committee for approval, as part of the Capital Programme (approval is being sought through the Physical Programme paper to move this to Stage 2 under the Capital Programme);
 - ii** approve the installation of a plaque commemorating Sir Edward Carson and the signing of the Ulster Covenant;
 - iii** establish a Member Working Group to consider and agree commissions for future installations in City Hall or City Hall grounds; and
 - iv** note the ongoing discussions in respect of statues in the City Hall grounds and the development of a contemporary installation styled as a community arc.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1** Discussions have been ongoing at Party Group Leader level in relation to the installation of additional statues within City Hall grounds. This is in the context of the EQIA referred to in the introduction to this report and the need to achieve a greater level of balance in terms of the persons who are depicted or represented within the grounds. One such figure promoted as being a person of significant historical importance, viewed by many as worthy of being commemorated, is Winifred Carney. In the context of the EQIA and not in any way to undermine her historical importance, Winifred Carney goes some way to providing the balance that the EQIA recommends. She does so as a woman, as a Trade Unionist representing workers and as an Irish Nationalist and Republican. Notably she was married to George McBride, a prominent member of the UVF. At Party Group Leaders there was some discussion as to whether this relationship needed to be covered in terms of the statue or referenced in some narrative. A copy of the Redhead report relating to a Winifred Carney installation has been circulated. Members are asked to note that approval to move this to the next Stage (Stage 2) under the Capital Programme is on the agenda for today's Committee as part of the Physical Programme report.
- 3.2** At the time that the relocation of memorabilia to the exhibition was agreed there was, as part of that arrangement, a commemorative tile to be installed marking the place at which Sir Edward Carson stood when he signed the Ulster Covenant. Discussions took place with HED as the City Hall's listing would require consent for the installation to go forward. HED took issue with the installation and the tile, asserting that it would break the symmetry of the marble in the reception area. As it has not been feasible to proceed, officers are presenting an alternative proposal which would be the erection of a plaque within the reception area commemorating the place at which the Ulster Covenant was signed by Edward Carson. An example of the type of plaque and its proposed location appears in the Redhead report has been circulate to Members.
- 3.3** Members will be aware that decisions have already been taken supporting the installation of two stained glass windows representing the LGBT community and the NHS. Discussions are ongoing at Party Group Leaders in respect of future installations to include Mary Ann McCracken (which is the subject of a NOM), Grace Bannister, Inez McCormack, Robert McAdam and Paddy Devlin.

- 3.4** These discussions will continue with a view to getting to a settled list which will then be developed into a programme. For this and the other installations work will have to be undertaken to establish commissions in order to allow the installations to proceed subject of course to funding. Members were also presented with a proposal for a municipal arc type installation sitting within a contemporary modern design. The arc has a more dynamic type use in that the panels can be changed to promote different content or themes.
- 3.5** Given the extent of these proposals going forward Members are asked to consider establishing an All-Party Working Group to engage in the commissioning and design of these installations. Final decisions on commissions would of course be taken through Committee in the normal way for approval.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.6** No approvals are sought at this time in respect of funding. The installations referred to will have to be included within the Capital Programme and taken through the established procedures for approval.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.7** Any decisions in respect of the installations referred to would require to be subject to an equality screening or an EQIA if found to be necessary.”

During discussion, a Member requested that consideration be given to including within discussions the potential for installing in the grounds of the City Hall a statue in recognition of Isabella Tod, who was noted for being a dedicated social reformer on behalf of women and those experiencing poverty, as well as a suffragist and the person who had secured the admission of women to Queen's University.

He highlighted her links to the Council by pointing out that, in 1888, when a new city-status municipal franchise for Belfast had been granted, she had ensured that the vote had been conferred on persons, including women, rather than solely on men. She was, therefore, a deserving candidate and the proposal would assist in addressing the under-representation of tributes to women in the grounds of the City Hall.

He went on to welcome the proposal contained within the report that a plaque be erected within the reception area of the City Hall to commemorate the place where Sir Edward Carson had signed the Ulster Covenant. However, he requested that consideration again be given to placing an inscription on a single tile on the exact spot where he had stood.

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After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report and:

- i to approve the installation of a statue of Mary Ann McCracken in the grounds of the City Hall, the final form of which would be submitted to the Committee in due course for approval, as part of the Capital Programme; and
- ii to refer to the Party Group Leaders the requests for the installation of a statue of Isabella Tod in the grounds of the City Hall and for a tile to be inscribed marking the spot in the entrance area of the City Hall where Sir Edward Carson had stood when signing the Ulster Covenant.

Update on Physical Programme

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The Council’s Physical Programme covers 170 current capital projects under a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Stage movements on the Capital Programme.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:**

- **City Hall Statues - Move ‘City Hall Statues - Winifred Carney’ to *Stage 2 – Uncommitted* on the Capital Programme; and**
- **City Cemetery Project - note the update provided on the appointment of a mapping and genealogy software specialist.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the Council runs a substantial physical programme under a range of funding streams including the capital programme, BIF and LIF together with the projects that it is delivering on behalf of other agencies**

including the Executive Office, the Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure. There are currently 170 live projects worth in excess of £120m, as well as 100+ early stage uncommitted projects and £300m + of completed projects which still receive dedicated resourcing effort.

Proposed Movement - Capital Programme

- 3.2 Members agreed that all capital projects must go through a three-stage process where decisions on which capital projects progress are taken by the Committee. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. Members are asked to agree to the following movements on the Capital Programme:

Project	Overview	Stage
City Hall Statues – Winifred Carney	The creation of new statues within the grounds of City Hall. One of the pieces is to be a representation of Winifred Carney .	Move to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i>

Members will be aware that the overarching City Hall Statues project was approved at SP&R Committee in January 2020 as a *Stage 1 - Emerging* project on the Capital Programme. Members are asked to recommend that one element of the statues, Winifred Carney, is moved to *Stage 2 – Uncommitted* on the Capital Programme. Further detail on this is contained with the '*Installations – City Hall/City Hall Grounds*' report which is also on the agenda for discussion by the Committee at its meeting on 21st May. An Outline Business Case (OBC) will now be worked up on the proposal with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.

- 3.3 **City Cemetery Project – Mapping and Genealogy Software Specialist**

Members will be aware that the City Cemetery project was approved at the SP and R Committee in August 2018 as a *Stage 3 – Committed* project on the Capital Programme. The project is designed to protect and enhance the rich heritage within the cemetery, and incorporates a number of elements such as the development of a new visitor centre, restoration of key heritage assets and enhanced interpretation. Members are asked to note that the specialist company Plotbox will now be appointed

under delegated authority, with the costs to be met from the overall capital project budget.

3.4 Financial and Resource Implications

Financial – City Cemetery Project – costs will be drawn from the existing project budget

Resources – officer time to deliver as required.

3.5 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process.”

After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report and, in line with its earlier decision, to move City Hall Statues – Mary Ann McCracken to Stage 2 Uncommitted on the Capital Programme.

Motion - War Years Remembered

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th May, the following motion had been proposed by Councillor Pankhurst and seconded by Alderman Copeland:

“This Council notes the priceless and globally renowned work of War Years Remembered, as well as the impact which COVID-19 has had on the museum.

Consequently, given the importance of not only preserving our social and military history as well as offering educational lessons that offer excellent ways of building bridges between communities, including ethnic minorities, this Council agrees to engage with War Years Remembered on finding a suitable solution to their current struggles, including a proposed relocation to Belfast.

This Council agrees that such a move would be beneficial not only to our city’s economy and attractiveness through local tourism, but also through the provision of education to our schools, colleges and local community groups.”

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion had been referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Pankhurst provided details of the various historical artefacts contained within the War Years Remembered Museum and pointed out that some of those had been placed on display at the event which had taken place on 15th April in the City Hall grounds

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to mark the 80th anniversary of the Belfast Blitz. He explained that the owner was experiencing a number of challenges around the operation of the museum and that he was seeking to relocate it from a warehouse several miles away into Belfast. He highlighted the significant benefits which such a move would bring, in terms of raising awareness, attracting visitors and supporting the economy and urged the Members of the Committee to grant approval for Council officers to enter into discussions with the owner on the future of the museum.

Alderman Kingston then spoke in favour of the proposal.

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to submit to a future meeting a report on the outcome of those discussions.

**Motion - Proposed Bank of Ireland Closures –
Response from Managing Director Northern Ireland**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st April, had passed the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McAteer and seconded by Councillor Gormley:

“This Council:

- notes the plans announced by Bank of Ireland to close 103 branches across the island of Ireland, including three in South Belfast;
- notes the expectation set by the Financial Conduct Authority that banks should assess customer needs and consider the availability and provision of alternative arrangements where closures are planned;
- notes the concern expressed by the Financial Conduct Authority that it may be more difficult than usual to reach all customers under the current restrictions and engage with them on closure proposals effectively;
- supports the call from the Financial Services Union that there should be no closures of branches during the pandemic and its call for a moratorium on closures until the end of 2022; and
- agrees to write to the CEO of Bank of Ireland to call for such a moratorium.”

The City Solicitor informed the Members that a response to the motion had been received from Mr. I. Sheppard, Managing Director, Bank of Ireland Northern Ireland.

Mr. Sheppard stated that he understood the concerns which had been expressed around the proposed branch closures and stressed that the decision had not been taken lightly. He explained that Bank of Ireland had undertaken a thorough analysis of its services, including branch usage, the growth in online banking and the range of services

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which it could offer through the Post Office network, and had highlighted the fact that 52% of counter services provided to Bank of Ireland customers in Northern Ireland were already carried out at a local Post Office.

He pointed out that the trend towards digital banking had been evident for more than a decade and had been accelerating since 2017. Given the clear changes being seen in customer behaviour, Bank of Ireland was not, therefore, in a position to change its approach in relation to branch closures.

He explained that the bank was committed to ensuring that customers were fully informed of the alternative arrangements available to them and highlighted mobile, on line and telephone banking services, and the option to use remaining Bank of Ireland branches and the Post Office. Full details of these arrangements were contained in a letter and a branch impact analysis which had been sent to customers of those branches in Belfast which had been identified for closure. The branch impact analysis documents had also been published on the bank's website.

Mr. Sheppard referred to the fact that Bank of Ireland customers could, at their local Post Office, make lodgements of cash and cheques, withdraw cash and make balance enquiries. Business customers would, later this year, also be able to use nominated Post Office outlets to access enhanced services, such as cheque encashment, bulk cash lodgements and obtaining pre-ordered coinage. The bank would again be writing to its customers before and after each branch closed. In addition, branch teams would be making proactive calls to those customers who may need additional support and would meet with them in branch, if required.

He added that Bank of Ireland was engaging fully with its Regulators on the closure of the branches, including the communication of its decision analysis, its consideration of the impact of the closures on customers and businesses and the alternative arrangement which had, or would be, put in place. In line with guidance, it had also considered the impact on customers of the closure dates, should lockdown measures be in place at that time.

He stressed that Bank of Ireland was committed to Belfast and that the outcome of the strategic review of its business had underlined its commitment to providing financial services in Northern Ireland in the long term. However, it needed to restructure its business to respond to the significant and accelerating changes in customers' banking requirements. It was, therefore, focusing on a smaller, better equipped branch network and investing in technology improvements, which would mean that it could continue to play a strong role in Northern Ireland for the years to come.

Mr. Sheppard had concluded by pointing out that Bank of Ireland would be investing in its remaining branches and technology in order to improve customer service across its business. It was also relocating its Head Office from London to Belfast, which again underlined its long term commitment and would, in time, provide employment opportunities by securing talent from local Universities, apprenticeship schemes and the wider community, which had recognisable banking expertise.

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The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the response.

**Motion - 10 Per Cent Pay Increase for
Council Workers – Response from HM Treasury**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st April, had passed the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Matt Collins and seconded by Councillor Michael Collins:

“Over the last year, councils have led the way in efforts against the Covid-19 pandemic, providing a huge range of services and support for our communities. Local Government has shown more than ever how indispensable it is.

But the pandemic has led to a massive increase in expenditure and loss of income and the Government has failed to provide the full amount of promised support.

Local Government workers have kept our communities safe throughout the pandemic, often putting themselves at considerable risk as they work to protect public health and deliver functioning services during this difficult time.

Since 2010, the local government workforce has endured years of pay restraint with the majority of pay points losing at least 23 per cent of their value since 2009/10. At the same time, workers have experienced ever-increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity.

The funding gap caused by Covid-19 will make local government employment even more precarious. There has been a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up more than three-quarters of the local government workforce.

Recent research shows that if the Westminster Government were to fully fund the unions' 2021 pay claim, around half of the money would be recouped thanks to increased tax revenue, reduced expenditure on benefits, and increased consumer spending in the local economy.

The Council believes that:

- our workers are public service super-heroes. They keep our communities clean and safe, look after those in need, and ensure services continue to function. Without the professionalism and dedication of our staff, the council services would not be deliverable. Local government workers deserve a proper real term pay increase; and

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- the Government should take responsibility to fully fund this increase, it should not put the burden on local authorities whose funding streams have greatly suffered and who have not been offered adequate support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Therefore, the Council resolves to:

- support the pay claim submitted by Trade Unions representing all public sector staff for a substantial increase;
- to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to call for a pay increase for public sector workers to be funded with new money from central government;
- meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and consider practical ways in which the Council can support the campaign; and
- encourage all staff to join a union.”

The City Solicitor drew the Members’ attention to a response to the motion which had been received from HM Treasury, on behalf of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The response had stressed that the Government recognised that public sector workers played a vital role in the running of public services and referred to their commitment in keeping the public safe during the pandemic. It hugely valued and appreciated the dedication of all key workers and was working hard to ensure that they felt supported and safe to continue that work.

Throughout the current crisis, the Government had sought to protect people's jobs and livelihoods and to support businesses and public services across the UK and had spent over £352 billion since the start of the pandemic to do so. Since March 2020, it had helped to pay the wages of people in 11.4 million jobs across the country, through the Coronavirus Jobs Retention Scheme, protecting jobs which might otherwise have been lost, and had supported the livelihoods of 2.7 million self-employed workers. However, given the unprecedented impact of Covid-19, unemployment and redundancies were rising in the private sector. Employment in the public sector had not, however, been affected to the same extent.

The response had gone on to state that, prior to Covid-19, those working in the public sector were, on average, already receiving better remuneration packages than their counterparts in the private sector, with the Office for National Statistics estimating that public sector workers were paid 7% more than those in the private sector, having taking into account other factors, including pension contributions.

In order to protect jobs and ensure fairness, the Government had confirmed in the 2020 Spending Review that there would be a pause to headline pay rises for the majority of public sector workforces in 2021-22. Performance pay, overtime, pay progression and pay rises from promotion would continue for all workforces where such arrangements existed,

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However, given the unique impact of Covid-19 on health services, and despite the challenging economic context, the Government would continue to provide for pay rises for over 1 million NHS workers. In setting the level for these rises, it would need to take account of the challenging fiscal and economic context. The NHS Pay Review Body and the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration would, as usual, make their recommendations later this year.

The response had concluded by stating that it had been correct to temporarily pause pay awards for the rest of the public sector earning £24,000 and above on a full-time equivalent basis, whilst the Government assessed the impact which the Coronavirus had had on the wider economy and labour market. If it were to carry on with blanket, across the board pay rises, the existing gap between public sector reward and the private sector would widen further. This approach would allow it to protect investment in public services, as the Coronavirus continued to have an impact. The Government would protect the lowest paid, with 2.1 million public sector workers earning less than £24,000 (Full Time Equivalent) receiving a minimum £250 increase.

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the response.

**Motion - Support for Sign Languages Act and the Addition of
Languages to School Curricula – Response from Ministers**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st April, had passed the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McMullan and seconded by Councillor Heading:

“This Council notes that 15th – 21st March was Sign Language Week, timed with the anniversary of the UK Government formally recognising British Sign Language as a language in its own right on 18th March 2003. However, in 2021 neither British Sign Language nor Irish Sign Language have legal status in Northern Ireland nor are sign languages part of school curricula.

This means at present, that deaf people must rely on the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (NI) (1995) to secure reasonable adjustments via sign language provision. In order to do so, deaf people are required to identify as ‘disabled’, in sharp contrast to their right to recognition as a cultural and linguistic minority under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This Council believes that there is a need to create a more accessible and inclusive society in Northern Ireland, through greater learning of sign languages and awareness of Deaf culture.

It further notes this Council's previous support for the Belfast Statement on Mental Health and Deafness following the 6th World Congress, which met in Belfast in September 2014, to address issues around equal rights for

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deaf people in mental health care under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Noting the rights of deaf people to recognition as a cultural and linguistic minority under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this Council expresses its support for the introduction of a Sign Languages Act for Northern Ireland. Further noting Article 24(b) of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that requires the State to facilitate the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community, the Council expresses its support for sign languages to be added to school curricula to ensure that all children learn from the earliest opportunity.

Therefore, the Council will write to the Minister for Communities and the Minister for Education to ask when the New Decade, New Approach commitment to a Sign Language Act will be brought forward and further asks that this legislation includes provision for sign languages to be added to the Key Stage 1 and 2 Curriculum, with schools equipped to deliver these courses, as well as the introduction of sign languages as a GCSE for secondary school pupils."

The City Solicitor informed the Members that a response to the motion has been received from Mr. P. Weir, Minister for Education, and from Mr. T. McAuley, Acting Head of Sign Language Policy Team, on behalf of the Minister for Communities.

Minister Weir had stated that there was currently no statutory requirement for pupils to learn sign language in schools in Northern Ireland. However, young people should be given opportunities to engage with and demonstrate the skill of communication and to transfer their knowledge about communication concepts and skills to real-life meaningful contexts across the curriculum. Pupils were encouraged to become effective communicators by using a range of techniques, forms and media to convey information and ideas creatively and appropriately. Therefore, schools may choose to introduce sign language in this context.

He had pointed out that the curriculum was broad and balanced and that it provided schools with considerable flexibility to adapt what they taught and to use approaches which best suited the learning needs of their pupils. This flexibility afforded the freedom to include learning opportunities, such as sign language, should a school consider this to be a priority for its pupils.

He had gone on to explain that any changes in the current curriculum to make sign language a statutory requirement at Key Stage 1 and 2 level would require a legislative change to the 2007 Minimum Content Order. His officials were liaising with their counterparts in the Department for Communities, which had lead responsibility for taking forward the new Sign Languages Act, to discuss the impact and operational practicalities of the new Act.

The Minister had concluded by stating that, in terms of introducing sign languages as a GCSE qualification at post primary level, the Department for Education (England) was

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developing content for a potential British Sign Language GCSE and hoped to consult on this later in the year. Following a period of consultation and approval of a qualification by Ofqual, it would then be available for delivery by centres in Northern Ireland. However, it was not possible to provide an accurate timescale for the potential rollout of this qualification at this time.

Mr. McAuley had confirmed that Minister Hargey had welcomed the Council's interest in this matter and was fully supportive of the need to create a more accessible and inclusive society in Northern Ireland, through greater learning of sign languages and awareness of Deaf culture. The Minister remained committed to the introduction of Sign Language legislation, built upon the principles of equality and social inclusion, to ensure that the Deaf community here had the same rights and opportunities as those in the hearing community and were able to access services in their own language.

He had explained that the Sign Language Policy Team had, over the past few months, been engaging with the Deaf community to outline the legislative timeframes and the options which had been considered for bringing forward a Bill, both in this mandate and the next, in the context of the challenges presented by Covid-19. The Department had taken on board feedback from the Deaf community, not only of the need for legislation, but, more importantly, of the need for the right legislation which would make a difference to their lives, even if it took more time to do so.

Whilst the Minister would have preferred to introduce legislation in the current mandate, responding to the pandemic had reduced the time available to do so. Therefore, despite the best efforts, a Sign Language Bill had not been included in the Department's Primary Legislation Timetable schedule for the remainder of this mandate. The Minister had recognised that this news would be viewed with disappointment and had directed officials to continue their engagement with the Deaf community to ensure that their views continued to be represented as work towards a future Sign Language Bill in the next mandate progressed. That would include continued engagement with the Council's Language Officer with responsibility for BSL and ISL.

Mr. McAuley had then addressed that part of the motion referring to "the need to create a more accessible and inclusive society in Northern Ireland, through greater learning of sign languages and awareness of Deaf culture" by pointing out that the Department's work with the Deaf community promoted respect and understanding of BSL and ISL and Deaf culture.

He had then highlighted the fact that the Department for Communities funded multiple BSL and ISL courses, such as Family Signing Language courses for families with deaf children, to learn together to enhance the crucial early years' communication which was the foundation for better life outcomes, including academically and emotionally. It also funded some Deaf awareness and sign language classes at primary and secondary school level, as well as some BSL and ISL courses at Levels 3,4 and 6, which were a requirement for a career in, for example, interpreting and translating. Projects and initiatives to promote the awareness of BSL/ISL and Deaf culture to local hearing communities and voluntary and community groups were also funded. He had pointed out that all of these courses were accessible across Northern Ireland and that many beneficiaries resided within the Belfast City Council area.

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Mr. McAuley had then made reference to the Council's previous support for the Belfast Statement on Mental Health and Deafness, following the 6th World Congress, to address issues around equal rights for deaf people in mental health care. He had concluded by stressing that the Department for Communities had been pleased to partner with the conference organisers and support the conference through funding to meet the significant costs of interpreting and translating.

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the responses.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

Update on Belfast Region City Deal

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD), including an update on the development of Outline Business Cases (OBCs) and progress on the development and agreement of the Deal Documentation to allow phased delivery to commence.**

2.0 Recommendations

The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- note the programme overview and the progress that has been made in Outline Business Cases (OBCs) development for all projects, as detailed in the appendix accompanying the report;**
- note the development of the deal document, based on the agreed approach to delivery of a phased deal; and**
- note the update in respect of the BRCD Council Panel and the minutes of the BRCD Council Panel held on 29th January 2021.**

3.0 Main Report

Programme Overview

- 3.1 In February, the Committee received a detailed update on progress across the programme and on the ongoing discussions between partners and the NI and UK Governments in relation to agreeing a phased deal, which recognises the**

varying states of readiness of projects across the programme. The NI Delivery Board, which oversees all the City and Growth Deals in NI has agreed this approach in principle, with approval of expenditure being sought for the most advanced projects in parallel with the deal document being developed. Members will be aware that the development and agreement of the deal document is critical to allow money to flow to the BRCD projects.

Deal Document

- 3.2 Over the past few months work has continued at pace and a draft Deal document has been developed based on content suggested by the UK Government in line with previous deals. The PMO has reviewed a number of deal documents to ensure the language and level of detail within the BRCD document is consistent with previous deals.
- 3.3 It builds on the BRCD initial proposition and the Heads of Term document signed in March 2019. However, the draft deal document also recognises that previous plans were agreed before the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore the programme and its projects have been reviewed in light of the new economic challenges and outlines how the proposals have proven to be essential to plans for the recovery of the region.
- 3.4 The overarching deal document is supported by both an Implementation Plan and Financial Plan, which both also have to be agreed by the partners with the NI and UK government departments. These documents are also being developed as set out below.
- 3.5 The Implementation Plan provides detailed information on the projects including key milestones, financial information and funding flows, risks and outcomes. This information is being collated from the OBCs through programme assurance work undertaken by KPMG and through engagement with Partners. It should be noted that Implementation Plan forms the basis of the monitoring and reporting for each project.
- 3.6 The Financial Plan sets out the overall financial framework including stewardship, protocols and controls and the role of the accountable body. The plan also details the financial forecasts and predicted funding flows and timelines and forms the basis of the financial reporting and profiling arrangements. A first draft of the financial profiles based on the OBCs was sent to the Department of Finance in advance of the March meeting of the NI Delivery Board. A further iteration will be developed following the programme assurance work being completed by KPMG.

- 3.7 Discussions are now ongoing with UK and NI Governments to agree a timeline and process for negotiation and approval of the key documents, in parallel with formal consideration of OBCs.

Investment Priorities

Tourism and Regeneration

- 3.8 As previously outlined the Tourism and Regeneration programme recommends seven projects for inclusion in the Deal Document. These are Belfast Destination Hub, Bangor Waterfront, Destination Hillsborough, Carrickfergus Regeneration, The Gobbins, Mourne Mountain Gateway and Newry Regeneration. Since the last update to committee in February, Outline Business Cases (OBC's) for all these projects have now been submitted for consideration by the relevant government departments.

Innovation

- 3.9 OBCs for the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC), Global Innovation Institute (GII) Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (i-REACH) and Screen Media and Innovation Lab (SMIL) have been formally submitted to NI and UK Governments. SMIL has been through its casework review, with casework reviews for AMIC and I-Reach currently taking place. An updated OBC for the Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology (CDHT) will be submitted for approval to Executive Board in June in advance of submission to the NI and UK Governments. This will mean that all five Innovation OBCs, all of which are at an advanced stage of development, will have been formally submitted for approval.

Digital

- 3.10 The draft Digital Innovation Programme Business Case and the OBC for i4C digital innovation project have been submitted to NI and UK Government for review and consideration and feedback has been received which is currently being addressed through a series of workshops and written responses. A revised programme business case is currently being finalised and when approved through the BRCD structures will be formally submitted to the NI and UK governments. As previously reported the programme business case will prioritise a flexible 'funds-based' approach with the increased use of Challenge Funds alongside capital funding to support connectivity and other enabling infrastructure in order to support digital innovation. It will also ensure that innovation

support reaches priority sectors across the region, through investment in Regional Innovation Hubs.

Infrastructure

- 3.11 An OBC has been completed for the Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge and interim OBCs have been prepared for the Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 and the Newry Southern Relief Road, due to the very early stage of their development, in advance of the necessary consultations on route development. Members will be aware that there is currently insufficient funding within the BRCD funding envelope to deliver all three projects and discussions are ongoing with the Department for Infrastructure and Department of Finance on proposals for an Infrastructure pillar level budget to allow projects continue to the next stage of development as part of the phased deal approach.

Employability and Skills (E&S)

- 3.12 The draft Employability and Skills Proposition is currently being finalised following a detailed engagement process with partners and key industry stakeholders. It incorporates three core component elements of an Employability and Skills Partnership (including an E&S Hub), a core E&S programme and approach to deliver inclusive growth. Once finalised detailed plans for its implementation during phase 3 will then follow.
- 3.13 Partners continue to work to develop and implement collaborative partnership projects in support of the BRCD objectives. This includes developmental work by council partners towards a new digital transformation programme for businesses. In addition, funding secured through the Department for Economy's Apprenticeship Challenge Fund has enabled the partners to begin to explore the potential for new apprenticeship pathways aligned to BRCD priority sectors, and to undertake research that will inform the development of a virtual apprenticeship platform. This work includes a series of webinars to help inform the research and to promote apprenticeships.

Communications and Engagement

- 3.14 Strategic engagement with key political representatives on the benefits and impact of the deal in supporting recovery has been taking place over the past few months. There has been strong support for the approach recommended by the BRCD partners involving a phased deal agreed on the basis of the most advanced projects having received OBC approval. There

was also recognition among senior political representatives of the deal's role in recovery and Members will be aware that the Department for the Economy's Economic Recovery Action Plan highlighted the need 'to accelerate delivery of City and Growth Deals'.

- 3.15 Plans are being finalised for enhanced engagement during May and June with business representative organisations and with businesses across the region, including through online events and forums. This will include online sessions with key sectoral groups and individual business chambers. It is also intended that a written briefing will be circulated to major businesses likely to have a specific interest in the BRCD or who have been significantly engaged in the BRCD to date.

BRCD Council Panel

- 3.16 Members will be aware that the BRCD Council Panel provides a forum for members from all six partner councils to meet to jointly discuss issues, progress and benefits of the BRCD. Each council is represented on the Forum by four members and, as previously agreed by this Committee, the four BCC nominees are the party group leaders (or their nominees) from the four largest parties.
- 3.17 A Virtual meeting of the Panel was held on 28 April 2021 hosted by Ards and North Down Borough Council. At this meeting, the Panel received an update on the next steps in the development of the deal document and supporting documentation along with an update on progress in respect of each of the pillars of investment. Members also received a presentation on Ulster University's plans for a new, world class Screen and Media Innovation Lab (SMIL). SMIL is set to play a key role in the Belfast region's economic recovery post-COVID, by building on the success of NI's creative industries which already contribute over £1billion GVA to the NI economy and employ around 26,000 people. The minutes of the January meeting were also approved and have been circulated to Members.
- 3.18 The next meeting will be hosted by Belfast City Council and suitable dates are currently being considered.

Next Steps

- 3.19 As outlined above the key components for a phased deal are now well advanced, with OBCs submitted and being reviewed across the programme and draft deal documentation developed. The BRCD partners will therefore now be seeking agreement on a timetable for consideration of the most

advanced OBCs and for engagement and negotiation with the NI and UK Governments on the deal documentation, allowing the deal to be signed and funding start to flow to the transformative projects that are include within the BRCD.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.20 All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.21 The approach taken to develop the City Deal has been subject to independent equality screening and rural proofing and states that:

‘BRCD is inherently inclusive, affording an opportunity for the region to grow in a way that will benefit the economy of Northern Ireland as a whole, thereby enhancing the lives and well-being of its citizens. If during further development of the programme it becomes apparent that there may be an adverse impact on certain groups or communities then the partnership commits to carrying out further Section 75 work and including screening and EQIAs as and when appropriate.’”

After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the contents of the report.

Update on Customer Focus Programme

(Mrs. R. Crozier, Customer Focus Programme Director, attended in connection with this item.)

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

Members are reminded that, in February 2021, they received an update on the Customer Focus Programme which included plans for a new Customer Hub function to be operational from 29th March, 2021.

- 1.2 This report provides Committee with an update on:

- the implementation of the Customer Hub; and
- the development of an Elected Members’ mobile app and plans for roll out of the app to all Members.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- 1. note the update on the implementation of the Customer Hub function;**
- 2. note the update on the development of a mobile application for Elected Members and plans to roll this out to all members starting in June 2021; and**
- 3. agree that Party Group briefings be held in June 2021 to obtain Members' feedback on their Customer Hub experience and to promote use of the new mobile app.**

3.0 Main Report

Background

3.1 Our vision of customer focused services and associated blueprint for the Customer Hub were presented at the May 2020 Committee meeting and aim to ensure that we deliver:

- Optimised customer contact – professionalising resources and providing modern digital and telephony systems with access to real time data on contact performance**
- Channel shift – moving where possible to digitally enabled self-serve solutions**
- Customer centricity – designing our services around the needs of our customers.**

3.2 The Customer Hub blueprint remains as is, putting our customers at the heart of everything, ensuring we provide a consistent and professional service, affording our customers choice and convenience. This means improving and aligning all our access to service channels – telephone, face to face, website, and social media.

3.3 As part of this blueprint, the Customer Hub operation went live as planned on 29 March 2021. The Customer Hub operation consists of 16FTEs covering from 8 am to 6 pm, Monday to Friday, as a hybrid team working from Cecil Ward Building and from home, providing a first point of contact for a range of customers.

- 3.4 The first phase of this new function deals with customer contact for all departments and services, across a number of channels (online, telephone, email). Initially the hub will manage all customer contact for cleansing/waste and calls formerly through the main switchboard and corporate complaints numbers. All other direct dial telephone numbers remain unchanged.
- 3.5 As part of the blueprint for Elected Members, the Customer Hub provides specific services for Elected Members in the form of a direct phone line and email account and both these channels also went live on 29th March 2021.

Implementation of the Customer Hub Function

- 3.6 Preparation for implementation of the Customer Hub intensified from January 2021 to March 2021, completing the initial establishment of staff, filling 16 posts; development of systems and processes and delivery of training and development.
- 3.7 The first six weeks of operation have seen some challenges with double and single bank holidays which traditionally are followed by high call volumes.

Resources and Capacity

- 3.8 Planning for the Customer Hub anticipated call volumes in the region of 750 per day however actual call volumes in the first weeks of operation have been significantly higher. Day one of operation saw 1,049 calls and the day after the double bank holiday at Easter we received more than 1,600 calls. Email traffic has also been high accounting for one third of overall contacts. An analysis of the Customer Hub throughput for the month of April 2021 has been circulated to Members.
- 3.9 Because call volumes have been higher than anticipated we have been closely monitoring call queues, prioritising them and assessing the impact on staffing requirements.
- 3.10 Over these first few weeks of operation there have been resource constraints due to staff being recruited to other jobs and absence, coupled with a high demand for services. To achieve operational stability we have used temporary staff as an interim measure and are in the process of increasing and extending these arrangements whilst backfilling or recruiting temporary posts for a period of 6 months. We have also brought forward the recruitment of an additional 2 permanent posts within the agreed establishment.

- 3.11 Integral to this formative stage has been the inclusion of staff and Trade Unions in understanding the impact on staffing requirements during the transition and the early stages of operating the new Customer Hub.

Hand offs to Departments/Services

- 3.12 Work has been completed to co-design processes including the handoff from customer hub to services in other departments. The implementation initially is on a 'wide and thin' basis i.e. a basic level of information and signposting for customers is provided at the first point of contact for all services across all channels. Handoffs processes have worked well in general and are being refined as issues arise.

Dedicated Services for Elected Members

- 3.13 As stated, the Customer Hub went live with specific services designed for elected members – a dedicated telephone line and email account. In the first month of operation one or both of these channels have been used by 40 elected members. A profile of elected members engagement has been circulated.

A mobile App designed and developed for Elected Members

- 3.14 We continue to work with the Customer Focus Task and Finish group of Elected Members to develop a third contact channel, a mobile application which will enable members to raise issues, keep track of their cases and review their history of cases.
- 3.15 A prototype app was developed which members of the Task and Finish group have tested and at a recent workshop the group fed back on their experience and recommendations for improvement. We are grateful to elected members for their time and input to the development process. The app has been developed by Digital Services who are currently making changes based on members' feedback before making the first version of the app available to all members.

Our approach to rolling out the app

- 3.16 A briefing note was recently issued to Party Group Leaders setting out the approach to rolling out the members' app. This will be followed by a note to all members asking members to book a slot with Digital Services Trainers from week beginning 7 June 2021. Each slot will be used to facilitate members downloading the app and receiving training on use of the app. Two Digital Services Trainers will be involved in this

process, with each Trainer providing continuing support to their group of members. This approach was successfully used by Digital Services to roll out MS Teams to elected members.

Further Engagement with Elected Members

- 3.17 It is proposed that a series of Party Group briefings should take place during June 2021. The purpose of the Party Group briefings would be to engage with elected members to get their feedback on their Customer Hub experience to date to enable the Customer Focus team to inform service improvements and to facilitate a demo and promotion of the new Elected Members' app.

4.0 **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 4.1 The Committee agreed, in November 2017, that a budget of £500k be set aside for the customer focus project.

Resource requirements for operation of the Customer Hub are provided for within existing Budgets.

5.0 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

- 5.1 No implications."

After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- i adopt the recommendations contained within the report; and
- ii submit to the Party Group Leaders a report on the operation of the street cleansing service, including staffing and rota arrangements.

Update on Summer Programme

(Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services attended in connection with this item.)

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on our proposed summer programme for 2021, which will focus on services for children and young people, families and older people and support for partners and the CVSE sector.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- note the planned citywide summer programme and that delivery remains contingent on the further relaxation of COVID restrictions by the NI Executive.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

Context

3.1 The ongoing NI Executive Covid 19 restrictions has resulted in a significant disruption to our services during Summer 2021. This disruption will affect the types of permissible activities, the maximum group numbers and the location of any programme offer to families, children and young people and older people. Our service offer will also be limited by our ability to comply with child ratios within available staff resources and limited volunteer support.

3.2 C and NS has established an internal summer programming team, to design and plan activities and events, as we emerge from lockdown. As restrictions are further eased we will review and amend our plans accordingly and in line with public health guidance. The programme will support the further recovery of some of our facilities, such as community centres and our parks and open space.

3.3 Our programme has been designed in line with the recovery recommendations published by Prof Siobhan O'Neill (NI Mental Health Champion) and via collaborative working with the Belfast Area Outcomes Group for CYP, the Education Authority and Youth Services, the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum and key community and voluntary sector partners. Prof O'Neill's recommendations focus on:

- Reconnecting and reducing social isolation;
- Good quality programming;
- Promotion and support of existing community provision;
- Incorporation of physical activities, such as sports, dance, music & drama.

3.4 The BCC summer programme will focus on 4 key areas, namely:

- Children and Young People**
- Families**
- Older People**
- Support For Partners & CVSE Sector**

Children and Young People:

3.5 The current pandemic has made it difficult to plan a summer scheme programme based on the changing guidelines surrounding social distancing measures, capacity of participant numbers and what activities and sports are permitted at certain times.

3.6 We plan to deliver a two-week summer play programme which will move across the city from 17th July – late August 2021. This will operate with a capacity of 25 participants (related to child ratios) and we may also seek to allocate spaces via referrals from partners if necessary.

3.7 Given the fluid environment, we will maximise the use of our parks and outdoor space with fall back plans to use Community Centres when needed due to inclement weather and if permissible. The focus of this programme will be on:

- providing opportunities for children and young people to re-engage with their peers;**
- health and wellbeing with an emphasis on the outdoors;**
- providing opportunities to reflect on their personal journey during Covid-19 using supportive and creative methods;**
- enable parents, young people and others within the community to celebrate events and achievements to promote self-esteem and hope; and**
- re-engaging volunteers whose dedication, commitment and skills are vital in helping to deliver CYP services.**

3.8 Our Sports Development Team are currently working with Sports Governing Bodies to develop a summer coaching and exercise programme and we are working in collaboration with GLL around complimentary programming across our Leisure estate.

Families:

- 3.9 Our OSAL team will be developing and implementing four community celebratory events (1 for each area of the city)
- 3.10 We are also working up activity offers to animate our parks and open space such as a series of Small Parks family entertainment programmes to include music and dance, summer fun days, etc. We are reinstating some of our previous animation programmes such as park life, wildlife displays, dance displays and the Belfast Parks Photographic Competition.
- 3.11 We will support strategic partners and 3rd party provider access to our parks and open space for localised community programming and a broad range of events (such as Belfast MELA, Connswater Greenway animation etc.)

Older People

- 3.12 We have been working in conjunction with the Greater Belfast Senior Forum, the 6 older people's forums, Engage with Age, Volunteer Now, North Belfast Seniors Citizen Forum and Men's Sheds to design an initial programme of activities where numbers can be easily controlled and social distancing enforced. This might include a range of outdoor activities such as walks, Tia Chi, boules, and other games.
- 3.13 We will support age friendly groups via access to our community centres and officer lead activities, for example, bingo, mindfulness classes, cookery demos, Park life, environmental awareness and recycling, etc.

Support for Partners and CVSE Sector:

- 3.14 We will continue to offer resource support to the Community Sector in the form of our Micro and Project Grants. It is expected both micro and medium grant programmes will follow similar priorities as in 20/21 (detailed below), but this may need to be updated based on requirements of external funders.
- Support children and young people to be happy and meet their full potential.
 - Contribute to increased civic pride by building community confidence and improved and connected neighbourhoods.
 - Contribute to improved wellbeing by preventing isolation.

- Promote positive emotional and physical wellbeing by addressing mental and/or physical health.
- Prevent, reduce or address antisocial behavior.
- Unexpected premises costs and PPE related to the recovery of services
- Promote connectivity and inclusion within communities, between communities and between communities and statutory partners
- Develop grass roots community capacity

Micro Grant: Indicative Budget (£150,000) – Maximum award £1,500.

Medium Grant: Indicative Budget (£300,000) – Maximum award £5,000

- 3.15 Both programmes are due to open in the first week of June 2021 at the latest. The streamlined Micro Grant process will allow for awards to be made in time to support summer programmes across Belfast City Council. The Medium Grant (due to increased level of award) requires slightly more stringent due diligence and awards are not expected until first week of September 2021.
- 3.16 Our area teams will continue to work locally with CVS to identify any support needs including access to BCC facilities and outdoor space, programme design, training or capacity support or access to funding.
- 3.17 The Programme Recovery group will continue to revise plans in line with the NI Pathway to Recovery process and the further easing of restrictions and confirmed dates to be announced by the NIE on 13th May and 10th June.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.18 The summer programme will be covered by existing budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.19 None.”

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided an overview of the report and, in response to a Member, confirmed that officers would work with groups/organisations around the development of programmes and the use of Council assets.

The Chief Executive then raised concerns around the extent of bonfire material across the City and pointed out that, given the underlying tensions, significant issues could arise this year, which would require political leadership and decision-making.

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After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the contents of the report.

Fairtrade in Belfast

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to invite Members to pass a resolution updating the Council’s support for the continued campaign to maintain Fairtrade City (Borough) status for the Belfast City Council area.**

2.0 Recommendations

The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Demonstrate continued support for Fairtrade by passing the following resolution:**

‘This Council acknowledges the very real contribution that Fairtrade makes to sustainable development, tackling poverty, and to improving the lives of people from some of the most disadvantaged farming communities in the developing world.

Welcoming the efforts of the UK Fairtrade Foundation, Fairtrade Ireland and the regional campaign, with Northern Ireland a Fairtrade devolved region, to raise awareness of the worldwide impact of unfair trade and the opportunities that Fairtrade provides to promote sustainable development, the Council resolves to provide civic leadership and active support for a campaign to maintain Fairtrade City/Borough status for Belfast City Council area.’

- Nominate two Elected Members to the Fairtrade Steering Group, who will act as the Chair and Deputy Chair.**

2.2 Towards this objective we will:

- Seek to ensure that Fairtrade certified food and drink options are offered internally, in Council canteens and vending machines, 100% Fairtrade coffee and tea is available for all internal meetings; and included in procurement guidelines with subsequent annual review;**

- Work in partnership with the media, businesses and local communities to raise awareness of Fairtrade issues and the opportunities for supporting Fairtrade throughout the City;
- Use our influence to encourage the increased availability and use of Fairtrade products locally, including during Council organized events, hospitality and festivals;
- Encourage the active involvement of communities from across the City in the local Fairtrade Steering Group and campaign for Fairtrade status, including representatives from local schools, churches, businesses and charities;
- Monitor progress on maintaining Fairtrade City/Borough status through production of an annual report; and
- Appoint officer(s) from the Council as administrative support and nomination of two elected members to the Fairtrade Steering Group, who will act as Chair and Deputy Chair.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 Fairtrade is a global movement for change that works to guarantee a better deal for disadvantaged producers in the developing world, securing better prices, decent working conditions and fair terms of trade. Its primary objective is to tackle poverty and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 2,5,8,12,13, 16 and 17 in the developing world.
- 3.2 Working through the concept of trade rather than aid, Fairtrade supports the development of thriving farming and worker communities and the protection of the environment in which they live and work. Fairtrade tackles any use of child labour and/or human trafficking.
- 3.3 The Fairtrade system achieves a better deal for producers in the developing world, by offering them two major benefits: the 'Fairtrade Minimum Price', which is a guaranteed, minimum price paid by importers and buyers, which covers the cost of sustainable production; and an additional 'Fairtrade Premium', which is designated for social and economic development in the producing communities.

- 3.4 The farmers and workers themselves decide how the Fairtrade Premium will be spent within their community; hence, in real terms, it means investment in schools, transport, health care, sanitation, an improved environment, infrastructure and better business equipment and practices.
- 3.5 Fairtrade has a strong and active presence in both the UK and Ireland, represented by the Fairtrade Foundation and Fairtrade Ireland, respectively. A key area of activity for these national organisations is to raise awareness and understanding of trade issues, and to promote the buying of Fairtrade certified products as a way for everyone, no matter who they are, to use the power of their purchase to make a difference to the lives of farmers and workers in the developing world. One of the ways in which this is achieved is through 'Fairtrade Town' campaigns, whereby, local communities at borough, district, city, town or village level will be awarded Fairtrade status if they satisfy certain criteria set by the national organisations. Belfast passed Fairtrade resolutions to support a Fairtrade campaign and achieve the Fairtrade status, through full Council on February 18, 2000, October 18, 2004 and through the Policy and Resources Committee on November 19, 2004.
- 3.6 In 2005, Belfast was awarded Fairtrade City status by the UK Fairtrade Foundation and in 2006 awarded Fairtrade City status by the Fairtrade Ireland, in recognition of the work being carried on to promote Fairtrade. At this stage this was the highest level (City) of status available.
- In 2017, Northern Ireland achieved Fairtrade devolved region status as done in the other devolved regions of Scotland and Wales. <http://www.northernirelandfairtrade.org/projects> This requires every Council across Northern Ireland to play its active role in ensuring the entire Council area (City, Borough or District) and all Cities and Towns above the population of 6,000 within the Council area achieve Fairtrade status; hence the entire City/Borough/District becomes Fairtrade accredited.
- 3.7 With the expansion of Borough and District Fairtrade accreditations by the Fairtrade Foundations - Belfast was granted both City and Borough status upon renewal in 2016 and been successfully renewed every two years since, currently until March 19, 2022. Achieving Fairtrade City status was a significant milestone on this City's Fairtrade journey. However, it is important that the campaign continues to gain momentum, obtains commitments from more organisations and increases understanding across the whole community.

Key Issues

- 3.8 In order to be awarded Fairtrade status for their borough, city, town, district, village or other area, local communities must meet certain criteria. The criteria, or 'goals', set by both the UK Foundation and Fairtrade Ireland are broadly similar and can be summarized as follows:
- 3.9 Goal 1: Local council passes a resolution supporting Fairtrade, and agrees to serve Fairtrade products (for example, in meetings, offices and canteens), with the exploration and review of internal public procurement to include Fairtrade. Belfast City Council
- 3.10 In relation to Goal 1, Belfast City Council procurement of tea and coffee is included within the Ambient Foods contract; the specification indicated that coffee was expected to be supplied from Fair Trade products. In addition, there are concession contracts for example catering franchises at City Hall and parks sites where the specification states 'Use of a selection of Fair Trade certified products. It should be noted that the franchisee should, if possible, use a selection of Fair Trade accredited consumables' or 'Only high quality ingredients from reputable suppliers shall be used. The Contractor offers produce that is in season, fair trade and free range as part of its menu offer'.
- 3.11 Goal 2: A range of Fairtrade products (at least two) must be readily available and served in a number of the area's shops and catering establishments through a stock taking exercise.
- 3.12 Goal 3: Local workplaces and community organisations, such as places of worship, and schools, are encouraged to support Fairtrade and to use Fairtrade products whenever possible.
- 3.13 Goal 4: Use is made of the media and events to raise awareness and understanding of Fairtrade across the community.
- 3.14 In relation to Goal 4, Belfast City Hall was illuminated in the Fairtrade colours on Saturday 8th May 2021 to mark World Fairtrade Day following a request from the All Party Group on Fairtrade.
- 3.15 Goal 5: A local Fairtrade steering group, which is representative of the local community and has a member of the council, is convened to ensure the Fairtrade campaign continues to develop and gain new support.

- 3.16 The passing of a Council resolution in support of Fairtrade is, therefore, a key element in maintaining the campaign. Support for Fairtrade will demonstrate Council's commitment towards social justice and sustainable development and exemplifies the ethical leadership that is one of the corporate values that defines how Council will do business.
- 3.17 Sustainable development is one of the cross-cutting themes within the Corporate Plan. Running through every aspect of the Council's work, sustainable development is based on balancing social, economic and environmental costs and benefits to ensure the best future for all. Significantly in the context of this item, it necessitates consideration of the international, as well as the local, view.
- 3.18 It is important to emphasize that Fairtrade is not in competition with local farmers and that buying local and buying Fairtrade need not be mutually exclusive. It is recognized that many farmers locally in the UK and Ireland face similar issues to farmers elsewhere, not least in ensuring that they get a fair return for upholding decent social and environmental standards in their production. However, Fairtrade focuses on tropical products, such as coffee and bananas, that are not grown locally or on a few items, such as honey, for which local supply is insufficient to meet demand, necessitating imports from abroad and traded outside local season.

Consequently, using the example of honey, the choice facing shoppers is not necessarily between local honey and Fairtrade certified honey, but between Fairtrade honey and conventional honey imported from abroad. It is possible, therefore, to advocate the purchase of local produce from our own farmers, while at the same time promoting Fairtrade and making an international difference in tackling poverty.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.19 It is anticipated that the costs associated with Council's support for and promotion of Fairtrade will be met from within existing budgets. The purchase of Fairtrade products and items, which the resolution commits Council to considering, will be carried out in accordance with relevant purchasing and procurement policies.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.20 None have been identified.

- 3.2.1 Fairtrade is the gold standard of ethical labelling and can only appear on products from the developing world. Fairtrade is not a charity but local ethical consumerism led by cross community, public/private sector demand and statutory obligations: United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030), particularly Goals 2,5,8,12,13, 16 & 17, which falls to each council under sustainability. Fairtrade alleviates poverty, tackles global issues and all forms of exploitation (child labour, trafficking), environmental and social considerations, including climate change. Fairtrade has an international dimension and wider implication for the most disadvantaged vulnerable small-scale producers world-wide, that produce the tropical commodities that are not able to be grown locally.**
- 3.22 Fairtrade accreditation (status) in Northern Ireland is based on the entire council area (boundary): District, Borough or City. It is an entire council-wide achievement/accreditation of all sectors and representation of society (government, businesses, schools, churches, colleges/universities, etc)."**

After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- i adopt the recommendations contained within the report; and
- ii approve the Council's participation in a "Toilet Twinning" initiative, similar to that which had been adopted in the Northern Ireland Assembly, whereby the Council would, by making a donation to have one or more of its toilets twinned, help to fund projects in underdeveloped regions, to provide families with access to toilet facilities, clean water and information on hygiene.

EU Exit - Proposed Economic Study and Briefing

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the process and resource implications around a study on economic opportunities on the island of Ireland to be gained through new trading and economic relationships, following a request raised at the April 2021 meeting of the Council.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 If the Committee is minded to approve the study, the Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- i agree that officers work up terms of reference for approval by the Brexit Committee;**
- ii agree that officers bring back a costed proposal; and**
- iii agree that officers explore the potential for cost sharing with another statutory or academic body.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will be aware that, following the UK's exit from the EU, there are new processes in place governing trading relationships between Northern Ireland and GB and Northern Ireland and the European Union. The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) was approved in April and sets out a framework for the UK and EU's future relationship. It sets out arrangements in areas such as trade in goods and services (including financial and legal services), digital trade, intellectual property, public procurement, aviation and road transport, energy, fisheries, social security coordination and collaboration on scientific research and collaboration, thematic issues, health collaboration, participation in EU Programmes.

3.2 In addition to the TCA, under the NI Protocol arrangements, NI remains in the EU's single market for goods. This allows goods to flow to and from NI to ROI and the rest of the EU without customs checks, tariffs or new paperwork. The EU's rules on customs and regulation of agri-food products continues to apply to goods arriving in NI. The Protocol covers a wide range of areas: human rights, the Common Travel Area, the Single Electricity Market, limited state aid provisions, regulation of manufactured goods and VAT and excise.

3.3 Invest NI has set out its position for trade and investment, noting that Northern Ireland continues to have access to the Great Britain (GB) and the EU markets for goods and that 'this dual market access position means that Northern Ireland can become a gateway for the sale of goods to two of the world's largest markets and the only place where businesses can operate free from customs declarations, rules of origin

certificates and non-tariff barriers on the sale of goods to both GB and the EU’.

- 3.4 The implementation of the new trading relationships has clearly brought challenges. In April 2021, QUB released the results of an opinion poll undertaken on their behalf which demonstrated that public views are evenly split over whether the protocol is overall positive for Northern Ireland (43%; 44% disagree) although 65% of respondents acknowledged that particular arrangements for Northern Ireland are necessary to manage Brexit.
- 3.5 At the beginning of May 2021, Manufacturing NI released the results of the first survey of member businesses since EU exit. This demonstrated that while 1 in 4 businesses are struggling with post-Brexit operations, only 19% of respondents want the protocol to be replaced. The survey noted that the most significant challenges for manufacturing businesses at present related to supply chain issues and the availability of raw materials as well as current uncertainties related to both Brexit and ongoing impact of Covid-19.
- 3.6 At the April 2021 Council meeting, it was agreed that a report on the potential for commissioning an economic study to explore opportunities on how best to exploit the unique position of Belfast (post EU exit) would be brought back to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. It was also agreed that a briefing session be held – to which all members would be invited – to receive an update on the work that had already been done by council officers and other agencies on this issue, and that relevant economic experts be invited to contribute to the discussion. It is suggested that in considering terms of reference for the study, if agreed, that this could be added to the agenda for the Brexit Committee with an invitation to other members to attend.

Economic Study

- 3.7 In terms of the economic study, it is important to note that the protocol and other instruments apply at a Northern Ireland level and therefore it will be important to engage with and take account of any work being undertaken by the Department for the Economy and/or Invest NI in this field. Areas of focus for a Belfast study may include:

Trade:

- Analysis of current export activity for Belfast-based firms (subject to data availability) – by volume and destination

- Assessment of potential impact on trade levels taking account of new governance structures (excluding Covid implications)
- Consideration of specific support required to help local businesses to maximise trade opportunities arising from new governance arrangements, including budget implications of the investment (details to be provided for NI/ROI; NI/GB; NI/EUE; NI/RoW).

Foreign Direct Investment:

- Forecasting global FDI trends for the coming five years, with a focus on those key sectors that have contributed most significantly to recent employment growth in Belfast
- An assessment of the implications of EU exit on the ability to continue to attract FDI in each of these sectors, including economic modelling in terms of jobs, salary levels and GDP
- Assessment of emerging opportunities in existing and/or new sectors to be targeted, based on new operating environment and Belfast's existing economic offer, to include consideration of investments such as City Deal
- Consideration of the role of city government in supporting Invest NI in this work, including specific recommendations on areas of investment and support to be developed
- Consideration of potential new opportunities (sectors/FDI locations) that may arise from the new trading arrangements, including relative assessment of Belfast's ability to capitalise on these opportunities and investment required to do so
- Consideration of implications for city positioning work, including target markets and locations.

- 3.8 Subject to further refinement of the terms of reference for this work – including engagement with other partner organisations – it is estimated that the costs associated with the study would be in the region of £80-£100k. Members will be aware that the Brexit Committee does not have a budget. At this point, no budget has been set aside in any departmental estimates to carry out this work. Ultimately approval will need to be sought

from SP and R following consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.9 The costs associated with undertaking the research study are likely to be in the range of £80-100k. Members are advised that there has been no budget set aside within this financial year to cover the costs associated with this work. However if members decide to agree to the recommendations of this report a further report will come back with proposed terms of reference and detailed costings.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.10 Equality/good relations implications to be considered as part of the brief.”

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That the Members of the Committee agree to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

On a vote, twelve Members voted for the proposal and seven against and it was declared carried.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Update on Phase 5 of the Alleygates Programme

(Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services attended in connection with this item.)

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a further update on the next steps associated with Phase 5 of the Alleygates Programme.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief

Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve the agreed approach for Phase 5.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will recall that, at the Committee meeting on 19th March, an update on Phase 5 Alleygates was provided and the decision was taken to allocate the £500K capital budget equally across North, South, East and West Belfast.

3.2 Additionally, Members were informed that a framework would be developed to assist Members in prioritising potential gate locations for Alleygates Phase 5.

3.3 Officers have reviewed frameworks used for previous phases of Alleygates and, having taken on board Members feedback, are suggesting the following 6 stage approach:

3.4 Initial Data Analysis

- Crime/ASB Data (PSNI/Council)
- Environmental Crime Data (Council)
- Registered Elected Member requests for Alleygates (Council)
- Customer requests for Alleygates (Council)
- Site Suitability for alleygates (including meeting definition of alleyway as per legislation as can't close off public footpaths)

3.5 The analysis will produce an 'initial priority list' of possible alleygate locations for future Committee consideration on an area basis (North, South, East and West). Alleygate locations ranking of high need in more than one of the categories above will likely be ranked higher as these are indicators of demonstrating stronger need/suitability.

Elected Member Assessment

3.6 Recognising that statistical data does not always present the fullest and most accurate analysis of need, formal Elected Member input will be sought via pro forma to enrich the data analysis.

3.7 The pro forma will include items such as:

- Member knowledge of history of crime, ASB, environmental crime and gate effectiveness
- Overview of any community consultation/feedback completed by Members

- Identification of any other locations, assessed against suitability criteria

Agreed Long List

- 3.8 The initial data analysis and formal Elected Member assessment will be combined, producing a citywide 'long list' (presented on an area basis) and this will be presented to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for formal consideration.

Area Allocation

- 3.9 Following agreement of the citywide 'long list', possible gate locations for each area will be considered by the appropriate Area Working Group. The Area Working Group will be asked to refine that list to an agreed priority short list based on available data and budget (£125K per area).
- 3.10 Area Working Groups will also be asked to consider agreeing a reserve list (in priority order) of possible gate locations as based on previous experience. This is because there are a range of reasons (community objection, further site suitability issues, statutory objection) which sometimes prevent alleygates from proceeding at later stages.

Final Gate Locations Agreed

- 3.11 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee will then consider the recommended priority short list and priority reserve list from each Area Working Group for possible alleygates.

Legal Consultation and Gate Installation

- 3.12 Officers will commence the formal legal statutory and community consultation required under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011. Members will recall this is an extensive process and will take several months to complete before Alleygates can be ordered/installed.

Alleyway Transformation

- 3.13 Members will be aware of the commitment by the Department for Infrastructure Minister to support via the Blue Green Infrastructure fund a regional Alleyway Transformation Programme. The overall value of the monies to support the programme has not been finalised, but it is likely to be in the region of £1m - £2m for the whole of Northern Ireland.

Additionally, there has been no indication of how the funding will be allocated across the region.

- 3.14 Given the important link between Alleygates Phase 5 and the Alleyway Transformation work, it is proposed the above framework should be used to assist Members in making decisions at the appropriate point in the future on which alleyways may be supported as part of a Belfast Alleyway Transformation Programme. I.e. Alleyways identified in the final citywide 'long list' not taken forward by Elected Members for Phase 5 Alleygates would be specifically brought forward for consideration under Alleyway Transformation.**
- 3.15 Members should note that initial indications are that the funding will only support equipment purchase (and not associated capacity building), so it will be important to identify alleyways that have a strong existing community commitment to their sustainability and/or ensure potential locations receive capacity support from the Council.**
- 3.16 Officers will be engaging with DfI in the coming months to develop a potential delivery model for Alleyway Transformation for Belfast and will bring that forward for Members consideration in due course.**

Financial and Resource Implications

Financial implications are detailed in the body of the report.

Equality, Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

An Equality Screening will need to be completed on Alleygates Phase 5 in due course."

During discussion, a Member referred to the initial indications that the funding from the Department for Infrastructure for the Alleyway Transformation Programme could only be used to support equipment purchase. He explained that many alleyways required significant additional work, such as resurfacing and the removal of vegetation, to transform them fully and stated that the Council should seek to ensure that the cost of that work would also be met. He referred also to the need to request the Department for Infrastructure to adopt those alleyways which would be transformed under the Programme and which were currently unadopted, to allow them to be effectively maintained and serviced.

In response, the Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the Member that Council officers were continuing to engage with the Department for Infrastructure on the funding parameters for the Alleyway Transformation Programme and to identify other sources of funding to ensure that the needs of local communities were fully realised. He referred to a report which had on 8th December, 2020, been presented to the People

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and Communities Committee which had included information on adopted/unadopted alleyways, in preparation for the implementation of the Transformation Programme and confirmed that discussions had taken place with the Department for Infrastructure and subsequently with the Council's Legal Services Section on the options which were potentially available. The aforementioned report would, he added, be circulated to the Members of the Committee for information and would form the basis for future discussions on alleygating and the Alleyway Transformation Programme.

After discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve the proposed approach for the implementation of Phase 5 of the alleygating programme, as set out within the report.

Assets Management

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

i) Hannahstown Hill Village Playground and Public Square

- extend the current Licence Agreement with Hannahstown Community Association for a further ten years;

ii) DfC Covid 19 Revitalisation Scheme – Legal agreements

- enter into legal agreements with DfI and DfC in respect to the revitalisation schemes at Castle Place and Adelaide Street;

iii) Forth Meadow Community Greenway – Licence Agreements

- enter into Licence Agreements on third party lands, as required, to facilitate the completion of the capital project;

iv) Conacre / Grazing Agreements

- approve conacre licences for the growing of crops, grazing and grass cutting on agricultural lands for a period of three years on Council lands at Cavehill Country Park, Glencairn, Lagan Meadows, Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, Barnett's Demesne, Clement Wilson Park, Ballygomartin Road (North and South), Lagan Lands East and Roselawn; and

v) Covid-19 Testing Sites

- approve the lease between the Council and the Department of Health and Social Care at Woodlands Playing Fields Car Park for a Local Testing Facility/Walk-In Centre for Covid-19 and the extension of the Access Agreement between the Council and Serco Ltd for Mobile Testing Units at Whiterock Leisure Centre and Northumberland Street Car Parks.

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Update on Area Working Groups

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the East Belfast Area Working Group of 6th May, including the following recommendations:

- i that £40,000 of the allocated BIF funding be released to the Strand Arts Centre to progress with RIBA Stage 2 but that no further funding be released for RIBA Stage 3;
- ii that the Strand Arts Centre be required to provide up-to-date costings for the project as part of the Strand RIBA Stage 2 report;
- iii that both the Strand Arts Centre and the Titanic People projects be timebound, with a definitive timeline to be communicated to the groups via letter, and, if projects were to progress, that stages within the projects would also be timebound against key project deliverables, and;
- iv that a meeting be convened in October in order to review each project's progress against the timelines and to make decisions on any future commitments.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Update on Contracts

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- approve the public advertisement of tenders, in line with Standing Order 37a, as detailed in Table 1 below;
- approve the award of Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 2 below; and
- note the award of retrospective Single Tender Actions, in line with Standard Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 3 below.

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Microsoft Enterprise Subscription Agreement (ESA)	Up to 3 years	£1,500,000	R Cregan	Microsoft Enterprise Subscription Agreement (ESA) is the contract to provide all or our Microsoft services such as Office 365.

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T2167 Management and coordination/referrals of service provision for the Traveller Communities. (fully funded)	Up to 19 months	£66,000	S Toland / R Black	Approved by SP&R April 2021. Further approval sought for an increase in Contract duration. To develop and enhance infrastructure that enables a coordinated approach in accessing services and service delivery for the Travelling Community in Belfast.
Provision of production management for Council events and activities	Up to 4 years	£350,000	A Reid	Tender required for the provision of a production management service for Council events and activities.
Development of economic strategy for Belfast	Up to 5 months	£80,000	A Reid	Position Belfast and Council in context of emerging regional strategy positions
T2082 Provision of a 'Youth Engagement and Civic Education Project' for Forth Meadow Community Greenway PEACE IV Programme Services	Up to 16 months	£80,000	S Toland / R Black	Approved by SP&R June 2020, project delayed due to covid - EU Funded project to engage with 600 young people along the Forth Meadow Community Greenway
Property Maintenance Units MTC for building energy management systems maintenance	Up to 4 years	£250,000	S Grimes	Recurring contract which covers callouts, repairs, planned maintenance and small works to building energy management systems to all Council properties
Property Maintenance Units MTC for CCTV, door access and public address systems maintenance	Up to 4 years	£250,000	S Grimes	Recurring contract which covers callouts, repairs, planned maintenance and small works to CCTV, door access and public address systems to all Council properties
Property Maintenance Units MTC for fire and intruder alarms maintenance	Up to 4 years	£350,000	S Grimes	Recurring contract which covers callouts, repairs, planned maintenance and small works to fire and intruder alarms systems to all Council Properties
Property Maintenance Units MTC for lifts maintenance	up to 5 years	£375,000	S Grimes	Recurring contract which covers callouts, repairs, planned maintenance and small works to lifts to all Council properties

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
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Replacement metal railings at Dundonald Cemetery	Up to 16 weeks	£60,000	S Grimes	Works identified in Property Maintenance Units 2021/22 – non-recurring
Refurbishment of entrance gates at Ormeau Park	Up to 12 weeks	£30,000	S Grimes	Works identified in Property Maintenance Units 2021/22 – non-recurring
Replacement of vinyl floor covering at Falls Swim, Glen CC, Grosvenor CC & North Queens Street Play Centre	Up to 12 weeks	£70,000	S Grimes	Works identified in Property Maintenance Units 2021/22 – non-recurring
Replacement windows to Braniel CC, Downshire Hall & ATP Memorial CP	Up to 8 weeks	£55,000	S Grimes	Works identified in Property Maintenance Units 2021/22 - planned backlog
Replacement of the Linear Track Lighting within the Grove Wellbeing Centre	Up to 6 months	£180,000	S Grimes	Works identified in Property Maintenance Units 2021/22 – non-recurring
Replacement of the existing boilers within Grove Wellbeing & Belvoir Activity Centre	Up to 3 months	£240,000	S Grimes	Works identified in Property Maintenance Units 2021/22 – non-recurring
Electrical supplies	Up to 5 years	£1.6m	S Grimes	Supply and delivery of electrical goods/ consumables to facilitate the service delivery of the Property Maintenance section in maintenance and minor works refurbishments of Council properties.
Workwear and PPE	Up to 5 years	£1.3m	S Grimes	Supply and delivery of range of workwear and personal protective equipment 'PPE' (i.e. uniforms, footwear, safety gloves etc) for Council staff that are stocked and distributed by the stores team.
*Delivery of a feasibility study, partner engagement and project business case for the development of an Advanced Wireless investment model	Up to 7 months	£180,000	R Cregan	Based on expert recommendations on maximizing the impact of Belfast Region City Deal Infrastructure Enabling Fund investments

* For noting purposes as SP and R approval was granted April 2021 as a separate paper.

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Friday, 21st May, 2021**

Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Total Value	SRO	Supplier
Provision of consultancy services - Port Health (ref Brexit) previous STA T2154	£47,000	J Tully	Deloitte
Brexit support services through the Innovation Factory Contract – 2nd phase. 1st phase approved in Dec 20.	£50,000	A Reid	Oxford Innovation

Table 3: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Value	SRO	Supplier
Network Services	Up to 2 years	£100,000	R Cregan	Black Box

Equality and Good Relations

Update on Decade of Centenaries Programme

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the current Decade of Centenaries programme and to seek approval from Members to apply for additional funding that has become available from the Northern Ireland Office.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:**
- i note the contents of this report and progress in the delivery of this year's Decade of Centenaries programme; and**
 - ii agree the proposal to apply to the NIO's Centenary Programme for £4,000 to deliver an Arts project, as part of marking the centenary of Northern Ireland, 'Our Story in the Making: NI Beyond 100'.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will be aware that there are a number of projects being delivered as part of the Decade of Centenaries Programme this year. In addition to a range of Council funded activities, the Council has received funding from the Shared History Fund (administered by Heritage Lottery on behalf of the NIO) to deliver a number of projects. These projects are:

- Drama and animation programme on 22 June 2021 and live performances in the Autumn to schools and youth groups
- The restoration of the chairs in the Council Chamber, used by the King and Queen on the occasion of the inauguration of the NI Parliament in 1921
- A digitised artefacts and stories projects related to 1921 to be launched at a live event in Autumn 2021
- A time capsule project with young people
- End of Decade of Centenaries Conference in March 2022

3.2 In addition to these events, others have also already been delivered or being planned, which are funded or supported by the Council, including:

- A programme of 37 online events for the Civic Weekend 1-3 May
- Illumination of the façade of City Hall on 22 June 2021
- An online conference on Violence, Conflict, Militarisation and Displacement; Belfast in 1920
- An online panel discussion on ‘100 years of Northern Ireland; how has it gone?’
- Cycle 100 events
- Discussion events in the autumn

3.3 An additional opportunity has now become available. The NIO is offering funding of up to £4,000 for each council to commission an artist, community group, or group of young artists local to the area, to create and develop a cultural piece of work - be that a piece of art or the development of a community space - that reflects the unique community of each council area.

3.4 The project is not required to have a centenary narrative, but instead should capture a moment in time for the community. Proposals are required to be submitted by councils to NIO by 1st June 2021 and the cultural piece is to be completed by 31st August 2021.

- 3.5** In order to ensure an open and transparent process within the timescale, the Council's Tourism Culture Heritage and Arts Unit will oversee a short competitive process and invite local street artists to respond with suitable proposals incorporating a co-creation process. Criteria will be aligned to the themes of the *A City Imagining* cultural strategy and the process will be guided by the Decade of Centenaries principles.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.6** There are no new financial implications. Should Members be in agreement and the application is successful, this project will be fully funded at £4,000.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.7** The Decade of Centenaries Programme is part of the District Council's Good Relations Programme, which was screened for equality, good relations and rural needs and was screened out."

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

Request for Funding – Polish Heritage Flight Visit

The Members of the Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise Members of a request for funding towards a Polish Heritage Flight Visit due to take place in August, 2021.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1** The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- i approve an amount of £3,000 towards the Polish Heritage Trail as part of the partnership approach with Our Freedom and Yours, the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Belfast, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough, Ards and North Down Borough and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Councils;

- ii approve an additional £800 towards the educational element, subject to liaison with the relevant Good Relations Officer to ensure that the sessions are targeted at wide audience and the content fits with good relations objectives; and
- iii note that the above funding support is subject to confirmation being received from The Executive Office on their allocation towards the District Council Good Relations Programme budget.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

- 3.1 In 2019, the Your Freedom and Ours project started working on the Polish Wings Heritage Trail, bringing the forgotten history of the Polish Airmen in Northern Ireland to life in the form of an educational trail available online and physically to the wider public.
- 3.2 This year, to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland, as well as, to celebrate the relationship between the Polish and the Northern Irish communities, they propose to organise a 2 day visit in August by the Polish Heritage Flight to Northern Ireland with a ground event at the Newtownards airfield (subject to restrictions) and a flypast over several locations related to the history of the Polish Airmen in Northern Ireland. The Polish Heritage Flight is a historical aircraft collection based in Duxford, flying the Hurricane and the Spitfire in the Second World War Polish Air Force markings. During the visit, the PHF will provide an aerial display over Belfast including the City Airport, Milltown Cemetery also flying over South, East and North Belfast. This display will be visible to thousands of spectators around Belfast.
- 3.3 Prior to the visit, they also propose delivering a series of talks explaining the history of the Polish Air Force in the Second World War and Northern Ireland. This series will be available to local communities either face-to-face or online. Such an approach would allow the project to explain the historical connection between NI and Poland and foster relationships with the Polish community living in Belfast today.
- 3.4 To make the whole project successful, a partnership was formed between the For Your Freedom and Ours project, the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Belfast, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough, Ards and North Down Borough and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Councils. All the mentioned

above parties have agreed to support the programme and to contribute to the budget.

- 3.5 They are asking the Council to become partners in the programme and to support the idea of bringing shared history to life by supporting the Polish Heritage Flight. They advised that the total budget required for the two days programme is £15,000, and are asking partners to contribute £3,000 for the aerial display. An additional £800 is being requested for an educational element including talks on the history of the Polish Air Force.
- 3.6 Members may wish to note that the last time the Polish Air Force was visible over Northern Ireland was in 1945, so bringing the Hurricane and the Spitfire in Polish markings to Northern Ireland will be a significant way to celebrate the past and the present connections.
- 3.7 The group advises that such a project will have an impact on the Good Relations in the city; from their experience with delivering shared history programmes across Northern Ireland; such an educational approach plays a massive role in changing people's perspectives on the presence of the Polish community in Northern Ireland.
- 3.8 A project outline and draft Programme to take place on 21st and 22nd August has been circulated.
- 3.9 By way of background, there are currently approximately 25,000 Polish people living in Northern Ireland. The majority of them are settled in the Greater Belfast area, including a large population living in East Belfast.
- 3.10 In recent years, a number of murals dedicated to the shared history between Poland and Northern Ireland were erected in Belfast and the For Your Freedom and Ours shared history project delivered a number of OCN accredited Good Relations programmes to over 1000 participants representing local communities. This programme was designed to help tackle issues related to integration and reduce levels of prejudice towards members of the largest ethnic minority group in Northern Ireland. Several groups that participated in the programme come from the Greater Belfast area, including Ballynafeigh Orange Hall, Ballynafeigh Historical and Cultural Society, Ballymac Friendship Club, ACT Initiative South Belfast, Belfast South Community Resources and Fortwilliam Youth Centre.
- 3.11 Members are asked to consider the request and to note that funding requested could be provided from the Good Relations

budget, subject to confirmation of funding through a Letter of Offer from The Executive Office which is expected shortly.

- 3.12 Officers would advise that the educational element of £800 could also be supported subject to liaison with the relevant Good Relations Officer to ensure the sessions are targeted at wide audience and the content fits with good relations objectives.**
- 3.13 The project would make an important contribution in building relationships between the Polish and wider communities, emphasising connectedness and promoting understanding.**

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.14 The above request of £3,800 could be covered from existing budgets once confirmation has been received from The Executive Office on their allocation towards the District Council Good Relations Programme budget.**

3.15 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The above event would be supported through the Good Relations Programme which has the aim of promoting good relations within the City.”

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

Equality and Diversity - Equality Screening and Rural Needs Outcome Report

The Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the contents of a report which provided a summary of equality screenings and rural needs impact assessments for the period from January to March, 2021.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership

The members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 10th May, including the recommendations:

- i that the Partnership receive at its next meeting a presentation from Blu Zebra on the draft report “The Council’s Covid Response in Lockdown One – Making Sure No One Was Left Behind”; and

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- ii to note that the Partnership took part in a facilitated discussion on sectarianism within the City and that the outcome of that discussion would be brought to the next meeting of the Shared City Partnership for endorsement and then to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Operational Issues

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Party
Group Leaders' Consultative Forum**

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 13th May.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Social Policy Working Group**

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Social Policy Working Group of 27th April.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Customer Focus Working Group**

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the minutes of the meeting of the Customer Focus Working Group of 21st April.

**Requests for Use of the City Hall
and the Provision of Hospitality**

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve the recommendations made in respect of those applications received up to 7th May, 2021, as set out below:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2021 EVENTS						
Clonard Swimming and Waterpolo Club	6 November 2021 <i>Dependent on City Hall recovery and COVID guidelines</i>	Celebration Dinner of Clonard ASC - A dinner to celebrate the 100 years of the club, its history and heritage.	C	No (voluntary group)	Yes, Wine Reception as centenary	Approve No charge Wine Reception

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		<p>Numbers attending – 300 - 400</p> <p><i>* Numbers and room layout will be reviewed and revised in line with COVID19 social distancing guidelines at the time of this event.</i></p>				
2022 EVENTS						
Queens University Belfast	Monday 5 September 2022	<p>British Society for Cardiovascular Research Conference Dinner - welcome dinner linked to 2-day conference taking place in QUB, Belfast.</p> <p>Numbers attending – 80</p> <p><i>* Numbers and room layout will be reviewed and revised in line with COVID19 social distancing guidelines at the time of this event.</i></p>	A & B	No (charity)	No hospitality	Approve No charge No hospitality
2025 EVENTS						
Ulster Automobile Club	13 September 2025	<p>Celebration Dinner of Ulster Automobile Club - A dinner to celebrate the 100 years of the UAC, and its significant contribution to the cultural and sporting</p>	C	No (voluntary/ community group)	Yes, Wine Reception as centenary	Approve No charge Wine Reception

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		life of Belfast and Northern Ireland. Numbers attending – 350 <i>* Numbers and room layout will be reviewed and revised in line with COVID19 social distancing guidelines at the time of this event.</i>				
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Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Crohn's and Colitis UK 'Invisible Disability Employer Scheme'

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to accede to a request from Councillor McMullan that the Council join the Crohn's and Colitis UK 'Invisible Disability Employer Scheme'.

Chairperson

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DECISIONS, TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 11th May, 2021 **FINAL CX DECISION REGISTER PUBLISHED:** 14th May, 2021
COMPILATION OF COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CX: 12th May, 2021 **FINAL DATE FOR CALL-IN (10am):** 21st May, 2021
CX's COMMENTS RECEIVED: 12th May, 2021

	Topic	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call-in
		<u>Restricted</u>	
2a	Promoter Request for the Hire of Boucher Road Playing Fields	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Grant authority for Shorefest for the use of Boucher Road Playing Fields for a local music festival from 25th October 2021 to the 2nd November 2021; (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ negotiate an appropriate fee which recognises the costs to Council, minimises negative impact on the immediate area and takes account of the potential wider benefit to the City economy, in conjunction with the Councils Commercial Manager; ○ negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and 'take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction; 	Yes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring compliance with Coronavirus restrictions in place at the time of the event; meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence; and a review clause, which allows for consideration of any issues during the previous events, prior to any authorisation for future years. <p>It was noted that the above recommendations were taken as a pre-policy position, in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being progressed in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Team.</p>	
2b	Proposal to install a Panoramic Wheel in Botanic Gardens	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) grant authority for G Force Amusements Ltd to install, promote and operate a 33 metre Panoramic Wheel in the lawn area adjacent to the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens during the period Saturday 3rd July 2021 – Sunday 26th September 2021 with 3 days prior to opening and 2 days after for erecting and dismantling; (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee which recognises the costs to Council, minimises negative impact on the immediate area and takes account of the potential wider benefit to the City economy, in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Manager; (iii) Delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and 'take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject 	Yes

		<p>to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction; • The promoter meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence; and • a review clause, which allows for consideration of any issues during the previous events, prior to any authorisation for future years. <p>It was noted that the above recommendations were taken as a pre-policy position, in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being progressed in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Team.</p>	
2c	Request for use of premises - Barnett Demesne	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to accede to the request from the County Grand Lodge for the use of Barnetts Demesne on the 12th July 2021, subject to an appropriate legal agreement being prepared by Legal Services and noted that a separate report was being submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee seeking permission for use of the Cenotaph at City Hall for the Service of Remembrance and wreath laying	Yes
2d	City Cemetery Heritage Project	The Members of the Committee noted the significant progress in the delivery of the City Cemetery Heritage Project and the ongoing work to address the vandalism of graves in City Cemetery.	No
2e	Resources and Fleet Update (Waste Collections and Management)	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to grant permission for Mr. Tim Walker, acting Chief Executive, arc21 to present to a future meeting of the Committee on relevant	Yes

		important proposed legislation affecting the future of Waste Collections.	
2f	Community Provision Update	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree to test the new approach to supporting areas of weak or no community infrastructure in partnership with communities on a North, South, East, West basis and with a budget of £15,000 for each area; and • to extend the delivery period for 2020/21 capacity, revenue and advice grant funding to the end of September 2021, on a case by case basis, as needed. 	Yes
<u>Matters referred back from the Council/Motions</u>			
3a	Recent Violence and Public Disorder	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to agree that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed be submitted to a future meeting.	Yes
3b	Response from the Minister for Infrastructure re: The provision of a pedestrian crossing adjacent to the proposed entrance to Cherryvale Playing Fields	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to authorise that Council officers liaise with the Department for Infrastructure officials to further explore the potential of the provision of provision of pedestrian crossings on Knockbreda Road and on Ravenhill Road, at either side of the playing fields as part of the Blue Green Initiative.	Yes
<u>Presentations</u>			
4a	Presentation on the Air Quality Detailed Assessment work - AECOM in attendance	Noted.	No
<u>Committee/Strategic Issues</u>			
5a	Waste Partnerships - Belfast Hills Partnership	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to approve the Service Level Agreement approach with Belfast Hills Partnership, which would assist in dealing with waste in the	Yes

		course of their clean-up operations on the Belfast Hills.	
5b	BHSCT Snowdrop Group Request	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the content of the report – and specifically the request noted in 3.7 from the BHSCT Snowdrop Group to request that the Council supports the organisation to establish a small Snowdrop Garden area within one of the parks; and • grant permission for officers to continue to work with the Trust and the Group to identify and agree a suitable location, and to work towards organising a small scale event/planting ceremony at the end of May/early June which would adhere to Government Covid 19 Regulations in place at the time of the event 	Yes
5c	Litter Bin Sensors - Smart Cities Data Analytics Project	Noted the ongoing work in respect of the Litter Bin Sensors - Smart Cities Data Analytics Project and that future updates would be submitted to the committee as the project progressed.	No
<u>Physical Programme and Asset Management</u>			
6a	Playground Improvement Programme 2021/22	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to agree the refurbishment of the playground sites detailed below, under the Playground Improvement Programme, which had an allocated budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme for financial year 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of construction works at Vere Foster playground • Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area) • Ormeau 2000 playground (Park Road) <p>She further recommended that, in the event that the Council secured external funding or identified any internal shortfalls in year, refurbishment works at Clarawood Park playground</p>	Yes

		(junior zone) be included as part of the 2021/22 programme of works.							
6b	Hannahstown Village Playground & Public Square	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it extend the Council's current Licence Agreement with Hannahstown Community Association and amend the mapping to include the playground and adjacent public square lands only.	Yes						
Operational Issues									
7a	Proposal for naming new streets	<div>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to approve the application for naming a new street in the City as set out below:</div> <table><tr><th>Proposed Name</th><th>Location</th><th>Applicant</th></tr><tr><td>Mill Valley Lodge</td><td>Off Mill Valley Road, BT14</td><td>Alan Paterson Design</td></tr></table>	Proposed Name	Location	Applicant	Mill Valley Lodge	Off Mill Valley Road, BT14	Alan Paterson Design	Yes
Proposed Name	Location	Applicant							
Mill Valley Lodge	Off Mill Valley Road, BT14	Alan Paterson Design							
7b	Proposal for Dual Language Street Signs	As at least two thirds of the total numbers of persons surveyed in the streets were in favour of the proposal to erect a second street nameplate in Irish at Trinity Street , in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve the application.	Yes						
7c	Request for the use of Sandown Road Carpark	<div>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to approve the request for the Ballyhackamore fun day event on Saturday 21st August and authorise the closure of the public carpark from 07.00 – 20.00, subject to the completion of the appropriate event management plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the Event Organisers:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;• meets all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and	Yes						

		licensing responsibilities; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consult with adjoining residents, businesses and local communities as necessary; and • adhere to Government Covid 19 Regulations in place at the time of the event. 	
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Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link:

<http://www.internalminutes/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=10315&Ver=4>

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 11th May, 2021

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Baker (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain, Michael Collins, Corr,
de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, Michelle Kelly, Magee, McAteer,
McReynolds, Mulholland, Newton, Pankhurst, Smyth and
Verner.

Also attended: Councillor O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were recorded.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th April were taken as read and signed as correct.

It was reported that the minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th May subject to the following amendment:

Response from Department for Communities – Affordable Warmth Update

At the request of Councillor Heading, the Council agreed to communicate to the Minister for Communities its disappointment in relation to the rules outlined in her response which prevented the underspend of the Affordable Warmth Scheme in 2020-2021 being ring-fenced for the use of the scheme and carried over into the next financial year and it was unfortunate that this underspend could not be reallocated to those in need.

Declarations of Interest

Alderman Rodgers and Councillors Newton and Pankhurst declared an interest in respect of agenda item 2 (c), Request for use of Barnett's Demesne, in that they were Members of the Orange Order. They remained in the room while the matter was under consideration but took no part in the discussion.

**People and Communities Committee,
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Councillor McReynolds declared an interest in item 2 (e) Resources and Fleet Update (Waste Collections and Management) in that he was the Belfast City Council representative on Arc21.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 6 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following 3 items as, due to their nature, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**Promoter Request for the Hire of
The Boucher Road Playing Fields**

The Committee considered a request seeking permission to use the Boucher Road Playing Fields from 25th October – 2nd November, 2021 for the purpose of hosting a local music festival - Shorefest.

Following a query in regard to the promoters potentially offering space on one of the days to a local community organisation, the Director of Neighbourhood Services clarified that the details were being drawn up but the organisers were looking to work in conjunction with local community organisations, as opposed to handing over the actual use of the space.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- (i) Grant authority for Shorefest for the use of Boucher Road Playing Fields for a local music festival from 25th October 2021 to the 2nd November 2021;
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to:
 - negotiate an appropriate fee which recognises the costs to Council, minimises negative impact on the immediate area and takes account of the potential wider benefit to the City economy, in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Manager;
 - negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' & 'take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to:
 - the promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
 - compliance with Coronavirus restrictions in place at the time of the event;
 - The promoter meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence;

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 11th May, 2021**

- a review clause, which allows for consideration of any issues during the previous events, prior to any authorisation for future years.

The Director asked the Members to note that the above recommendations were taken as pre-policy position, in advance of the Council agreeing a more structure framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Council's Commercial team.

**Proposal to install a Panoramic Wheel
in Botanic Gardens**

The Committee considered a report in relation to request from G Force Amusements Ltd to install, promote and operate a 33 metre Panoramic Wheel in the lawn area adjacent to the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens during the period 3rd July 2021 – 26th September 2021.

The promoter was aware that there might be other events in the Botanic Gardens over the summer, for example, music events and the Belfast Mela. The promoters would be required to liaise with the existing pre-booked events to ensure there were no operational impediments to events already booked into the venue.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- (i) Grant authority for G Force Amusements Ltd to install, promote and operate a 33 metre Panoramic Wheel in the lawn area adjacent to the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens during the period Saturday, 3rd July 2021 – Sunday, 26th September 2021 with 3 days prior to opening and 2 days after for erecting and dismantling;
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee which recognises the costs to Council, minimises negative impact on the immediate area and takes account of the potential wider benefit to the City economy, in conjunction with the Councils Commercial Manager;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' & 'take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to;
 - The promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
 - The promoter meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence;
 - a review clause, which allows for consideration of any issues during the previous events, prior to any authorisation for future years;

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The Director asked the Members to note that the above recommendations were taken as pre-policy position, in advance of the Council agreeing a more structure framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Council's Commercial team.

Request for use of premises - Barnett Demesne

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast had written to the Council regarding the use of the Barnett's Demesne for its Belfast demonstrations on 12th July.

He advised that a separate report was being submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee seeking permission for use of the Cenotaph at City Hall for the Service of Remembrance and wreath laying

The Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to accede to the request from the County Grand Lodge for the use of Barnett's Demesne on the 12th July 2021, subject to an appropriate legal agreement being prepared by Legal Services.

**City Cemetery Heritage Project and
Crematorium Recovery Planning**

The Committee considered a detailed report which provided an update in regard to the City Cemetery Heritage Project, the ongoing management of vandalism of graves in the City Cemetery and finally measures being considered to plan and allow for the reopening of the Chapel at the crematorium.

The Director of City Services provided an overview of the City Heritage Project, as follows:

- contractor procured in early 2020 to deliver the capital elements, work commenced on site in March 2020;
- a dedicated City Cemetery Engagement Officer appointed in February 2020;
- restoration of some of the site's listed assets commenced;
- the new Service yard completed in December 2020;
- construction on the site's new Visitor Centre in February 2021, due for completion in early October 2021; and
- the project included the delivery of a comprehensive interpretive and digital plan for the site, both of which were well underway.

The Director advised that with the easing of current restrictions it was anticipated that interest in the project would increase dramatically over the coming months. During this time the project's Engagement Officer would continue to maximise stakeholder engagement while the Project Team would continue to manage project delivery. She stated that it was envisaged that the project would be completed in November 2021 and she Director undertook to keep the Members updated as the project progressed.

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The Director then provided an overview of the recent damage caused by vandalism to ten graves in the Jewish Cemetery, located within City Cemetery. She reported that the necessary repair work was already underway to restore the damaged headstones.

She also referred the various measures implemented and currently being considered which would hopefully help to mitigate the ongoing antisocial behaviour (ASB) issues, these included:

- increasing the height of the existing perimeter wall;
- the installation of steel shutters;
- the installation of automatic security lighting;
- the installation of intruder alarms on all the yard's buildings/containers;
- the installation of new CCTV cameras; and
- the potential use of Smart Technology – Sparrowatch.

Discussion ensued in respect of the installation of CCTV cameras and how any footage might be used to secure prosecutions in the events of ASB and vandalism. The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided an update in respect of the CCTV policy that was currently being prepared by Legal Services and the Director of City Services provided a comprehensive update in respect of the strict legislation that existed around CCTV footage and its limitations for use. She advised that a further update on the potential use of the Sparrowatch technology would be provided to the Members in due course.

Following a request from a Member seeking the reintroduction of quarterly reporting in respect of vandalism to parks and cemeteries, along with repair costs, the Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that officers were currently looking at this, he detailed the lack of resources currently to commit to quarterly reporting and advised that this would be looked at within the context of the Open Space and Street Scene Project.

A suggestion was made by a Member that the collection of data could possibly also be looked at as part of the customer hub.

In terms of the potential reopening of the Chapel at the crematorium the Director of City Services advised that, as part of the NI Executive COVID Recovery Framework, the Council were constantly reviewing the Covid regulations. She stated that with the easing of current restrictions, officers were currently planning for the recovery of the internal use of the building.

She detailed that NI Coronavirus legislation and statutory guidance required venue operators to limit numbers attending funerals by risk assessment. An initial consideration of all the risks in the crematorium Chapel would limit numbers able to attend to approximately 20 mourners. The Crematorium Manager had assessed the building in terms of all the Covid guidelines. A limit of 20 mourners would ensure that attendees could be safely accommodated within the Chapel, giving due regard to social distancing measures and therefore reducing the risk of transmission of Covid-19. Enhanced cleaning between services and the application of risk assessment process would also be implemented to support the reopening, in addition the pews would also be temporally replaced with individual seating and it was also proposed that a webcasting service would be installed. It was anticipated that this would commence by the end of June.

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The Members of the Committee noted the significant progress in the delivery of the City Cemetery Heritage Project, the ongoing work to address the vandalism of graves in City Cemetery and the potential reopening of the Chapel at the crematorium for mourners.

Resources and Fleet Update
(Waste Collections and Management)

The Committee considered a detailed report which provided an update in regard to matters within Waste Collections and Management. The Director of City Services provided a comprehensive update in respect of each of the following areas:

- The latest performance data on waste arisings and recycling, including the impact of Covid-19;
- Important consultation documents around Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging and Deposit Return Schemes;
- Update and initial performance data on the Wheelie Box Pilot Scheme and the future of waste collections;
- Interaction with the Customer Hub launch and the ongoing work with policy implementation and missed bins; and
- Developments within the sphere of inter council collaborative working.

The Members noted the update and recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to grant permission for Mr. Tim Walker, acting Chief Executive, to present to a future meeting of the Committee on relevant important proposed legislation affecting the future of Waste Collections.

Community Provision Update –
Capacity and Grant Funding

The Committee considered a report which outlined a proposal to test a new approach to support communities and also in regard to funding for independently managed community centres for summer schemes.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided an update in regard to Community Capacity. He provided an overview of the current support in terms of financial assistance, provision of community buildings and direct staff provision. He stated that, in order to ensure that the Council continued to respond to emerging needs, consideration had been given to testing new methods of supporting communities with a weak or no community infrastructure and he provided a detailed overview of the proposals.

During discussion several Members highlighted the issues within their communities that existed in terms of weak local community infrastructure and lack of capacity.

The Director advised that further consideration was being given as to how communities of interest could be supported and stated that proposals would be submitted to a future meeting for Members consideration. He further detailed that these areas of concern would be considered as part of the pilot, this might identify that a different approach was required and if this was the case, such changes could possibly be looked at through a co-design process.

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In terms of the 2020/21 Capacity Grant, the Director reminded the Members that the Chief Executive had written to the Department for Communities (DfC) outlining the impact of the Covid-19 restrictions and the bearing that these had had in regard to the delivery of services for community/voluntary organisations. The letter had requested that the Council's Letter of Offer, in its entirety, be extended to allow 2020/21 funding to carry forward to the 2021/22 financial year.

The Director advised that the Department for Communities had responded stating that the Council should put only 2020/21 COVID-19 specific funding on to the Council reserves for use in the 2021/22 financial year. It stated that the DfC grant, which funds the Council's community capacity, buildings revenue and advice grants, must be spent in keeping with the original terms and conditions from DfC i.e. only spend between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021 would be eligible to be claimed.

The Members were reminded that the Council provided a significant amount of match funding for this grant funding and the Members were asked to consider if they wished to extend the delivery period for all of the above 2020/21 capacity, revenue and advice grant funding to end September 2021, to be considered on case by case basis.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- agree to test the new approach to supporting areas of weak or no community infrastructure in partnership with communities on a North, South, East, West basis and with a budget of £15,000 for each area; and
- extend the delivery period for 2020/21 capacity, revenue and advice grant funding to end September 2021, on a case by case basis as needed.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Motion - Recent violence and Public Disorder

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th May, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Smyth and seconded by Councillor Mulholland, had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), been referred to the Committee for consideration:

"This Council condemns the recent serious violence and public disorder that took place not only in Belfast, but across Northern Ireland

It condemns paramilitarism, the use of violence for political ends and the exploitation of young people and working class communities.

We were deeply troubled to see images of children and young people involved in violence and deplore the risk of another generation seeing violence as a response to political frustrations. Whilst matters have thankfully settled over the past 2 weeks, we still believe that the underlying issues prevail and the threat of violence is near too far away from the surface in Northern Ireland.

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As the main political body of this city, we have a moral and ethical duty to do everything we can to protect our citizens, particularly those young people at risk of being manipulated into street violence, as well as our duty of care to front line council staff carrying out daily essential services. We must also move away from simply offering condemnation and begin to look at solutions that will offer our young people hope and invest in their futures.

This Council will: commit to supporting all elements of the Youth Service, including our own Belfast Youth Forum; and will convene an urgent meeting of the relevant statutory agencies and third sector organisations to develop a consistent, young person led approach for the coming summer period; engage with relevant departments to ensure that discretionary funding is made available to support youth engagement and intervention; engage with Trade Unions to ensure safety of our staff and; will support the ongoing process for the formation of a NI Youth Assembly; and seek assurances that Youth Citizens' Assemblies will be considered as an engagement model to make recommendations for the city on addressing poverty, inequality, eradicating paramilitarism, integrating communities, expanding opportunity and tackling the climate crises."

Both Councillors Smyth and Mulholland addressed the Committee and outlined the context of the motion.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Pankhurst,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting,

"This Council also commits to encouraging young working-class Unionists and Loyalists to engage and join any youth forum given current disconnect and imbalances through engaging with local youth providers, including uniformed organisations such as the Boys' and Girls' Brigades, to encourage membership.

Furthermore, this Council calls upon the British Government, the Irish Government, and the European Union to move quickly to resolve the Northern Ireland Protocol which is greatly exacerbating tension and antagonising many within the Unionist and Loyalist community."

On a recorded vote, six Members voted for the amendment and thirteen against and it was declared lost.

<u>For 6</u>	<u>Against 13</u>
Alderman Rodgers; and Councillors Bunting, Cobain, Newton, Pankhurst and Verner.	Councillors Baker, Black, Michael Collins, Corr, De Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, Michelle Kelly, Magee, McAteer, McReynolds, Mulholland and Smyth.

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Accordingly, the Members of the Committee recommended that the Motion be adopted and, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to agree that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed be submitted to a future meeting.

**Response from the Minister for Infrastructure re:
The provision of pedestrians crossing adjacent to
the proposed entrance to Cherryvale Playing Fields**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th March, it had agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Infrastructure requesting the provision of pedestrian crossings, at either side of the playing fields.

The Democratic Services Officer drew the Members' attention to a response that had been received from Minister Mallon.

In her correspondence the Minister advised that she had asked her Department officials to explore the possibility of the provision of pedestrian crossings as part of the Blue Green Initiative. She suggested that Council officers working on this proposal liaise with her Department officials to try and progress the proposal further.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to authorise that Council officers liaise with the Department for Infrastructure officials to further explore the potential of the provision of provision of pedestrian crossings on Knockbreda Road and on Ravenhill Road, at either side of the playing fields as part of the Blue Green Initiative.

Presentations

**Presentation on the Air Quality Detailed
Assessment work - AECOM in attendance**

**(Mr. Alastair. Curran and Ms. Eliza. Barszczewska-Lyner attended in connection with
this item.)**

The Committee was reminded that at its previous meeting it had agreed to receive an update presentation in regard to Air Quality Assessment. The Committee noted that Mr. M. Nancarrow from Aecom was also in attendance.

Mr. A Curran commenced by providing a comprehensive overview of the recent Air Quality Detailed Assessment work, detailing how the Council had arrived at the appointment of AECOM consultants in early 2020, this included information in respect of:

- Notice of Motion having been raised at the People and Communities Committee meeting in October 2019, regarding the delivery of a detailed air quality review and assessment for the city, for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) ambient air pollutants;

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- A Competitive European tender exercise having been undertaken by the Council in September 2020 in order to appoint an appropriately experienced environmental consultancy to deliver the detailed assessment project; and
- The Department of Agriculture Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DAERA) having agreed to provide 50% match funding up to a maximum of £125,000 during the 2020-2021 local air quality management grant year to support delivery of the detailed assessment project

The assessment project was a two-year contract, with the final project report scheduled to be presented to the People and Communities Committee in December 2022. The Members noted that it would comprise of the following 4 principal components:

- 1) Additional ambient monitoring for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), particulate matter (PM₁₀) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5});
- 2) Development of an emissions inventory for the Belfast City Council area;
- 3) Detailed atmospheric dispersion modelling to map concentrations of NO₂ and PM_{2.5} spatially and temporally for the Belfast City Council area; and
- 4) Analysis and reporting of the dispersion modelling data for the city to identify geographic areas of exceedance of national or European health-based air quality standards and of WHO guideline values.

The Committee noted that the Emissions Inventory would incorporate activity data in respect of local roads, rail networks, shipping, air traffic, industrial sources, and household emissions. Detailed atmospheric modelling would be used which would involve Cambridge Environment Research Consultants and atmospheric dispersion modelling software. The software would enable the data gathered to be overlain on maps or aerial images of the city to aid interpretation of the findings.

The Aecom representative then provided the Members with details in respect of proposed locations for the six additional sensors that were to be installed, along with the rationale for the proposed locations which were still to be confirmed. He advised that these would be Zephyr 'real time' small sensor air quality monitors that would measure PM₁₀, PM_{2.5} and NO₂, they would be solar powered and mounted on lampposts or street furniture. The monitoring locations would be operated by Aecom throughout 2021 and would then revert to the Council.

Following a number of queries in relation to the foul smell/gases in the Colin area and whether this technology would be useful, the officer advised that this particular technology was specifically designed to deal with ambient air quality and would not therefore pick up on methane/carbon dioxide gases etc. that are a result of landfill and therefore a monitor at this location would not be appropriate. The Director of City Services advised that there might be alternative technology available and she undertook to liaise with the two Members directly to discuss.

Following several specific queries in regard to the proposed locations of the detailed assessment monitors the officer explained the rationale behind the proposals, he advised that these were a starting point and ultimately this process would be built upon going forward to try and obtain as much information as possible citywide.

The Members welcomed the project and the work undertaken to date.

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The Chairperson thanked the officers and AECOM representative for their attendance at the meeting, following which they left the proceedings.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Waste Partnerships - Belfast Hills Partnership

The Committee was advised that the Council and Belfast Hills Partnership (BHP) currently operated a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to accept waste from their clean-up operations into Belfast City Council (BCC) waste disposal facilities. The Director reported that the SLA was due to terminate at the end of October 2021 and the BHP had approached the Council seeking it to consider a new agreement.

The Director reported that the current arrangement had worked well. The BHP brought approximately 2-3 bags of litter, per week, which had been collected from the Belfast Hills, to Blackstaff Way Recycling Centre for disposal. As this waste was categorised as litter, the current legislation deemed this to be household waste and it did not therefore incur any disposal charge to the BHP. The total amount of waste deposited over the course of the year was not excessive and the BHP welcomed the partnership working that had been adopted by the Council.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve the Service Level Agreement approach with Belfast Hills Partnership.

BHSCT Snowdrop Group Request

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 This purpose of this report is to outline a request which has been brought to Council by the Snowdrop Group – a service user service improved focussed group of BHSCT. In the absence of a broader memorialisation policy and accompanying framework (proposed for development) – this request is therefore being presented to committee/council for discussion and approval.**

2.0 Recommendations

The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Note the content of the report – and specifically the request noted in 3.7 from the BHSCT Snowdrop Group to request that Council supports them to establish a small Snowdrop Garden area within one of our parks.**

- Give permission for Officers to continue to work with the Trust and the Group to identify and agree a suitable location, and to then work towards organising a small scale event/planting ceremony towards the end of May/early June (taking account of NI Exec restrictions in place at the time).

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1** Around 60,000 babies are born prematurely each year in the UK. In the UK, it is estimated that 1 in 4 pregnancies end in loss during pregnancy or birth.
- 3.2** The Snowdrop Group was established in 2017 and is a service user group within BHSCT. The group provides a means of working in partnership with bereaved parents to inform and drive improvements in Maternity services within the Trust. The group has representatives from all parts of Belfast and from all religious backgrounds and none. [The terms of reference for the group are included in Appendix 1.]
- 3.3** United by their shared experience of the devastating loss of their precious babies, the parents are passionate about working with staff, to ensure those who travel the same path in the future, receive the most compassionate care and support possible. The group strives to improve care for all those who experience baby loss at any stage of pregnancy or shortly after birth, informed by the experience and understanding of what really matters most at such an unimaginable time.
- 3.4** Since its inception, the group has contributed to a number of important and tangible improvements. These have included:
- Advocating for and contributing to, the refurbishment of Room 9 and the quiet room within the RJMH-Royal Jubilee Maternity Hospital (Room 9 is the delivery room used in circumstances where the baby will, or has already, passed away).
 - Completion of artwork in conjunction with Artscare to be displayed in 'Room 9', linking the journeys of parents who give birth to their babies there, to those who have walked the path before them.
 - The development of a handmade sympathy card which is now distributed to all parents who experience the loss of their baby, providing contact details for the Bereavement Midwife in the RVH.
 - Informing work carried out in the area immediately outside the alternative exit from the Maternity Unit.
 - Facilitated a recruitment/involvement event to encourage other service users to come forward with their experiences and perspective on how services could be improved.

- Work to improve the environment and information available within the Early Pregnancy Unit.
 - Facilitating the Aching Arms and Cradle charities to deliver within RJMH.
- 3.5 The group have also focused on raising awareness and breaking stigma associated with pregnancy and baby loss, and are very active during Baby Loss Awareness Week (held annually 9th -15th October). The last two years they have been involved in a social media campaign where individuals shared their stories by video in order to help break the silence around this issue.
- 3.6 The Snowdrop has now become a symbol for baby loss awareness within Belfast Trust and beyond and is also a symbol of hope for many families. The group are keen to develop a Snowdrop walk each year and would like to try and establish a Snowdrop Garden – somewhere families can go to reflect and remember their babies.
- 3.7 They have approached council officers to enquire if it would be possible to have a dedicated area in a park in Belfast, where snowdrops could be planted and a small sign placed (wording to be agreed with BCC). They have no preference in terms of location apart from a request that the site would be able to accommodate being a starting and end point for an annual ‘Snowdrop Walk’ – therefore some of our larger parks/open spaces might be more appropriate.
- 3.8 It would then be the group’s intention to promote this place/space amongst their network and to hold events there periodically throughout the year (these would be considered via the normal BCC Outdoor Leisure application and approval process).
- 3.9 They also intend to fundraise in-year in order to be able to purchase a memorial bench (through Council’s memorialisation process) for installation at the chosen site.
- Financial & Resource Implications**
- 3.10 Initial resources associated with sourcing and planting snowdrops, alongside ongoing maintenance of the flower beds, would be met by Council via the existing OSS budget for whichever park is identified as being most appropriate for hosting. Going forward, the BHSCCT Snowdrop group will be responsible for covering the costs of any future planned events, supplying a small sign to be placed within the flower beds and of sourcing funding to purchase and install a memorial bench (through Council’s normal memorialisation process) to be sited close to the site.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.11 There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications and no Rural Needs Assessment required for the recommendations outlined above.”**

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- note the content of the report – and specifically the request noted in 3.7 from the BHSCT Snowdrop Group to request that Council supports them to establish a small Snowdrop Garden area within one of the parks; and
- grant permission for officers to continue to work with the Trust and the Group to identify and agree a suitable location, and to work towards organising a small scale event/planting ceremony at the end of May/early June (taking account of NI Exec restrictions in place at the time).

**Litter Bin Sensors - Smart Cities
Data Analytics Project**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on a proposal for a litter analytics research project that Open Spaces and Streetscene are supporting via the Council’s City Innovation Section.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the ongoing work in respect of this work and that future updates will be brought to committee as the project progresses.**

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Members will recall previous update to SP&R committee in 2017 on the Council’s Smart Framework and Innovation Programme. This seeks to harness the talent of the city’s digital SME sector, and our world-class university research, to support the Council, community planning partners and local communities to create more innovative solutions to complex public policy challenges as identified in the Belfast Agenda. This work is part of a wider ambition to foster innovative methodologies and compliments the Council’s parallel work on Social Innovation with local**

communities and our corporate commitment to service transformation.

- 3.2** A number of ‘demonstrator’ projects have taken place since 2017 including Waste Management analytics where the Council was awarded 20 hours of world-class ‘big data’ analytics expertise to analyse household recycling behaviour with the aim of providing insights that can assist in driving up recycling levels. Most recently Members will be familiar with the ‘Amazing Spaces Smart Places’ Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) challenge.
- 3.3** There has continued to be strong support for the concept of a Smart framework, particularly from the local SME community as it provides opportunities to deploy proto-types and products in a real-world environment. Public sector partners recognise the potential to bring innovation to bear on existing challenges, and broad agreement that Belfast City Council has an important convening role to play in bringing a diverse range of partners together for a common social impact.
- 3.4** One such existing challenge facing local government relates to public realm litter bins in terms of suitable locations, sufficient numbers, appropriate type, public usage, how frequently they fill up, frequency of emptying, and routing practices.
- 3.5** Queen’s University and local SME Litter Analytics approached Belfast City Council in 2020 to partner on a collaborative urban waste research project using data from bin sensors to predict how quickly litterbins fill up, and to see how variables such as public holidays or weather might affect this. Information generated could provide predictive modelling to support workforce planning and optimised routing.
- 3.6** The SME have been liaising with the Neighbourhood Services Manager with portfolio responsibility for Open Spaces and Streetscene and has identified the following locations for deploying the proto-type sensors;
- Parks - Falls Park and Botanic Park
 - Linear arterial route - Antrim Road
 - High street retail area - City centre
- 3.7** The pilot feasibility study is due to commence in Q1 of 2021/22, with sensors in situ for approximately 6 months. The duration of the project will be in the region of 6-12 months, with the approach and breadth dictated by the number of sensors obtained by the SME.
- 3.8** The project will focus on general waste public realm litter bins in the first instance; however, the SME are interested in wider urban

waste challenges including public behaviours. Therefore, depending on the success of the pilot, and funding that the SME can source, there may be scope to analyse public realm recycling behaviours. For example, to use data from a standard litter bin for a period, then install or label a dedicated recycling bin beside it for another period of time and see what the difference would be.

- 3.9 It is hoped that the project will permit the development of 'Use cases' and insights to allow the Open Spaces and Streetscene team to consider emptying public realm bins in a more efficient manner saving resource and ensuring optimal deployment of infrastructure.
- 3.10 It will also supporting a local SME to develop their solutions, this will help them bid into larger funding opportunities and develop a market ready solution.
- 3.11 As the project progresses, future updates will be brought to this committee.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.12 The costs with this project have been included within existing revenue budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.13 None."

Noted.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Playground Improvement Programme 2021/22

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the successful 2020/21 Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) and outline plans for new playground refurbishments under the 2021/22 programme.

- 1.2 Members are asked to note that refurbishments are to be funded under the Capital Programme and that an allocation of £580,000 has been agreed for this work, in this financial year.

1.3 Members should also note that under last year's PIP;

- Refurbishment works at Blackmountain, Ohio Street and Falls Park playgrounds were successfully completed.
- Covid 19 restrictions impacted on the planning process and land transfer associated with construction of a new play facility at Vere Foster. As a result construction works commenced late in the 2020-21 financial year and are currently ongoing. Costs associated with completion of the new facility at Vere Foster will be part of this year's programme and included within the capital budget of £580k. Completion costs are estimated to be in the region of £150k.
- A playground refurbishment at Grosvenor Recreation Centre, fully funded by DfC (£145k), was completed successfully.
- An extension of the existing Lisnasharragh (Clonduff) playground, funded under the Leisure Transformation Programme, was also successfully delivered last year.

1.4 Members should also note that during last year's programme DfC funded 49% of improvement work at the following playgrounds, reducing council's net capital spend by a total of £272k;

- Falls Park
- Ohio Street
- Vere Foster

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

Agree refurbishment works at the sites below under the Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) 2021-22. This year's programme has an annual, in year budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme for financial year 2021/22;

- Completion of construction works at Vere Foster playground
- Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area)
- Ormeau 2000 playground (Park Road)

2.2 In the event council secure external funding or identify internal shortfalls in year, Members are asked to agree

- Refurbishment works at Clarawood Park playground (junior zone) are also included as part of this year's annual programme.

3.0 Main report

Playground Refurbishment Programme

- 3.1** Since its inception in 2012, the Playground Refurbishment Programme continues to make a significant and positive impact to the overall quality and play value of the city's playgrounds; this has greatly improved accessibility, providing more inclusive equipment, safety surfacing, boundary fencing, site furniture and landscaping works.
- 3.2** With continued investment over the last nine years, Council is achieving the desired improvements at each of its sites. The Council's newest refurbished playground facilities below are now more inviting, inclusive and exciting places for children and parents to visit; moving their quality scores to the desired higher standard. (See appendix 1 – image of some recently refurbished playgrounds).
- 1. Blackmountain**
 - 2. Ohio Street**
 - 3. Falls Park**
 - 4. Grosvenor Recreation Centre**
 - 5. Lisnasharragh (Clonduff)**
- 3.3** Members should note that Play Services Ireland Ltd undertook the independent playground inspections on behalf of the Council. The 'quality score' allocated for each playground is based on compliance with European safety standards BS EN 1176-7: 2020.
- 3.4** The independent playground inspection report highlights the age range for each piece of playground apparatus and identifies and prioritises repairs to existing playground equipment. The Council's Facilities Management and Playground Inspectors continue to undertake these repairs in the order they have been prioritised. (See Appendix 2 – copy of the 2021 Independent Playground Inspection report for Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area) which has the city's largest, bespoke multi-play fort. This unit is heavily used throughout the summer months however, it has been identified as nearing the end of its life expectancy.
- 3.5** Each playground is individually categorised, giving a combined 'quality score' Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area) playground for example was allocated an overall quality score of 3.8 which positions it just below the categorisation of Insufficient/Poor.

Quality scores:

Score 9 – 10 Excellent
Score 8 – 9 Very Good
Score 7 – 8 Good
Score 6 – 7 Fairly Good
Score 5 – 6 Sufficient
Score 4 – 5 Fair
Score 3 – 4 Insufficient
Score 2 – 3 Poor
Score 1 – 2 Very Poor
Score 0 – 1 Extremely Poor

3.6 Following the independent inspection assessments of all 103 playgrounds across the city, it is proposed that sites listed under Item 2.1 are refurbished as part of this year's Playground Improvement Programme, which has an allocated budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme. If additional funding or internal shortfalls are identified in year, it is proposed that an additional playground site at Clarawood Park (junior zone) is also improved under this year's programme.

3.7 The playgrounds recommended for refurbishment are the ones with the lowest quality scores (See appendix 3 – 2021 mean quality score ratings). Because of the proposed refurbishment works, these playgrounds will move from insufficient/poor/fair to the higher classification of 'Excellent' – quality score 9 – 10 when re-inspected.

3.8 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The proposed Playground Improvement Programme will be funded through the Capital Programme with an annual budget of £580,000 allocated for works. CNS Landscape, Planning and Development Officers will continue to re-design play facilities and project manage all works associated with the 2021/22 Playground Improvement Programme.

3.9 As in previous years, the OSS Managers will continue to assist with the distribution of information relating to playground improvements to elected members, local communities and user groups.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

3.10 None."

Several Members referred to the need for the installation of more inclusive playground equipment as part of the Council's Playground Improvement Programme.

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The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that the Council was committed to providing inclusive playground equipment for children of all abilities but stated that this would take time to progress and work through the proposed programme of works.

A Member raised a query in respect of the Clarawood Playground and the Director undertook to investigate the matter and to update him directly.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to agree the refurbishment of the playground sites detailed below, under the Playground Improvement Programme, which had an allocated budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme for financial year 2021/22:

- Completion of construction works at Vere Foster playground
- Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior area)
- Ormeau 2000 playground (Park Road)

It further recommended that, in the event that the Council secured external funding or identified any internal shortfalls in year, refurbishment works at Clarawood Park playground (junior zone) be included as part of the 2021/22 programme of works.

Hannahstown Village Playground and Public Square

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Committee that the subject lands at Hannahstown were owned by Lamh Dhearg GLC and had been leased to Hannahstown Community Association (HCA) for 10 years until 1st February, 2024.

The HCA had licenced the subject lands to Lisburn City Council for 10 years until 31st January, 2024, this Licence had transferred to Belfast City Council on 1st April, 2015 under Local Government Reform. The Director detailed that the Licence could not be extended beyond 31st January, 2024 without the Lease to HCA from the GAA club being extended or indeed a new Lease being put in place.

The Committee noted that the Council had received Rural Development Programme (RDP) funds on behalf of the HCA to improve the quality of the general environment and services available in Hannahstown, this had included upgrades to the playground and the creation of a new public square. The Letter of offer from the RDP required the Council to enter into a development agreement with either the land owner (Lamh Dhearg GLC) or the Lessor (HCA) for 7 years from 29th January, 2019. The grant aid terms and conditions stated that the applicant i.e. Belfast City Council, must maintain in good condition all property, equipment, machinery, furniture, fixtures, fittings and assets owned or used by the applicant in connection with the property. The Council were therefore obliged to maintain the playground and new public square. The Council were unaware of this at the time of handover and therefore it had not been allowed for within the budget setting process and this would have to be absorbed from within existing budgets.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it extend the Council's current Licence

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Agreement with Hannahstown Community Association and amend the mapping to include the playground and adjacent public square lands only. This would ensure compliance with all the relevant terms and conditions of the RDP grant aid.

Operational Issues

Proposal for naming new streets

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve the application for naming a new street in the City as set out below:

Proposed Name	Location	Applicant
Mill Valley Lodge	Off Mill Valley Road, BT14	Alan Patterson Design

Proposal for Dual Language Street Signs

As at least two thirds of the total numbers of persons surveyed in the streets were in favour of the proposal to erect a second street nameplate in Irish at Trinity Street, the Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated to approve the application.

Request for the use of Sandown Road Carpark

The Committee considered a request from Ballyhackamore Residents Association for the exclusive use of Sandown Road carpark to host a family fun day event and local traders market.

A Member sought clarity if such use could be extended to other Council carparks which would enable more community events to be held.

The Director of City Services advised that the current Belfast Off Street Parking Order limited what Council could permit to take place at a public carpark. She advised that the Council were currently engaging with the Department for Infrastructure in this regard and meanwhile Council officers endeavoured to accommodate any requests received with alternative options.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to approve the request for the Ballyhackamore fun day event on Saturday 21st August and authorise the closure of the public carpark from 07.00 – 20.00, subject to the completion of the appropriate event management plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the Event Organisers:

- resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- meets all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities;
- consult with adjoining residents, businesses and local communities as necessary; and

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- adhere to Government Covid19 Regulations in place at the time of the event.

Last Meeting

Councillor Baker referred to the fact that this had been his last meeting in the role of Chairperson, as his replacement was due to be appointed in June, and thanked the Members and officers for their support over the previous year.

Chairperson



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DECISIONS, TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 12th May, 2021 **FINAL CX DECISION REGISTER PUBLISHED:** 14th May, 2021
COMPILATION OF COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CX: 14th May, 2021 **FINAL DATE FOR CALL-IN (10am):** 21st May, 2021
DEADLINE FOR CX's COMMENTS: 14th May, 2021

	Topic	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call-in
<u>Matters Referred back from Council</u>			
2a	Motion - Extension of the Belfast Bikes Scheme	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree that a report on how this motion would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting when resources became available and write a letter to the Minsiter for Infrastructure as outlined, to include consultation with communities before implementing further infrastructure; and • Note that the Strategic Review of Belfast Bikes Scheme would be submitted to the Committee in June. 	Yes
<u>Presentation</u>			
3a	Supporting Business start-up and growth in Belfast	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the recommendations and proposed way forward set out in the future provision of business start-up support research; • Agree to council officers working in partnership with the 10 other councils, DfE and Invest NI to address the recommendations in relation to future business start-up measures and delivery models; and 	Yes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the following allocations from the existing 2020/2021 Enterprise and Business Growth budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £90,000 to support the delivery of services to support the Social Enterprise and Cooperative Sector. • £31,109 to support the delivery of a regional collaborative project which supports digital transformation in existing business over an 18 month period • £65,000 to support the delivery of the Way to Scale initiative in partnership with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI which will commence in September 2021 • £10,000 to support the development of a Fintech strategy in partnership with Fintech NI. • Note that an update would be provided to the Committee in June in relation to targets for the Co-ops and Social Enterprise model, and raising awareness of, and capacity building for Co-op representatives be examined for the future. 	
<u>Request to Present</u>			
4a	Department for Infrastructure and Translink	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to receive presentations form the Department for Infrastructure (Roads) and Translink at its Special Meeting on 23rd June; • Agree to request that presentations are provided in advance on the meeting; and • Request that DfI provide an update on the Safe Cycle Network in the City, segregated cycle infrastructure, removal of parking bays, and the reallocation of roads, and that Ms. L. Loughran and Mr. A. Grieve also be invited to attend. 	Yes
<u>Restricted Items</u>			
5a	DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief	No

	Update - Reimagining the Public Realm and Connectivity/Active Travel	<p>Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the updates on the DfC Revitalisation Programme projects contained within this paper and noting also the continued importance of the use of streets and spaces to assist businesses and communities as part of a wider programme of work focused on Reimagining the Public Realm; • Agree to the allocation of the project funding within the DfI Sustainable and Active Travel element of the Revitalisation Programme as outlined below; • Note that these approvals will not be subject to call-in to enable the procurement process to commence and complete within the timeframe of the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme; and • Note the response from DfI following questions raised at the November 2020 Special Meeting of the CG&R Committee in relation to cycle lanes. • Feedback to be provided in relation to the signposting of how public can report issues regarding pavement café licences; and • Write to the Minister for Infrastructure to express the Council's disappointment in the Departments lack of ambition and ability to prioritise the provision of segregated or pop cycle lanes, cycle infrastructure and road reallocation, extended pavements and pedestrianisation access in the past year in comparison to the progress and work undertaken by other cities, and the importance to progress such works in consultation with communities. Also request an update on eScooter legislation and the need for the trial of eScooters to progress in Belfast as soon as possible. 	
<u>Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure</u>			
6a	Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2021-22	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:	Yes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage DfC's Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22. 	
6b	Sustainable Travel - Notice of Motion Update	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the contents of the report; and Note that the proposed Motion – Sustainable Transport, as set out in the report, would not be taken forward. 	Yes
6c	Future of the City and the Role of the City Centre	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the proposed Members Future of the City Workshop scheduled for Tuesday, 25th May 2021, and agree the proposed agenda outline as outlined at Appendix 1. 	Yes
6d	DfI Traffic Management Proposals	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the five proposed schemes. 	Yes
<u>Growing Business and the Economy</u>			
7a	Employability NI Update and ESF support	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the update on Employability NI and the Belfast Labour Market Partnership; Agree to consider the draft Action Plan at the June 2021 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee; Note and approve the match funding requests of £240,000 for the European Social Fund projects for the financial year 2021/22 and agree, in principle, to committing the £240,000 allocation for the final year of project delivery (2022/23), subject to satisfactory 	Yes

		<p>monitoring and formal confirmation of the funding from DfE, as well as budget availability within the core budget agreed through the 2022/23 revenue estimates process; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that, in relation to the suggested additional representation on the Belfast Labour Market Partnership, namely the Labour Relations Agency, Trade Union and the Economic Research Institute, the Director of Economic Development will report back on the engagement and outcome once they have been considered by the Partnership. 	
<u>Strategic and Operational Issues</u>			
8a	Review of Belfast Agenda and maintaining focus on delivery	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the reconfiguration of the Belfast Agenda Delivery Boards as set out within this report; (ii) Note the clear alignment and synergies between the Boards and work of the Committee; (iii) Note the role of Elected Members in inputting and shaping the refresh of the Belfast Agenda over coming months; and (iv) Note the role that Elected Members will play in refreshing the community plan detailed in section 3.9. 	Yes

Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link: [Agenda for City Growth and Regeneration Committee on Wednesday, 12th May, 2021, 5.15 pm \(belfastcity.gov.uk\)](https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/agenda-reports)

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 12th May, 2021

REMOTE MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Brooks (Chairperson);
The High Sherriff, Councillor Long;
Aldermen Dorrian and Kingston; and
Councillors Beattie, Donnelly, Gormley,
Hanvey, Heading, Howard, T. Kelly, Lyons,
Maskey, McLaughlin, McMullan, O'Hara
and Spratt.

Also attended: Councillors Baker, Groogan and Smyth.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Mr. S. Dolan, Senior Development Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for the inability to attend was reported on behalf of the Deputy Chair, Councillor Murphy, and Councillors Ferguson and Whyte.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 14th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th May.

Declarations of Interest

In relation to item 5.a) Department for Communities (DfC) COVID19 Revitalisation Programme Update, Councillor Donnelly declared an interest in that he was an employee of the Upper Springfield Development Trust, and Councillor T. Kelly declared that her husband was an employee of the Greater Village Regeneration Trust, as both organisations had been in receipt of Business Cluster grants.

Matters Referred Back from Council

Motion - Extension of the Belfast Bikes Scheme

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th May, the following motion on Extension of the Belfast Bikes Scheme, had been proposed by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor McAteer:

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“This Council:

Acknowledges the record-breaking month for the use of Belfast Bikes, with 30k journeys made in March this year, and commends once again the scheme and our officials working on it.

Recognises that it must continue to promote and invest in the positive environmental, economic and social benefits of cycling and pedestrianisation throughout our city.

Calls on Council officers to carry out a scoping exercise to examine the further extension of Belfast bikes, beyond the city core and further out into communities across the city.

Agrees to write to the Infrastructure Minister Nicola Mallon to reiterate the need for working in support of investment into the required protected cycle lane network in our city and communities, to support the further rollout of the Belfast Bikes Scheme extending its reach and accessibility throughout the city.”

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the Motion had been referred without discussion to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

The Director of Economic Development highlighted that a report on the Strategic Review of Bikes would be submitted to Committee in June and the item to be considered later on the agenda “*DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme Update – Reimagining the Public Realm and Connectivity/ Active Travel*”, also considered project funding within the DfI Sustainable and Active Travel element of the Revitalisation Programme.

During discussion, Members debated concerns regarding the amount of cycle lanes in North and West Belfast, in comparison to the rest of the city and discussed the safe cycling provision and supporting infrastructure that should be brought forward as a priority for the city.

After discussion, the Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- agree that a report on how this motion would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting when resources became available and write a letter to the Minister for Infrastructure as outlined, to include consultation with communities before implementing further infrastructure; and
- Note that the Strategic Review of Belfast Bikes Scheme would be submitted to the Committee in June.

Presentation

Supporting Business start-up and growth in Belfast

The Director of Economic Development reminded the Committee that the Council had the statutory responsibility for a range of business support activities since 2015, principally focusing on business start and support for key target groups. He advised that the Council also provided a wider range of support services to businesses, working closely with Invest NI and other partners to focus activities in line with the ambitions set out in the Belfast Agenda, particularly around job creation, new business starts and business growth.

The Chairperson introduced Dr. K. Bonner, Senior Economist, Ulster University Economic Policy Centre, and Prof. M. Hart, Deputy Director, Enterprise Research Centre and Aston Business School, to the Committee and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Hart provided background to the 'entrepreneurial deficit' in Northern Ireland, as measured by enterprise and business start-up activity. He stated that, whilst recent years had seen record levels of start-up in the UK in an international context, levels had remained static in Northern Ireland, accompanied by low business birth rates – Belfast being the exception.

He provided an overview of the project, and advised that, in light of the evidence-base review, the findings sought to set indicative ambitious 'stretch' targets based on the comparative data; make recommendations for a potential re-boot in light of revised targets; and develop a budget and highlight all resources needed for revised business start-up support in Northern Ireland.

Mr Hart explained the current model for business start-ups and suggested that a more tailored approach for businesses may be more appropriate. He illustrated a fragmented landscape, and described current start up support in Belfast, together with the following need for the development of new targets which included, within 3-5 years:

- An additional 5,200 individuals engaged in the very early stages of setting up their own business (self-employment and registered businesses);
- Increased survival rates – 80% after two years compared to 45-50% currently; and
- More start-ups that survive and scale - 4-fold increase – ~2% currently to 10%.

He explained the resources required to make this happen and concluded that, with the current annual budget and existing infrastructure, the pre-start to business plan stage support could continue to be provided in an efficient manner but would not be sufficient to achieve the recommended targets.

He suggested that additional funding would be required and resources to: develop access to a benchmarking tool; specialist post-start workshops on digital and new

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technologies; employee engagement; intellectual property; exporting; supply chain support and innovation; and building networks of businesses at a similar stage.

He highlighted that, in light of the targets and required resources for an enhanced NI start-up programme, it was estimated that the cost would be £5,000 per individual or business entering the programme. He pointed out that mentoring was a key requirement and the new 'Help to Grow' government scheme to support businesses would help the gap for intermediate business assistance.

During discussion, the representative's answered a range of questions in relation to help for the self-employed, existing schemes and the need for tailored approaches, social impact agenda, post start-up schemes, evaluation of the 'Go For It' scheme, how to progress survival rates of new businesses, where to find financial assistance, and collaborative working with other enterprise agencies. Mr. Harte highlighted the importance of business survival rates past three years.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their informative presentation, and they retired from the meeting.

The Director of Economic Development drew the Members' attention to the following report which had been published alongside the presentation which outlined the current status of business start-up support research and recommendations for the future:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the council has had statutory responsibility for a range of business support activities since 2015, principally focusing on business start and support for key target groups. The council also provides a wider range of support services to businesses, working closely with Invest NI and other partners to focus activities in line with the ambitions set out in the Belfast Agenda, particularly around job creation, new business starts and business growth.**
- 1.2 Since the transfer of functions, officers have been working to improve the effectiveness of the support provided to achieve the substantial shift that will be required to meet the targets set out in the Enterprise Framework. The framework aims to increase the number of new businesses and make existing businesses more productive and competitive.**
- 1.3 The current collaborative programme to support business start-up – the Northern Ireland Business Start Up Programme (Go for It) – is scheduled to run until 2023. Given the lead-in times required to inform any future intervention and secure support across partner councils, Belfast City Council took the lead in undertaking research to inform the future measure and**

model required to deliver business start-up support across the region.

- 1.4 This report sets out some of the key findings from the research by the team from the Enterprise Research Centre and the programme of work to be completed by the Enterprise and Business Growth team to begin to address some of the recommendations.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Note the recommendations and proposed way forward set out in the future provision of business start-up support research;
- Agree to council officers working in partnership with the 10 other councils, DfE and Invest NI to address the recommendations in relation to future business start-up measures and delivery models; and
- Consider and approve the following allocations from the existing 2020/2021 Enterprise and Business Growth budget:
 - £90,000 to support the delivery of services to support the Social Enterprise and Cooperative Sector.
 - £31,109 to support the delivery of a regional collaborative project which supports digital transformation in existing business over an 18 month period
 - £65,000 to support the delivery of the Way to Scale initiative in partnership with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI which will commence in September 2021
 - £10,000 to support the development of a Fintech strategy in partnership with Fintech NI.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the Council has developed and delivered a range of interventions to address the challenges around low levels of business start-up, innovation, competitiveness and productivity, in addition to putting in place support to enable businesses to overcome the more recent challenges associated with Covid 19 and the UK's exit from the EU. The programme of work delivered by the Enterprise and Business Growth team contributes towards

the commitments identified under the Growing the Economy theme within the Belfast Agenda, the priorities set out in the recovery plan and our ongoing commitment to supporting inclusive economic growth.

- 3.2 The aim of this report is to set out some of the key findings from the research undertaken on behalf of the team by the Enterprise Research Centre. The research identifies a number of priority interventions required to meet local and regional ambitions and targets and sets out proposed activity to be undertaken by the Enterprise and Business Growth team to begin to address some of the recommendations.
- 3.3 Aligned to this research, the report also seeks to set out some new areas of work to be delivered in the 2021/22 financial year. These proposals have also been shaped and informed by the City Deal proposals, including the investment in digital connectivity, infrastructure, and innovation. They include enhanced support for new and alternative business models (including social enterprises and cooperatives), support for companies to transform their business using new digital technologies, and interventions to increase the number of 'scaling' businesses.
- 3.4 Future business start-up support
- Members will be aware that, as part of the transfer of functions and Local Government Reform, responsibility for business start-up and support for under-represented groups in terms of enterprise support transferred to councils. Since the transfer of functions in 2015, we have been working with other councils across the region as well as local delivery partners to put in place a range of support which is aimed at engaging new entrepreneurs and supporting them to develop the skills and capabilities to start their own business.
- 3.5 Our Enterprise Framework sets a vision for the city as a great place to start and grow a business. Its vision is for Belfast to be 'recognised for its diverse community of entrepreneurs, who benefit from a comprehensive, planned and coherent system of enterprise support, which fulfils their needs at all stages of the business growth life-cycle'.
- 3.6 Levels of entrepreneurial activity are a vital sign of a successful economy and research shows that successful cities are those that have a dynamic business base, supporting productivity through increased innovation, competition and job creation. However, across official measures, Northern Ireland's start-up activity lags the UK and

the other 11 regions. Belfast's rates as among the lowest in NI.

- 3.7** The prevailing poorer performance in Northern Ireland indicates a clear need for the councils and their key enterprise partners to relook at how we currently measure and provide business start-up support and identify how we can fundamentally change existing support to put in place provision that create a step change in performance.
- 3.8** These issues have also recently been highlighted in research conducted by FSB and UU which suggests that current approaches are not achieving the desired outcomes to increase the rate of business start-ups. Within their recent Economic Recovery Action Plan, DfE have also acknowledged the need to work in conjunction with DfC and the councils to set targets for business start-up support.
- 3.9** The research led by Belfast City Council proposes an alternative approach for Northern Ireland and Belfast to measure and articulate business start progress, providing indicative targets for business start delivery based on the region's ambitions, resources and learning from comparable successful regions. The findings will enable us to make recommendations to DfE/DfC on the most appropriate measure for reporting on business start-up performance which is based on a model of delivery that sets out to achieve our ambitions as a council.
- 3.10** The report recommends a more focused approach to support, establishing a series of targets relating to business start-up and survival. The approach will include:
- Strong, multi-layered campaign to drive a broader spectrum of individuals towards the start-up support – with support in place to reflect their needs
 - Change in the focus of the support to enhance business survival rates
 - Tailored support to increase the number of scaling businesses.
- 3.11** Based on these recommendations, officers have engaged with each of the other councils across the region to explore the appetite for a consistent approach across all areas. We will now commence engagement with DfE on the findings of the research particularly in relation to revising metrics for business start-up support – a commitment that has been included in their Economic Recovery Action Plan. In partnership with the other councils, we will also work to

develop an engagement plan which will be used to demonstrate the benefits of changing the approach, recognising the statutory responsibilities of council aligned with work that is already being delivered by our partners. In parallel, work will be undertaken to develop a business case for investment and costed options for the new approach, to ensure that there is provision in place once the current programme ends in March 2023.

3.12 Developing new business models: support for social enterprise and co-operatives

Members will be aware that, over the last number of years, the council has significantly increased its support for organisations exploring new or alternative business models, including social enterprises and co-operatives. Currently, interested individuals or organisations are able to access a range of support including idea generation sessions, skills development workshops, 1-2-1 mentoring best practice visits and networking sessions.

- 3.13** Within the last year, through this support we delivered an enhanced programme of activity which engaged 325 individuals in awareness events and webinars and recruited 45 participants providing them with 1-2-1 mentoring to support the development of new social enterprises and cooperatives. To date, this has resulted in the creation of 41 new jobs.

We put in place additional support in response to the specific needs of organisations recognising that the set-up of a co-operative is often a lengthier and more complicated journey. This included a series of webinars which engaged 93 individuals in addition to support for developing legal documents for 4 new co-ops, providing 20 days of additional mentoring to 6 co-operatives and recorded and published one podcast focussed on cooperative development.

- 3.14** One of the early challenges that both co-ops and social enterprises faced in the early part of last year was that many of them were not eligible for the mainstream government support. To overcome this, we established a support fund through which we were able to provide support more than £100,000 financial assistance to 47 organisations across the city.
- 3.15** Within this financial year, we will continue to raise awareness of social enterprises and cooperatives as viable business models and will extend our support services to assist more

businesses in the sector to start up and overcome the ongoing challenges of Covid 19. We will work to engage a minimum of 300 individuals and organisations through our awareness activities and aim to support a minimum of 45 organisations to establish a social enterprise or cooperative. We have been working with the sector and representative bodies including SENI, Cooperative Alternatives and Trademark to identify how we can enhance our support, in addition to looking to other cities to identify what has worked well. As a result of this engagement, we propose enhancing our existing provision, to include the following:

3.16

- **Organising Social Economy Belfast Week in August 2021:** this will work with sector partners and organisations to raise awareness of the social enterprise and co-operative sector in the city, highlighting the positive impact of the sector and the support available. In addition to Social Economy Week, we will also work throughout the year to pilot interventions with young people with a focus of raising awareness of the sector with young people across the city and engaging them to help overcome issues within the areas they live.
- **Go Social Incentive Fund:** this will be delivered as a pitching competition. It will be targeted at innovative businesses that require support, particular at the start-up and early development stages. The total available fund will be in the region of £60,000 and it is expected that a minimum of 6 organisations will be supported
- **Support to enhance the capacity of the sector** aligned with the council's inclusive growth ambitions and draft social value policy. This element will include undertaking research across the sector to enable us to further tailor our support to help increase the number of social enterprises and co-operatives accessing public procurement opportunities.

Digital Transformation

- 3.17 While the council has been providing support to businesses for some time to move them online and help them look at how new technologies can enhance their business, we witnessed unprecedented demand over the last year as businesses were forced to do more in this space. This digital engagement is unlikely to drop back as businesses re-open. Indeed, we see that there will be an increasing interest across all sectors, moving beyond digital marketing and online selling towards digital transformation. In light of the growing demand, the 11 councils recently submitted a joint bid to Invest NI to access

funding to deliver a pilot initiative over an 18-month period, focusing on digital transformation support for SMEs. This programme offers more intensive support than the existing digital programme available through the council, focusing on supporting access to new digital technologies such as Immersive Tech, Artificial Intelligence and machine learning.

- 3.18 198 businesses across the region will access support through a range of specialist workshops, events, mentoring and aftercare over the period of the programme (18 in the Belfast City Council Area). The total cost of the intervention across the region is £1,241,542, which is being supported by match funding from ERDF/Invest NI of £899,320, therefore the remaining match funding required by each council is £31,109. The programme will be managed by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council on behalf of the 11 councils, with support from each of the respective council areas through a collaborative agreement.

Scaling and Sector Growth

- 3.19 One of the key challenges identified through the enterprise framework and the future business start-up research is the need to encourage more businesses to scale and grow to turnover of more than £3million. Following the success of the Way to Scale Initiative delivered over the last 3 years in partnership with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI, officers have been working to develop the offering for businesses with growth ambitions and potential.
- 3.20 Through the delivery of this work to date, 40 businesses have been engaged in a programme of support designed to change CEO behaviour and develop high growth strategy. Outcomes include projected turnover increase of £18 million; 193 new jobs created, and 411 jobs supported / sustained.
- 3.21 The 2021/22 programme will support up to 60 individuals to participate on a series of workshops that will help to transform their businesses. 10 of the 60 participants will progress through to participate in the full Way to Scale Programme. This will involve a one week residential at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Entrepreneurship Development Programme; peer-to-peer workshop series with Catalyst Inc designed to maximise peer learning and address real-time business challenges; and a Go to Market residential in Boston which focuses on go to market strategies and tactics. It is proposed that this programme is supported with funding of £65,000 to maximise the take-up by Belfast-based

businesses. This represents around 30% of the overall project costs – the other contributions will come from Invest NI, Catalyst Inc and the businesses themselves.

- 3.22** In addition to putting in place support to enable more businesses across the city to scale, we are also working to increase the number of businesses starting and developing in key growth sectors. One of the key growth sectors over the last number of years has been Fintech. In the course of the last year, we have been working in partnership with Fintech NI and Invest NI to identify opportunities to support the local Fintech ecosystem. A recent UK wide review of Fintech identified Northern Ireland as one of the top 10 Fintech clusters and recommended the development of a 3-year strategy to support the continued growth of the ecosystem here. The strategy will aim to identify the challenges and opportunities for scaling Fintech businesses here, including focusing on how partners can collaborate to support the growth and development of the sector.
- 3.23** Due to the direct alignment with the work of the Enterprise and Business Growth team, Employability and Skills team, the Belfast Region City Deal, and the priorities of the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission, it is recommended that Belfast City Council contributes £10,000 to the strategy's development. Additional investment will come from other local authorities as well as Invest NI.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.24** The development of the research to inform the Future Provision of Business Start-up Support in Northern Ireland has been resourced from the 2020/21 financial budget for the Economic Development budget. The financial implications of any new areas of investment will be factored into the 2021/22 budget including:
- £90,000 to support the Social Enterprise and Cooperative Sector
 - £31,109 to support the delivery of a regional digital transformation programme
 - £65,000 to support the delivery of the Way to Scale initiative in partnership with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI
 - £10,000 to support the development of a Fintech strategy in partnership with Fintech NI.

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

- 3.25 The unit is currently undertaking a process of equality screening on the overall work programme, this will ensure consideration is given to equality and good relation impacts throughout the delivery of this activity.”**

During discussion, one Member requested further information in relation to Co-op and Social Enterprise targets and the importance of raising awareness of the co-operative option. One Member also suggested that similar workshops to those outlined under 3.21 of the report would be useful for Co-op representatives.

The Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Note the recommendations and proposed way forward set out in the future provision of business start-up support research;
- Agree to council officers working in partnership with the 10 other councils, Department for the Economy and Invest NI to address the recommendations in relation to future business start-up measures and delivery models;
- Approve the following allocations from the existing 2020/2021 Enterprise and Business Growth budget:
 - £90,000 to support the delivery of services to support the Social Enterprise and Cooperative Sector.
 - £31,109 to support the delivery of a regional collaborative project which supports digital transformation in existing business over an 18 month period
 - £65,000 to support the delivery of the Way to Scale initiative in partnership with Catalyst Inc. and Invest NI which will commence in September 2021
 - £10,000 to support the development of a Fintech strategy in partnership with Fintech NI.
- Note that an update would be provided to the Committee in June in relation to targets for the Co-ops and Social Enterprise model, and raising awareness of, and capacity building for Co-op representatives be examined for the future.

Request to Present

Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and Translink

It was reported that a request had been received from the Department for Infrastructure (Roads) to seek a date in which it could present its Spring 2021 update to Members, and correspondence had also been received from Translink to update

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Members on its low and zero emission buses which they intend to roll out across the city over the course of the coming months and years.

The Special Meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, 23rd June, had been provisionally set for the Committee to receive these two presentations.

The Members of the Committee recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Agree to receive presentations from the Department for Infrastructure (Roads) and Translink at its Special Meeting on 23rd June.
- Agree to request that presentations are provided in advance on the meeting; and
- Request that DfI provide an update on the Safe Cycle Network in the City, segregated cycle infrastructure, removal of parking bays, and the reallocation of roads, and that Ms. L. Loughran and Mr. A. Grieve also be invited to attend.

Restricted Items

Department for Communities (DfC) Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme Update – Reimagining the Public Realm and Connectivity/ Active Travel

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided an update on the progress of the physical elements of the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme, which included propositions on how to proceed with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Sustainable and Active Travel elements of the fund.

She provided an update under the following headings:

- Re-Imagining the Public Realm – City Centre Interventions;
- DfI Sustainable and Active Travel Fund - E-cargo bike pilot, Active/Sustainable Travel Hubs, City-wide covered cycle stands, Belfast Bikes; and
- DfI Response to Questions on Segregated and Pop-Up Cycle Lanes.

The Strategic Director reminded Members that the report was restricted, however, he advised that the restriction would be lifted in relation to the section on the Belfast Bikes, once the decisions had been ratified by the Council, at its meeting in June.

During discussion, Members raised concerns in relation to the location of Belfast Bikes and the lack of provision in some areas of the city, together with the impact of health inequality. It was highlighted by a number of Members that the level of cycling infrastructure investment in North and West Belfast was disproportionate to that of the other parts of the city and that cycling provision should be brought forward to address the greatest need and not allocated geographically. It was also highlighted that, although some quadrants of the city had large elements of cycling infrastructure, this was not

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representative of the coverage of the total geographical area with significant areas with little to no infrastructure.

The Directors answered a range of questions in relation to the locations of the proposed new bike stations, the need to link active travel sites across city, secured city centre cycle cage and city wide cycle stands, active travel hubs, pavement café licences and the impact on accessibility together with the reporting of issues, eCargo bike trial and eScooter legislation. The Director for City Regeneration and Development highlighted that further information would be brought into the Committee following the completion of the proposed procurement activities relating to covered cycle stands including type and locations of the covered cycle stands including the secure cycle unit option.

The Strategic Director advised that feedback would be provided to the Customer Hub Team regarding the signposting of how the public could report issues in relation to pavement café licenses.

In relation to the response from DfI regarding the linear meters of segregated and pop-up cycle lanes that had been developed in the city since 2016, at the request of a Member, it was suggested that the Committee write to the Department to express the Council's disappointment in the Departments lack of ambition and ability to prioritise the provision of segregated or pop cycle lanes, cycle infrastructure and road reallocation, extended pavements and pedestrianisation access in the past year, in comparison to the progress and work undertaken by other cities. Further suggestions for inclusion in the letter included the importance to progress such works in consultation with local communities and businesses directly impacted by the interventions, and also a request for an update on eScooter legislation and the need for the trial of eScooters to progress in Belfast as soon as possible.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Note the updates on the DfC Revitalisation Programme projects contained within this paper and note also the continued importance of the use of streets and spaces to assist businesses and communities as part of a wider programme of work focused on Reimagining the Public Realm;
- Agree to the allocation of the project funding within the DfI Sustainable and Active Travel element of the Revitalisation Programme, as outlined in the report;
- Note that these approvals would not be subject to call-in to enable the procurement process to commence and complete within the timeframe of the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme;
- Note the response from DfI following questions raised at the November 2020 Special Meeting of the Committee in relation to cycle lanes;
- Feedback to be provided in relation to the signposting of how the public could report issues regarding pavement café licences; and
- Write to the Minister for Infrastructure to express the Council's disappointment in the Departments lack of ambition and ability to

capitalise the modal change brought forward through the pandemic year. The letter should express Members concerns regarding the low level of provision of segregated or pop-up cycle lanes, cycle infrastructure and road reallocation, extended pavements and pedestrianisation in the past year in comparison to the progress and work undertaken by other cities. Members agreed to ask the Minister to prioritise these interventions, while also highlighting the importance to progress such works in consultation with local businesses and communities that would be directly impacted by the schemes, and to also request an update on eScooter legislation and that the trial of eScooters to progress in Belfast as soon as possible.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2021-22

The Director of Economic Development informed Members that the Council had been invited to apply for and administer the Department for Communities' (DfC) Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22 on behalf of Belfast based arts, culture (including leisure) or heritage organisations.

He advised that the deadline to submit an application for funding to the Department was 18th June and DfC intended to formally launch the programme as a competitive process on 24th May.

He highlighted that the Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme aimed to:

- Improve access to arts, culture (including leisure and active recreation) and heritage venues across NI for people with disabilities; and
- Increase participation in arts, culture (including leisure), heritage, and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.

He outlined that the Council oversaw the assessment and recommendation of projects via a competitive open call internally and externally and was responsible for delivery of all projects in receipt of funding.

He advised that the Tourism, Culture Heritage and Arts Unit managed the 18/19 and 19/20 Access and Inclusion Programme within Belfast and received support for 24 projects with total value of £412,554, of which five were Council projects. In 2020/21, they administered 11 grants, total value £185,443.

He pointed out that Capital works and equipment costs were eligible under this programme and maximum grant remained at £30,000, and projects must be completed on or before 31st March, 2022. He highlighted that the two new requirements proposed for this year were:

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- Applications for Council owned venues must be supported by an accessibility audit either completed by a qualified Council official or an accredited body. Applications for third party owned venues must have the endorsement of the Council; and
- Applicants must commit their own financial resources, minimum 10% of project cost.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to grant permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage DfC's Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22.

Sustainable Travel - Notice of Motion Update

The Committee considered the following report and associated appendices:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members on the status of the Notice of Motion regarding taxis in bus lanes since the previous reports to this committee in February 2020 and May 2020. In May 2020 it was agreed that a further report would be brought before this Committee in respect of the Notice of Motion to agree the Council position.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:**
- **Note the background to the Notice of Motion in relation to Sustainable Transport: Taxis in Bus Lanes and previous Committee decisions; and**
 - **Agree the Council's position in respect of the Notice of Motion and the proposed letter to the Minister of Infrastructure as set out below.**

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 At the Council meeting on 3rd February 2020, the motion as below was proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor O'Hara. In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), this was referred to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for consideration:**

‘This Council supports the promotion and expansion of sustainable transport in Belfast as a critical step in addressing the dangerous levels of air pollution and congestion across the City and in the context of our climate emergency.

With the appointment of a new Minister for Infrastructure, the Council should ensure that the Minister is clear about our commitment to sustainable transport options and the need for urgent action on climate.

Therefore, the Council agrees to write to the Minister to state that the Experimental Traffic Control Scheme Permitted (Taxis in Bus Lanes), which was proposed by her Department, does not have the Council’s support and to urge her to not progress this further, instead focusing efforts on further measures to enhance the provision of public transport, cycle infrastructure and pedestrian priority in the City.’

- 3.2 At the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 4th March 2020 after discussion, it was moved by Councillor McLaughlin and seconded by Councillor Donnelly:

‘That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the motion to enable a report to be submitted to its next monthly meeting providing details of any research/data available on the impact on air quality, traffic congestion etc. of permitting all taxis to operate in bus lanes.’

- 3.3 At the May 2020 CG&R Committee meeting, a report was provided to Members outlining the findings of a report commissioned to provide research and data from other cities in their approach to permitting, or not permitting taxi’s in bus lanes. Under the Chief Executive Delegated Authority procedure that was in place at that time for Committee reports, it was agreed, that in line with Members comments on the Committee paper, that a further report should be brought back into the CG&R Committee for discussion and to agree the Council position in respect of the Notice of Motion.
- 3.4 The May 2020 Committee Paper and associated appendices are included as Appendix 1 of this report and summarised below.

Context

- 3.5 The use of bus lanes in Belfast is determined by the Department for Infrastructure, and therefore any decision to allow taxis in bus lanes requires approval from the

Department. Bus lanes are operational across certain hours of the day and permitted taxis can use them. Currently, Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) are not currently permitted to use bus lanes. Permitted taxis are:

- Class B taxis displaying white/yellow roof signage
- Class D taxis displaying internal signage.

- 3.6 In 2017 a 12 week trial was undertaken by DfI, permitting Class A taxis access to bus lanes in Belfast. In 2018 DfI proposed an Experimental Traffic Control Scheme (Taxis in Bus Lanes). The Dept. advertised its Intention to Proceed on June 13, 2018 with a 21 day statutory period for representations. However, due mainly to the level of response to the advertisement of the proposal and also the absence of a Minister in 2018 the implementation of the planned 6 month (with a likely further 6 months) Experimental Traffic Control Scheme (not exceeding 18 months) did not proceed.
- 3.7 The Local Development Plan (LDP) Draft Plan Strategy includes the Strategic Policy (SP) 6 Environmental Resilience which emphasises the need for improved accessibility to sustainable transport modes and reduced reliance on car use. Furthermore, it highlights the need to improve sustainable transport links with commuter towns to protect the health of the city. It is noted that sustainable connectivity *'...is vital to social inclusiveness and improves the ability of local communities, in particular disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, to access employment and important services such as healthcare, education, shopping and leisure.'*
- 3.8 The LDP draft strategy sets out the Council's strategy and policy direction of supporting integration of sustainable transport networks and land use to improve connectivity, reduce traffic volumes and promote sustainable patterns of mobility. It proposes that such an approach will enable the development of a compact, walkable city that is connected to high quality public transport and active travel networks.
- 3.9 'Future Proofed City' Belfast Resilience Strategy includes a number of key areas of focus, one of which is Connectivity. The Resilience Strategy sets out the aspiration of creating a Sustainable Transport Plan that will *'... develop cycle, pedestrian and public transport networks that will support ongoing initiatives to reduce traffic and less sustainable forms of travel, both into and within Belfast.'*
- 3.10 The Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) has a stated policy to create a Green, Walkable,

Cyclable Centre. It alludes to a number of current and planned schemes that would have the cumulative effect of rebalancing the scale of tarmac to greenspace across the city, including the Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT), Belfast Streets Ahead, Belfast Bikeshare Scheme, and transformation of the Inner Ring.

- 3.11 The May 2020 Committee report included a chronology and recap of previous reports to the CGR Committee between 2017 and 2018 in relation to taxis using bus lanes. It also detailed the key findings from a Jacobs UK Ltd benchmarking study which had been commissioned to understand whether similar authorities permit 'taxis' to use bus lanes, and to engage with the local authorities to establish the rationale for their decision. This benchmarking study looked at eight other similar authorities in the UK. All eight of the benchmarked authorities allowed Hackney Carriages into the bus lanes (public hire) but only four of the authorities permitted Private Hire Vehicles access. The main reason PHVs were not permitted was due to the significant number licensed in an authority, as this was deemed to hinder the effectiveness of bus lanes.
- 3.12 The study highlighted that some cities have set a numerical limit to the number of hackney carriage while other cities allow market forces to dictate the numbers. It was noted that the benchmarking report had provided little evidence to inform the impacts of taxis using bus lanes on the numbers of people who cycle in the city, or on air quality. None of the benchmarked authorities had measured the air quality impact from taxis using bus lanes. However, Nottingham City Council felt that this was a valid reason for not allowing PHVs to use bus lanes.
- 3.13 The report by Jacobs set out the following reasons for prohibiting and reasons for allowing PHVs in bus lanes:

Reasons for prohibiting PHVs in bus lanes and Reasons for allowing PHVs in bus lanes

1. Congestion - PHVs in bus lanes may increase congestion, making it harder for buses to keep to their timetable and making them a less attractive modal choice. Historical reasons – PHVs permitted in bus lanes since bus lanes were introduced.
2. Enforcement difficulties - difficult to distinguish between a PHV and an ordinary car. May lead to private cars also using bus lanes. Lower fares – e.g. people with a disability who require door to door service should not have to pay extra to travel the same

journey if their journey requires a diversionary route due to a bus gate

3. Financial implications – Installation of new signage & road markings. Enforcement and administration of PCNs. Most efficient use of road space - Bus lanes often remain empty for significant amounts of time during the day and when buses are not operating.
4. Air Quality – Perceived negative impact on air quality

3.14 In line with the Notice of Motion as set out above Members are being asked to indicate how they wish to progress in terms of the proposal to write to the Minister.

3.15 Financial & Resource Implications

None associated with this report

3.16 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.”

During discussion, Members debated the issues associated with the Notice of Motion including the potential impact of increased vehicles in shared bus/cycle lanes, the need for segregated cycle provision, the impact the motion would have on hackney and public hire vehicles and the consequences for the public of less convenient travel. One member suggested the need for better transport options and the need to reduce the impact of vehicles on air pollution.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor O'Hara,
Seconded by Councillor Hanvey,

That the Members of the Committee agree to adopt the motion – Sustainable Transport in the name of Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor O'Hara as set out in the report.

On a vote, seven Members voted for the proposal and ten against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Note the contents of the report; and
- Note that the proposed Motion – Sustainable Transport, as set out in the report, would not be taken forward.

Future of the City and the Role of the City Centre

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting in December 2020, it had agreed that a workshop would be held for Committee Members and Party Group Leaders to consider the Future of the City in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated social, economic and environmental challenges.

The Strategic Director advised that there were a number of priority areas of focus for the Council, as set out in the Council's Recovery Framework, including, for example, City Deal, Housing Led Regeneration, Resilience, Digital and Innovation, Connectivity and Active Travel, and Economic Led Programmes.

He highlighted that the workshop would provide the opportunity to discuss these priorities and to consider the future role of the city centre and arterial route areas in creating investment, jobs and opportunities for the city and its communities.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the proposed Members Future of the City Workshop scheduled for Tuesday, 25th May 2021, and agree the proposed agenda outline as outlined at Appendix 1.

Department for Infrastructure Traffic Management Proposals

Members of the Committee were informed of the following Department for Infrastructure (DfI) consultations relating to local traffic management proposals within the city:

Henry Place – Proposed Accessible Parking Bays

DfI proposed to provide an accessible parking bay in Henry Place. Waiting would be limited in the proposed bay, 'Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, 2hours, no return within 1 hour'. This accessible parking bay would provide an additional facility for motorists with limited mobility in the vicinity of Clifton Street Doctors Surgery and Towerview Sheltered Housing.

DfI also proposed to introduce two limited waiting parking bays in Henry Place. The restriction would limit parking to 'Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, 2 hours, no return within 1 hour'. This proposal would deter all day parking and create a turnover of available spaces that would benefit local businesses and patients attending the doctors' surgery.

Gardiner Place – Proposed Double Yellow Lines

DfI proposed to introduce double yellow lines in Gardiner Place which would prohibit waiting at all times. This proposal would improve traffic progression at this location.

Hollywood Road – Proposed Limited Waiting Restrictions

DfI proposed to amend the limited waiting restrictions in Hollywood Road. The proposed restriction would limit parking to 'Monday to Saturday, 8am

to 6pm, 1 hour, no return within 1 hour'. This would create a greater turnover of available spaces that would benefit local businesses.

Lockview Road and Lucerne Parade – Proposed Waiting Restrictions

DfI proposed to amend the limited waiting restrictions in Lockview Road and Lucerne Parade. It was proposed to amend a section of the existing single yellow line waiting restriction outside the shops in Lockview Road to a limited waiting restriction. The proposed restriction would limit waiting, 'Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, 1 hour, no return within 1 hour'. This proposal would create a greater turnover of available spaces that would benefit local businesses. DfI also proposed to extend the existing 15m double yellow line corner restriction by 11m in Lucerne Parade. This proposal would improve traffic progression and road safety at this location.

Stranmillis Embankment – Proposed Limited Waiting Restrictions

DfI proposed to introduce limited waiting restrictions in Stranmillis Embankment. The restriction would limit parking to 'Monday to Saturday, 8am to 6pm, 4 hours, no return within 2 hours'. This would deter all day parking and create a turnover of available spaces that would benefit local businesses.

It was reported that the proposals had been developed in response to requests from members, residents or businesses and when implemented should deliver benefits including traffic progression, road safety, improved accessibility for motorists with limited mobility and improved customer access to local businesses.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the five proposed schemes.

Growing Business and the Economy

Employability NI Update and European Social Funding (ESF) support

Members of the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- **Update members on progress in regard to the Belfast Inclusive Labour Market Partnership (LMP) and the emerging priorities to be considered as part of the action plan for 2021/22**
- **Update members on performance of the five ESF projects in receipt of council match funding and request continuation of council support for the remaining two years of the projects, subject to relevant assurances.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- **Note the update on Employability NI and the Belfast Labour Market Partnership;**
- **Agree to consider the draft Action Plan at the June 2021 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee; and**
- **Note and approve the match funding requests of £240,000 for the European Social Fund projects for the financial year 2021/22 and agree, in principle, to committing the £240,000 allocation for the final year of project delivery (2022/23), subject to satisfactory monitoring and formal confirmation of the funding from DfE, as well as budget availability within the core budget agreed through the 2022/23 revenue estimates process.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Employability NI

Members will be aware that Employability NI is the new approach to helping unemployed individuals to get back into work. It is led by the Department for Communities but is intended to be a cross governmental approach to co-designing a sustainable future strategic employment offer, providing a tailored level of support proportionate to need. It has been designed in order to:

- **Deliver a reduction in economic inactivity and long-term unemployment to bring NI closer in line with UK rates**
- **Provide increased support for those further from the labour market such as those with health conditions (esp. mental health) and disabilities**
- **Create a mechanism for government to collaborate with councils and other Departments to offer local solutions.**

3.2 The governance of the Employability NI Programme includes 11 Labour Market Partnerships – one in each council area. These partnerships are responsible for:

- Providing leadership and leading on the integration of services
- Developing local area plans including setting targets for performance
- Managing devolved funding and its delivery
- Managing arrangements for the evaluation of local interventions.

3.3 DfC has encouraged local councils to make progress on the establishment of the Labour Market Partnerships in their respective areas, based on a suggested range of representatives. The Partnerships will be responsible for the development and oversight of a local action plan: initially this will be a one-year plan but, following this initial year, the Department will welcome three year action plans. The Belfast Labour Market Partnership has now been established and has met on two occasions. It is chaired by the council and includes senior representation from the following organisations:

- Department for Communities
- Department for Economy
- Invest NI
- Advice Sector
- VCSE Panel
- Belfast H&SC Trust
- Belfast Metropolitan College
- Belfast Chamber of Commerce
- CBI People & Skills Forum

3.4 At present, officers are working on the details of the strategic assessment. This will provide the intelligence to underpin decision-making and inform the priorities for action. It will take cognisance of key issues such as:

- Supply-side perspective including an analysis of current structure and composition of labour market, taking account of short-term impacts arising from Covid-19 as well as long-term structural challenges around economic inactivity, long term unemployment and geo-spatial deprivation.
- An analysis of labour market demand including the short-term demand pinch-points (such as logistics, social care and construction), sectors experiencing a skills mismatch (such as digital) and opportunities that can be built upon (such as the green economy).
- High-level map of provision including the performance of existing interventions.

- 3.5 The LMP will utilise the strategic assessment to agree an Outcomes Based Accountability baseline for Belfast and identify themes for improving Belfast's labour market which will then be detailed in an Action Plan submitted to the Department for Communities in June 2021. DfC has confirmed that they were successful in securing budget for the work of the LMPs through the recent budget round. The details of the budget allocations to each council area are currently being finalised. The allocations are based on population and relative levels of deprivation and, as such, it is expected that Belfast City Council will attract the largest budget settlement across the 11 council areas.**
- 3.6 The advantages to working with DfC on Employability NI include:**
- Ability to target employability interventions in line with need, ensuring a more inclusive approach to economic growth**
 - Enhanced level of insights on the localised nature of employability and inactivity challenges – and ability to tailor resources in line with need**
 - A more responsive series of employability interventions – with enhanced progression and employment outcomes for those engaging in the activity**
 - The potential to move towards a more formal strategic leadership role for council in this area of work.**
- 3.7 With specific regard to the Belfast Agenda and the Inclusive Growth commitments, the following are important to note:**
- Any interventions or activities within the LMP Action Plan will involve voluntary participation rather than mandatory engagement. It will be reliant on building a trusted network of referral points and creating a seamless approach to engaging with individuals who often present with very complex needs.**
 - The focus will be on those further back in the labour market including the long-term unemployed and economically inactive. This challenge is going to be even more significant in a post-Covid economy – where jobs numbers are significantly reduced**
 - Given the reasons behind our economic inactivity problem in Belfast, it is likely that there will be a significant focus on health-related economic inactivity. This will require a much better way of working with the Health Trust and other health partners**

- A critical element will be to consider how it can be outcomes-based (i.e. progressing in training/towards or into employment) while focusing on what is right for the individual. Given the range of organisations that are likely to be involved in delivery of this service, there are likely to be some challenges in getting this right.

3.8 Proposed approach for LMP

Based on our recent engagement with DfC – and taking account of the pressing nature of the unemployment challenge – officers consider that the best way forward on this is to:

- Engage with stakeholders such as QUB on the underpinning labour market intelligence (LMI) that will drive the work of the partners, particularly the linkages between employment/unemployment and deprivation as well as barriers to accessing a job (e.g. childcare, skills). We are working to develop rich sources of intelligence that will drive delivery and focus resources
- Engage with LMP members to understand likely demand and to develop targeted interventions, focusing particularly on LTU/economically inactive
- Understand how local level insights and engagement can make the delivery of existing interventions more effective
- Explore how council interventions can add value to the LMP – particularly the Employment Academies model which is extending into new areas (including transport and logistics) and exploring emerging areas of work (including sustainable construction, green economy and technology)
- Co-design interventions that can help move people back into work as quickly as possible – this will be particularly important for the ‘new unemployed’
- Review the progress of specific interventions regularly to understand what is working and to share insights with partners.

- 3.9 In our engagement with DfC, we have underlined how this work is wholly consistent with the Community Planning approach and is a good example of developing a partnership approach to address an entrenched challenge that requires input across a range of organisations. As part of the work to look at the existing Community Planning structures, we have embedded the Belfast LMP within the Community Planning Partnership governance and the respective Boards.

- 3.10 Officers will update members at the June 2021 Committee as the detail of the Action Plan emerges, and in advance of the formal submission to DfC.

ESF Match Funding

- 3.11 Members will be aware that the council has previously given in-principle commitment to match fund five European Social Fund (ESF) projects over the current funding period. The five projects are:

- LEMIS+ consortium
- Workforce Learning
- USEL
- Specialisterne
- Springboard.

- 3.12 These projects are currently entering year four of what was originally expected to be a four year delivery timeframe. However, the Department for the Economy has recently confirmed that the funding is to be extended for another year, ending in the next financial year. While the last year was undoubtedly challenging for all organisations working to help people into work, collectively these organisations engaged with 1411 participants and helped 596 individuals to find a job (against a target of 2664 people engaged and 579 into employment – note: figures to end December 2020 only).

- 3.13 ESF projects and other community-based engagement and training are key elements of the pipeline of support for the Employment Academies work. DfE has confirmed that funding levels allocated to each of the five supported projects will be maintained into year four of delivery and has also officially confirmed that ESF will be extended for another year (to 2022/23). It is therefore proposed that the council maintains its previously-agreed match funding contributions for this financial year (2021/22), with total funding of £315,518 (£240,000 Belfast City Council and £75,518 Urban Villages funding (UV funding to Springboard, Workforce and LEMIS+ projects only)). The funding allocations from council as well as indicative participant numbers and job outcomes for the individual projects are detailed below:

Organisation	Overall budget 2021/22	Council financial allocation 2021/22	Participant nos (est.)	Job outcomes (est.)
Springboard	£340,983.10	£27,244.55	Engage with 130 participants	52 participants into employment

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Wednesday, 12th May, 2021**

Workforce	£241,536.00	£54,699	Engage with 120 economically inactive and unemployed participants	26 participants progress into employment
USEL	£965,589.80	£50,000	Engage with 50 participants who are unemployed or economically inactive living with a disability	Support 15 participants to enter employment upon leaving the programme
Specialisterne	£74,188.75	£9,080	Engage with 7 participants who are unemployed /economically inactive and disabled (including autism)	Support 1 participant to enter employment upon leaving the programme
LEMIS+/Belfast Works	£3,070,421	£98,966	Engage with 2,375 participants	487 participants to enter employment per year

3.14 Given DfE's official commitment to run the programme for one more year, it is also proposed that the committee gives in-principle approval for the levels of match funding set out above to be committed to the projects in the next financial year. These allocations will be subject to satisfactory monitoring and formal confirmation of the core funding from DfE, as well as budget availability.

3.15 Financial and resource implications

Employability NI/Labour Market Partnerships

No specific additional financial contribution required from council at this point. It is expected that we will make available our initiatives such as Pathway to Enterprise and Employment Academies as part of the solution to create employment opportunities in key sectors experiencing employment demand across the coming year.

DfC has confirmed that it will provide resource support for the management and administration of the partnerships, alongside budget for programme delivery. Details of support available are currently being finalised. In the interim, officers are working to re-focus existing staff resources to support this important programme of delivery.

European Social Fund

£240,000 allocation within the Employability & Skills budget for 2021/22 with a renewal of this £240,000 for 2022/23. The £240,000 set aside within this financial year was part of the overall Committee budget approved by SP&R Committee on 22 January 2021. The allocation for next financial year will be subject to satisfactory monitoring and formal confirmation of the core funding from DfE, as well as budget availability as agreed through the estimates process.

Equality implications/rural needs assessment

- 3.6 One of the key advantages of this approach is that it will enable us to target resources on specific groups, including those with particular access issues and barriers that currently prevent them from accessing training and employment opportunities.**
- 3.17 Labour Market Partnerships will be established in all council areas.”**

During discussion, Members suggested additional Membership to the Belfast Labour Market Partnership. The Director of Economic Development advised that he would submit the suggestions to the Partnership and report back to Committee. He also explained further the target setting process by the recipients of the ESF Funding.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Note the update on Employability NI and the Belfast Labour Market Partnership;
- Agree to consider the draft Action Plan at the June 2021 meeting of the Committee;
- Note and approve the match funding requests of £240,000 for the European Social Fund projects for the financial year 2021/22 and agree, in principle, to committing the £240,000 allocation for the final year of project delivery (2022/23), subject to satisfactory monitoring and formal confirmation of the funding from the Department for the Economy, as well as budget availability within the core budget agreed through the 2022/23 revenue estimates process; and

- Note that, in relation to the suggested additional representation on the Belfast Labour Market Partnership, namely the Labour Relations Agency, Trade Union and the Economic Research Institute, the Director of Economic Development will report back on the engagement and outcome once they have been considered by the Partnership.

Strategic and Operational Issues

Review of Belfast Agenda and maintaining focus on delivery

The Members of the Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is update the committee on the recent reconfiguration of the Belfast Agenda Delivery Boards and the proposed approach and timeline for refreshing the city’s community plan and the role of Members in helping shape this.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:**

- (i) Note the reconfiguration of the Belfast Agenda Delivery Boards as set out within this report;**
- (ii) Note the clear alignment and synergies between the Boards and work of the Committee;**
- (iii) Note the role of Elected Members in inputting and shaping the refresh of the Belfast Agenda over coming months; and**
- (iv) Note the role that Elected Members will play in refreshing the community plan detailed in section 3.9.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Reconfiguration of Belfast Agenda Delivery Boards

Members will be aware, that in order to ensure that the vision and ambitions set out within the Belfast Agenda (community plan for the city) are translated into action and mobilised city partners to support delivery, four cross-sectoral delivery Boards had been formed (i.e. Growing the Economy and City Development | Working and Learning | Living Here | Resilience and Sustainability). The Committee will have received regular

updates on the programmes and achievements being released through the BA Delivery Boards, particularly from a Working and Learning and Growing Economy & City Development Boards.

- 3.2 As the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have begun to emerge, there is a need to understand how our city economy and communities are likely to be impacted by COVID-19, and what we need to focus on to rebuild in the coming months and years. Clearly, the pandemic is not over and there will need to be sustained efforts to protect the safety and health of our citizens, while at the same time balancing the need to stabilise and rebuild our economy and city. In this context, and as part of the review of the Belfast Agenda, there is a need to take stock and reassess the focus of Community Planning and the work of the Boards over the coming weeks and months. This is not to say that the ambitions and commitments set out within the Belfast Agenda should not remain at the core of our work. However, in order to address challenges that will continue to emerge as a result of the pandemic we may need to pivot our collective focus and seek to prioritise and accelerate key interventions and programmes.
- 3.3 The Community Planning Partnership agreed that there is greater alignment and fit between the focus of the Working and Learning Board (e.g. Skills development educational attainment), and economic focus of the exiting Growing the Economy and City Development Board. This approach provides the opportunity for the development of policies and interventions to create a skills pipeline that is intrinsically linked to economic development policy as well as demand and labour market intelligence. It also provides the opportunity for the development of a focused City Development Board that would examine the key priorities needed to drive city wide regeneration and development.
- 3.4 In summary, it was agreed that the Working and Learning Board and the Growing the Economy strands of the Belfast Agenda are brought together into a single board (i.e. Jobs, Skills and Education Board) alongside the creation of a standalone City Development Board.

Focus of Boards

- 3.5 The key areas of focus for the Boards, as agreed by the Community Planning Partnership are set out below and clearly align with the work of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. The Boards provide a platform to create enhanced collaboration and provide a focus on action and delivery.

Each of the Boards are examining and defining the specific deliverables that will be progressed in the context of community planning, enhancing the potential for collaborative gain, and the development of an 18-24 months+ action plan.

3.6 Jobs, Skills and Education Board

1. **Enterprise & Business Growth** - We are aware of the devastating impact of COVID-19 on many of our local businesses, social enterprises, co-operatives, and employees. Important that we strengthen the current system and bring forward an integrated approach to supporting businesses, sustaining jobs and creating new employment opportunities within the city including the arterial routes and key neighbourhood economic hubs. We will seek to adopt an inclusive approach to innovation and broaden the participation in and benefits from an innovative economy.
2. **Supporting tourism, culture, arts, entertainment and hospitality** - The prolonged and uncertain nature of the pandemic and the range of measures and restrictions brought forward has had a devastating impact upon the vitality and functionality of these sectors – key economic and employment drivers for the city and wider region. It will be important that we seek to protect and rebuild these important sectors (like many other sectors) during and emerging from the pandemic.
3. **Skills and Employability** – Working across partners to ensure local people gain the necessary skills to remain in or enter the local workforce. We will also work with employers to better match the demand for and supply of skills and provide a responsive and targeted approach to providing employability support for those furthest removed from the labour market. We will also seek to identify and maximise digital pathway opportunities to increase skills development and access to employment.
4. **Educational Underachievement** – There is no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic has further widened many of the inequalities which already existed across the city and has adversely impacted upon vulnerable people and families. Seeking to alleviate educational inequalities and underachievement within the city will continue to shape our plans and delivery over the coming years.

3.7 City Development Board

1. **City Regeneration and Investment** – We will work in partnership to identify and unlock major regeneration schemes for the city and maximise the associated benefits of such investment for local people and communities.
2. **Housing Led Regeneration** – Maximising the opportunities to continue to work with partners to explore and identify opportunities for the strategic use of public and private land assets and funding mechanisms to accelerate housing development, including city centre living and deliver mixed-tenure homes across the city. Significant housing stress exists across the city and there is an opportunity to consider how we can bring forward schemes which contribute to the growth ambitions set out within the Belfast Agenda and create sustainable communities (mixed-use developments providing community infrastructure, amenities, and open/green spaces).
3. **Access, Connectivity & Active Travel** – Alongside the need to bring forward a long-term transportation plan for the city, there is a need to focus on joint objectives and a targeted delivery approach across partners to accelerate opportunities to enhance accessibility, connectivity and active travel across the city. This is not only important to connect people to employment opportunities and investment hubs, but is important from a climate resilience perspective and will also create healthy, shared, vibrant and sustainable environments that promote health and emotional wellbeing.
4. **Future City Centre Programme** – The scale of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the future viability of the city centre is clearly challenging, with retail and hospitality industries in particular suffering. A thriving city centre is critical in terms of jobs and economic recovery for the city as whole, and for the wider region. It is clear that Belfast, in line with other cities need to consider the purpose of the city centre and how it can adapt to becoming a multi-purpose location, combining retail and hospitality with business, residential, cultural, community and other facilities, alongside new ways of working and embracing innovation and digital technology. The NI Executive have established a new High Street Task Force and it will be important that the Board consider the key challenges and opportunities.

3.8 Belfast Agenda Review

Members will note that there is a legislative requirement and timescale for review of the city's community plan (Belfast Agenda) which is required by November 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic and the disruption on normal working arrangements have understandably impacted upon the timescales for the review of community plans across local government. A detailed report outlining the planned process, including significant engagement and co-design with communities, city partners and elected Members. Attached at Appendix 1 is the copy of the detailed report considered and agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. In summary, the co-design approach we adopt needs to be flexible to reflect the outcome of prior engagement ensuring we listen to and reflect the specific needs of each area of the city.



3.9 Role of Elected Members

Elected Members will be engaged at each stage of the review process through the All Party Working Group on Community Planning. In addition, it is recommended that all Elected Members will have the opportunity to shape the priority framework and plans for the new 4 year period through Party Group briefings. In addition, Elected Members will also be supported by our Marketing and Communications team who will provide ongoing support via a communications toolkit to enable them to engage their constituents to make their voices heard.

- 3.10 While the specifics regarding engagement events will be finalised with partners, it is expected that there will be a series of thematic and/or local-area virtual workshops. This will provide a further role for Elected Members to provide a leading role within their communities to shaping the city's future plans.

3.11 Financial & Resource Implications

Any financial implications arising from this report will be covered from existing budgets. The review process will involve the participation of all community planning partners, who will need to commit their resources to the review process and the agreed action plans.

3.12 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

There are no equality, good relations or rural need implications in this report.”

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:

- Note the reconfiguration of the Belfast Agenda Delivery Boards as set out within this report;
- Note the clear alignment and synergies between the Boards and work of the Committee;
- Note the role of Elected Members in inputting and shaping the refresh of the Belfast Agenda over coming months; and
- Note the role that Elected Members will play in refreshing the community plan detailed in section 3.9 of the report.

Chairperson

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 28th April, 2021

REMOTE SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Brooks (Chairperson);
The High Sherriff, Councillor Long;
Aldermen Dorrian and Kingston; and
Councillors Donnelly, Ferguson, Gormley,
Hanvey, Heading, Lyons,
Maskey, McMullan, Murphy,
O'Hara and Spratt.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Ms. C. Patterson, Business Research and Development
Manager;
Mr. S. Dolan, Development Manager;
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. K. McCrum, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

(Councillor Murphy in the Chair)

Apologies for the inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Howard and T. Kelly.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Presentations

Ulster University; Belfast City Campus

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy welcomed to the meeting Professor D. Morrow, Director of Community Engagement at Ulster University. He then outlined the support that the Council had provided to the development of the new University Campus to date, and provided detail about a number of forums that staff continued to take part in.

Prof. Morrow provided a detailed presentation on the Belfast City Campus build, the most significant regeneration project in the City for many decades, which was scheduled to open in September, 2021. He noted, however, that Covid-19 regulations were likely to have an impact on the level of utilisation that would be possible.

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The Committee was provided with details of the building design and faculty layout, as well as its positioning in the north city centre.

Prof. Morrow explained that the campus was in the heart of the city, neighbouring many of Northern Ireland's most deprived Super Output Areas and Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. He suggested that engagement with local communities had to be creative, meaningful and long term in nature.

He stated that the University site could be seen as a connector point with many key attractions and historical buildings within its half mile radius. He also advised that the arrival of the University had the potential to reconnect historical buildings, referencing the 'Great Place North Belfast' initiative which had been supported by Lottery funding in order to create community based assets which would enliven the whole area alongside existing attractions.

He then highlighted the main changes that could be expected as a result of the development:

1. Demographic Change: 16,000 new stakeholders in the community with over 7,000 people expected on site on a daily basis during term-time;
2. Physical Regeneration: After years of dereliction and neglect, North City Centre was expected to become a core economic driver for Belfast and Northern Ireland;
3. Economic Opportunity: Based on the normal Universities UK multiplier of 1:5, an investment of £300m should result in an economic expansion of £1.5bn per year through innovation, start-up services, the night time economy, retail, and visitor numbers;
4. Social Change: Change to class, income, age, religion and ethnicity profile of the city centre would make a vacant space more vibrant and multi-cultural;
5. Environmental: Opportunities through regeneration and construction, but challenges with additional traffic, planning considerations therefore remained key.
6. Cultural Development: A potential driver for culture as a 'Shared Space' venue and as a result of a network of people living in the city centre.
7. Connectivity: A junction to other areas of the city, encouraging Active Travel and reconnecting walking and cycle routes, however many transport considerations were outstanding.

In relation to social clauses at a construction level, he explained that they had over-delivered with the help of the Department for Communities, with an equivalent of 93 years' worth of training, placement and apprenticeship opportunities to young people, students and the long term unemployed. He also advised that social clauses would be built into service contracts, working alongside partners within the Council, Department for Economy and Department for Communities.

The Committee was provided with an overview of the opportunities that would be brought to the city by the University, from teaching and learning, research and professional development, to events and facilities through a shared space. Prof. Morrow

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also detailed further economic, social, cultural and environmental opportunities such as increased job opportunities, the rejuvenation of the city, an increase in arts and sports activities, Active Travel and creating a more liveable city.

In terms of outreach and relationship building, Prof. Morrow provided an overview of Access Scholarships, which were due to launch within the week, for 40 students from low income families offering £2,000 per year in order to reduce the obstacles to accessing higher education.

Details regarding the UU-Community Benefits Framework, Neighbourhood Community Forum, Community Safety Group and Campus Regeneration Forum were also provided.

With regards to Active Travel, the Committee was given information on 'desire lines' emanating from the campus as the University was keen to ensure good walking, cycle and public transport links. Prof. Morrow detailed a number of initiatives that would support this goal, including Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3, the Clifton Gateway, and the Belfast Cycle Network, particularly the Northwest, North and Inner Ring cycle routes. He explained that positive work was ongoing with Translink in order to identify the best routes for students and staff and work with the Council was underway to establish an Active Travel Hub at Cathedral Gardens to encourage and sign-post walking and cycling options.

He confirmed that increased traffic was the biggest concern given the lack of managed parking and welcomed any support the Council could provide with this. He outlined additional work that was underway regarding transport corridors, junctions and additional pedestrian crossings.

In conclusion, Prof. Morrow outlined future opportunities as a result of the campus move and suggested that the build was only the beginning of the investment. City living, City Deal, Active Travel, integration of the city and covid recovery were highlighted as areas that would be impacted positively.

The challenges were outlined also, with weak traffic and transport infrastructure being key, alongside community safety concerns, integration of the new student population, environmental degradation, timing and tackling inequality. Prof Morrow concluded by stating that partnership working, collaboration and long term relationships were needed.

(Councillor Brooks in the Chair)

During Members questions, Prof. Morrow was asked about the impact of purpose built managed student accommodation on the issues in the Holylands area of South Belfast. He advised that the University had supported the development of the private sector purpose built accommodation as it was seen as the best way to manage large groups of students and create a healthy living environment. He noted that, while the University was not responsible for buildings, they were engaged in ongoing discussions about congregation areas that were both safe for students whilst not causing disruption

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 28th April, 2021**

to existing residents. He suggested that embedded culture issues and the price of accommodation influenced student choice of accommodation.

He pointed out that the community relations and engagement work that was done by the University in the Holylands area to assist with managing the ongoing problems and to encourage living in a civically engaged way. He also highlighted the positive aspects of attracting young people to the city and their impact on the sustainability of the city.

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy advised that the concentration of student housing in the Holylands area made it unique, and support would be needed to regenerate the houses into suitable family homes if a shift in living demand was to take place. During further discussion, a suggestion was made that trends in housing should be monitored to see if the goal of a city centre campus, in use during both the day and night, could be realised.

While the Committee was broadly supportive of the development and initiatives that had been presented, concerns were raised about the lack of solutions to the transport and traffic issues, particularly given that the development had been in the planning for close to a decade.

Prof. Morrow stated that he shared those concerns and welcomed support in progressing these aspects. He advised that engagement with the Department of Infrastructure had improved in recent years through a Junctions Working Group, however, the plans required structural changes which would take time, and it was therefore likely that necessity would force action in some areas. He noted again that parking was also a major concern and the urgency of the issue was being highlighted to the Minister. In reference to the accessibility of the campus, Prof. Morrow confirmed that the building was fully Disability Discrimination Act compliant and the University was committed to meeting all of its obligations on that front. He added that priority parking was available for disabled drivers. He also highlighted that the environment around the University was important, as were the junctions, to ensuring that they are fully walkable and accessible for all.

He stated that discussions had taken place regarding a railway halt at Gamble Street however there were no current plans given the major infrastructure project involved, but a redesign to Yorkgate station was planned and details had been published. He underlined the importance of public transport and Active Travel routes to deter people from using their cars.

With regards to air pollution, he explained that air quality measures were included within the campus impact study and would continue to be measured going forward.

Several queries regarding community engagement were posed, with Prof. Morrow confirming that engagement would be ongoing with both residents and key stakeholders. He welcomed a deepening relationship between the University and the Council as the plans moved forward. He also welcomed the opportunity to brief Councillors again and undertook to respond to any further queries that Councillors may have.

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After discussion, the Chairperson thanked Prof. Morrow for his attendance and welcomed the exciting project.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Chairperson

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DECISIONS, TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 19th May, 2021
**COMPILATION OF COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CX:** 20th May, 2021
DEADLINE FOR CX's COMMENTS: 21st May, 2021

CX DECISION REGISTER TO BE PUBLISHED: 21st May, 2021

FINAL DATE FOR CALL-IN (10am): 28th May, 2021

	Topic	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call-in
<u>Delegated Matters</u>			
2a	Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority	The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the applications that have been issued under the Scheme of Delegation.	No
2b	Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licenses Issued Under Delegated Authority	The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the applications that have been issued under the Scheme of Delegation.	No
<u>Non-Delegated Matters</u>			
3a	Update by the Department of Communities (DfC) on the Review of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing Scheme	The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the content of the report.	Yes

Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link: [Agenda for Licensing Committee on Wednesday, 19th May, 2021, 5.00 pm](#)

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Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 19th May, 2021

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Donnelly (Chairperson);
Aldermen Copeland and Sandford; and
Councillors Bradley, Bunting, Collins, Howard, Hussey,
Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee,
Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McCusker,
McKeown and Smyth.

Also attended: Councillors Gormley and Groogan.

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;
Mr. K. Bloomfield, HMO Unit Manager;
Ms. V. Donnelly, City Protection Manager; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was received for Councillor Nicholl.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th May, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Delegated Matters

THE MEMBERS OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN ORDER TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO HER BY THE COUNCIL ON 4TH MAY, 2021

Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the applications that have been issued under the Scheme of Delegation.

**Licensing Committee,
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Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)
Licenses Issued Under Delegated Authority

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the applications that have been issued under the Scheme of Delegation.

Non-Delegated Matters

Update by the Department for Communities (DfC)
on the Review of the Houses in Multiple Occupation
Licensing Scheme

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. D. Polley, Mr. K. Devlin, Mr. C. Murphy, Ms. I. McKinney and Ms. E. O'Neill from the Department for Communities (DfC) to the meeting.

The HMO Unit Manager reminded the Members that DfC had wrote to Belfast City Council on 22nd December 2020 to indicate that it wished to seek views in relation to the review of The Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 which was the enabling legislation for the HMO licensing scheme and that, at its meeting on 10th March 2021, the Licensing Committee agreed the Council's proposed response to the on-line questionnaire issued by DfC in respect of their review of the HMO licensing scheme.

He pointed out that the Licensing Committee had further agreed to an additional submission to DfC to be considered as part of their review highlighting legislative anomalies and omissions with suggested amendments to improve the delivery and administration of the HMO licensing scheme.

Mr. Polley thanked the Committee for inviting representation from DfC to discuss the review of the HMO Licensing Scheme and highlighted that the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (NI) 2016 had come into effect on 1 April 2019 and that the Department for Communities had agreed to undertake a review of the implementation and operation of the licensing scheme when it had been operational for one year. The Terms of Reference for the review were agreed in October 2020 and an online survey for responses opened on 22 December 2020 and closed on 5 March 2021

He reported that HMO licensing was a new regulatory scheme for Northern Ireland and new program of work for Councils. He added that at the point of transfer the scheme had been essentially a registration scheme.

He stated that the Review would look at the impact of the regulatory scheme on councils in terms of resources, guidance and legislation, with a view to identifying any changes necessary to ensure the legislation achieves its policy intent.

**Licensing Committee,
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Mr. Polley outlined the terms of reference for the review and gave an overview of the 227 survey responses which had been received, he added that the majority of responses had been from landlords and managing agents.

He referred to some of the emerging themes from the survey which included:

- Operational Delivery, including IT system, guidance, fees, communication, landlord training;
- Standards, including bedroom size, confusion around conflicting advice;
- Overprovision, planning permission process being applied when renewing license or on sale or transfer of property;
- Many responses were positive about fire safety standards and Energy Performance Certificates;
- Tenants unaware of how to check if property is HMO licensed and the standards expected;
- Residents still have concerns regarding refuse collection/littering and anti-social behaviour; and
- Some concerns expressed around apparent lack of enforcement on unlicensed HMOs.

He reported that DfC would undertake further detailed analysis of the responses and that a first stage report would be produced and shared with stakeholders and that further engagement would take place regarding the issues that had been raised and that a final report would be produced highlighting any necessary actions required and the timescales for implementation.

Following further discussion with Members of the Committee, the Chairperson thanked the representatives from DfC for their attendance at the meeting.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the content of the report.

Chairperson

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DECISIONS, TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 18th May, 2021
**COMPILATION OF COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CX:** 19th May, 2021
CX's COMMENTS RECEIVED: 21st May, 2021

FINAL CX DECISION REGISTER PUBLISHED: 21st May, 2021

FINAL DATE FOR CALL-IN (10am): 28th May, 2021

	Topic	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call-in
2	Planning Appeals Notified	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> note the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission. 	Yes
3	Planning Decisions Issued	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> note a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Strategic Director of Place and Economy, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 8th April and 8th May. 	Yes
5 Miscellaneous			
5a	Listing of various structures	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to support the proposed listing of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 electrical service pillars at: 	Yes

		<input type="checkbox"/> South end of Linenhall Street; and <input type="checkbox"/> East end of Wellington Park; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 boundary post at Shandon Park Golf Club, Knock Road, Belfast 	
4 Planning Applications - (Please note that these are not subject to Call-in)			
a	LA04/2020/1363/F - 21 apartments and 3 retail units with ancillary lobby space, refuse storage, bicycle storage and amenity space between 173 Newtownards Road and 1-5 Templemore Avenue	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> defer the application for a site visit. 	No
b	LA04/2020/2280/F - Mixed use development comprising 1no. ground floor retail unit and 13no. apartments at 93-95 Falls Road	This item was withdrawn from the agenda	
c	LA04/2020/1974/F - New station building, footbridge and platform canopies, cycle parking, bus and taxi drop off area, hard and soft landscape proposals, associated site works and demolition of existing station building at Yorkgate Rail Station on lands bounded by York Street, Dock Street, Whitla Street and M2 Motorway	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the application, subject to conditions, and that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, uses her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions. 	No
d	LA04/2020/1726/F - 3G pitch in revised position with floodlights, dug outs, turnstiles, 1.2m fence to pitch and associated ground works all as previously approved application Z/2013/1485/F; Belfast Celtic FC, Glen Road Heights	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the application, subject to conditions, and that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, uses her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions. 	No
e	LA04/2020/2258/F& LA04/2020/2257/DCA – Demolition of dwelling and outbuildings and construction of 2 detached dwellings with parking and associated site access and	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:	No

	landscaping works at 9 Cadogan Park, Malone Lower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the application, subject to conditions, and that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, uses her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions. 	
f	LA04/2021/0666/F - Window installation to east facing elevation (2 No. Windows) at first & second floor. Installation of patio doors leading to raised seating area at split level ground entrance floor at 1 Downview Avenue	This item was withdrawn from the agenda	
g	LA04/2021/0636/F - Single and two storey extension to rear, alterations to side elevations at 25 Ravenhill Park	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the application, subject to conditions. 	No
h	LA04/2020/1697/F - Change of use from existing warehouse to martial arts boxing club & gym with elevation changes at 2-6 Laburnum Street	<p>In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the application, subject to conditions, and that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, uses her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions. 	No

Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link: <https://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=167&MId=10188&Ver=4>

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Planning Committee

Tuesday, 18th May, 2021

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Hussey (Chairperson);
Councillors Brooks, Carson, Matt Collins,
Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey, Hutchinson,
Maskey, McCullough, McKeown,
Murphy and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and
Economy;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager
(Development Management);
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was reported from Councillor Nicholl.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 20th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th May, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Planning Appeals Notified

The Members noted the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission.

Planning Decisions Issued

The Members noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Strategic Director of Place and Economy, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 8th April and 8th May.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th May, 2021**

Miscellaneous Items

Advance Notice of Listings

The Members were advised that correspondence had been received from the Historic Environment Division (HED) regarding the proposed listing of a boundary post and 2 electrical service pillars in Belfast. The Principal Planning Officer outlined that Article 80 (3) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 required that the HED would consult with the Council before placing any building on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

HED had requested the Council's comments in relation to the listing of:

- 2 electrical service pillars at:
 - South end of Linenhall Street; and
 - East end of Wellington Park; and
- 1 boundary post at Shandon Park Golf Club, Knock Road, Belfast

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend to the Chief Executive that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, they supported the proposed listing of the boundary post and the two electrical service pillars, as detailed above.

Planning Applications

**THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING
ITEMS IN ORDER TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO HER BY THE COUNCIL
ON 4TH MAY, 2021**

Withdrawn Items

The Members noted that the following applications had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- **LA04/2020/2280/F** - Mixed use development comprising 1no. ground floor retail unit and 13no. apartments at 93-95 Falls Road; and
- **LA04/2021/0666/F** - Window installation to east facing elevation (2 No. Windows) at first & second floor. Installation of patio doors leading to raised seating area at split level ground entrance floor at 1 Downview Avenue

**LA04/2020/1363/F - 21 apartments and
3 retail units with ancillary lobby space,
refuse storage, bicycle storage and amenity
space between 173 Newtownards Road and
1-5 Templemore Avenue**

Moved by Councillor Hussey,
Seconded by Councillor McCullough,

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th May, 2021**

That, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, exercises her delegated authority to defer consideration of the application and that Members of the Planning Committee undertake a site visit in order to acquaint themselves with the location and the proposals at first hand.

On a vote, nine members voted for the proposal, three against and one no vote and it was declared carried.

**LA04/2020/1974/F - New station building,
footbridge and platform canopies, cycle parking,
bus and taxi drop off area, hard and soft landscape proposals,
associated site works and demolition of existing station
building at Yorkgate Rail Station on lands bounded by
York Street, Dock Street, Whitla Street and M2 Motorway**

The Members were provided with the key aspects of the Transport Infrastructure planning application. The Principal Planning officer outlined that the proposal related to the redevelopment of the existing rail station, where the railway infrastructure was already in place, and that the principle of development was considered acceptable.

The Members were advised that the site was not zoned for a use within BUAP or draft BMAP, but that the site formed part of the Carr's Glen Community Greenway and was located adjacent to an arterial route, as designated within dBMAP. The Principal Planning officer explained that the BUAP proposed a Cross Harbour Rail Link, linking Yorkgate Rail Station with the main city railway line, which had been completed.

She explained that the SPPS promoted sustainable patterns of development, aimed to improve connectivity and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to the private car. It also aimed to ensure accessibility for all and promoted the provision of adequate cycling facilities in new developments.

The Members were advised that the proposal included significant improvements to the public realm, including wider footpaths, seating areas, green spaces and improvements to the Whitla Street underpass in the form of upgraded lighting and painting of walls. Furthermore, the proposal included a community garden, which was welcomed and would result in wider community benefits.

The Principal Planning officer explained that additional information had been submitted in relation to contamination, noise, travel, ecology, landscaping, tree impact, flood risk and drainage. She confirmed that no objections had been received from the relevant consultees or any third parties.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, whereby evidence had been provided that NI Water had given permission for storm water to be discharged to the existing combined sewer, subject to conditions. The Principal Planning officer explained that, consequently, Condition No. 23 was no longer necessary.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th May, 2021**

The Members were advised that Mr. M. Holmes, Translink, was in attendance. A Member asked if Translink had considered installing a Belfast Bikes docking station at the Rail Station. The Member stated that, given that only 4 bicycles were permitted on train services before 9.30a.m., a Belfast Bikes station at the site would allow passengers to undertake their onward travel from the station. Mr. Holmes advised the Members that consideration had been given to a Belfast Bikes docking station, and that space still remained on site to accommodate it, but that they had been advised that there was currently no funding available for it.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application, subject to conditions. They also agreed that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would use her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2020/1726/F - 3G pitch in revised
position with floodlights, dug outs, turnstiles,
1.2m fence to pitch and associated ground
works all as previously approved application
Z/2013/1485/F; Belfast Celtic FC, Glen Road Heights**

The Members of the Committee were presented with the details of the application.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the key issues which had been considered during assessment were the principle of a new 3G pitch and floodlighting at the location, the impact on residential amenity and the impact on the wider environment, including bats.

She explained that there was an existing pitch in situ, therefore the use of the land and principle of the development was already established and was considered acceptable. The revised position included re-locating the pitch marginally to the west, with floodlights, dug-outs, turnstiles and all other associated ground works.

The Members were advised that DFI Roads, Environmental Health, Rivers Agency, NI Water, UK Crown Bodies and NIEA had no objections to the proposal, subject to conditions. She explained that Environmental Health had advised that, since the time of the original application, there had been new houses built in the area close to Glen Road Heights and, as such, had sought more information. As a result, the proposal amended the floodlighting, reducing the number from 8 to 4 poles, with 4 lights on each pole at a height of 18.3m.

The Members were advised that no representations had been received in the first Neighbour Notification period. The Principal Planning officer outlined that the application was re-Neighbour Notified and that it would expire on Monday, 24th May. She highlighted that a decision would not be issued until after that date and that if any comments raising any material planning matters were received, the application would be brought back to the Planning Committee for re-consideration.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th May, 2021**

A Member asked that, where possible, officers would not bring applications before the Committee before the expiry of the neighbourhood notification period.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application, subject to conditions. They also agreed that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would use her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2020/2258/F & LA04/2020/2257/DCA –
Demolition of dwelling and outbuildings and construction
of 2 detached dwellings with parking and associated
site access and landscaping works at 9 Cadogan Park,
Malone Lower**

The Principal planning officer outlined the key aspects of the applications. The Members were advised that they were before Members as it involved total demolition within a Conservation Area.

The Members were advised that the site was located within Sub Area D “Cadogan” within the Malone Conservation Area Guide.

She explained that the Council’s Conservation and Heritage Team had offered no objection to the proposal following amendments. The Members were advised that the Council’s Trees and Landscaping officer had advised they were generally content but that hand digging and the use of hand tools were to be conditioned. NI Water was content that the applications be approved with a condition, and Environmental Health and DfI Roads had no objections to the proposals.

The Members were advised that amended plans detailed a reduction in footprint of the dwellings to respect the spatial quality of the existing character of the conservation area and that additional landscaping information had also been received.

The demolition of the existing property was considered to be acceptable. She explained that the Conservation Officer had advised that the existing building was of little merit and did not make a positive contribution therefore its removal was acceptable.

The Council had received no third-party comments.

The Principal Planning officer stated that the proposed design, scale and massing was reflective of the wider context of the conservation area, reflecting traditional design and materials, and whilst the plot was sub divided there were similar sized plots in the area and of the same configuration.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application, subject to conditions. They also agreed that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would use her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th May, 2021**

**LA04/2021/0636/F - Single and two storey extension to rear,
alterations to side elevations at 25 Ravenhill Park**

The Members were advised that the application was before them as, under the Scheme of Delegation, all applications from Members of staff in the Place and Economy Department and Legal Services sections were required to go before the Committee.

The Principal Planning officer outlined that a single and two storey extension to the rear of the existing dwelling with alterations to the side elevations was sought.

The Members were advised that the proposed extension would not adversely impact the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It was considered to be sympathetic in its built form, scale, massing and appearance with the existing property and with surrounding neighbouring properties. It was considered that the proposal would not raise any issues in relation to residential amenity including overshadowing, loss of light, dominance and overlooking. There was sufficient space remaining within the curtilage of the property.

The application had been neighbour notified and advertised in the local press and no comments were received.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application, subject to conditions.

**LA04/2020/1697/F - Change of use from existing warehouse
to martial arts boxing club & gym with elevation changes
at 2-6 Laburnum Street**

The Members were provided with the details of the application for full planning permission. They were advised that the Council was providing funding for the proposal.

The Planning officer outlined that a gym and boxing club would occupy two floors, with the ground floor providing the main gym, changing facilities, ancillary office and a store. The first floor would provide space for two large boxing rings and a matted gym area.

The Members were advised that the application had been neighbour notified and advertised in the local press. One letter of representation had received, not objecting to the proposal but raising an issue with existing parking.

The Planning officer outlined that the Environmental Health Service had been consulted and was content with the proposal subject to conditions and an informative being attached to the decision regarding the transmission of potential noise.

DfI Roads had also been consulted and offered no objection subject to conditions being attached regarding the provision of cycle parking and implementation of a Travel Plan.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th May, 2021**

The proposal had been assessed against and was considered to comply with the BUAP, Draft BMAP, PPS3, PPS4, PPS6 Addendum and the SPPS.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application, subject to conditions. They also agreed that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would use her delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions.

Chairperson

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DECISIONS, TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 20th May, 2021
**COMPILATION OF COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CX:** 21st May, 2021
CX's COMMENTS RECEIVED: 21st May, 2021

FINAL CX DECISION REGISTER PUBLISHED: 21st May, 2021

FINAL DATE FOR CALL-IN (10am): 28th May, 2021

	Topic	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call-in
2	Correspondence from DFI seeking views on changes to two conditions - Departmental Planning Application LA04/2017/0474/F Lands at 88 - 104 Andersonstown Road and between 36 - 42 Mooreland Park and 202 - 206 Stockman's Lane (Casement Park)	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree changes to the wording of conditions 14 and 36 and to any further changes to the proposed conditions, provided that the changes are of a minor or technical nature. 	Yes
3 - Planning Applications (Please note that these are not subject to Call-in)			
a	Restricted item – LA04/2021/0666/F - Window installation to east facing elevation (2 No. Windows) at first & second floor. Installation of patio doors leading to raised seating area at split level ground entrance floor at 1 Downview Avenue	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the application, subject to conditions. 	No

Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link: <https://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=167&Year=0>

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Planning Committee

Thursday, 20th May, 2021

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McKeown (Dep. Chairperson)
Councillors Brooks, Carson, Matt Collins,
Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey, Hutchinson,
Maskey, Murphy, and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and
Economy;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager
(Development Management);
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor McKeown, Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Chairperson, Councillor Hussey, and Councillor McCullough.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Correspondence from DFI seeking views on changes to two condition - Departmental Planning Application LA04/2017/0474/F Lands at 88 - 104 Andersonstown Road and between 36 – 42 Mooreland Park and 202 - 206 Stockman's Lane (Casement Park)

The Members considered the undernoted report and the accompanying appendices which were available on modern.gov:

“1.0 Purpose of Report and Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The Council has received correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure in relation to planning application LA04/2017/0474/F for the redevelopment of Casement Park to provide a new stadium. The proposal is of regional significance and the application is being dealt with by the Department rather than Belfast City Council.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Thursday, 20th May, 2021**

- 1.2** The Department is seeking the Council's views on changes to proposed conditions 14 and 36 which relate to arrangements for an Events Management Group and requirements for an Events Management Plan.

2.0 **Recommendation**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, uses her delegated authority to agree the proposed changes to the wording of conditions 14 and 36 as set out in the Department's letter of 17 May 2021 and to any further changes to the proposed conditions provided that those changes are of a minor or technical nature.

3.0 **Main Report**

Background

- 3.1** The Council has received correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure in relation to planning application LA04/2017/0474/F for the redevelopment of Casement Park to provide a new stadium (see Appendix 1). The proposal is of regional significance and the application is being dealt with by the Department rather than Belfast City Council.
- 3.2** The Council provided its substantive consultation response to the planning application in August 2017. The Planning Committee offered no objection to the application but made the following specific comments:
- Further detailed cross sections through the entire site and surrounding properties were recommended
 - Further images to demonstrate impact on the skyline and key views were recommended
 - Greater certainty around travel, transport and traffic should be provided.
- 3.3** The application was considered by the Planning Committee again in September 2019 following re-consultation. The Committee agreed to provide no further comments but that the Director of Planning and Building Control would write to the Department and recommend that the residents' association known as MORA be given the opportunity to meet the Department and discuss their concerns.
- 3.4** A final consultation was undertaken in February 2020 in relation to technical information regarding traffic and access.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Thursday, 20th May, 2021**

As the additional information was limited, the matter was dealt with under delegated powers with no further comment provided.

- 3.5 The Department subsequently issued a Notice of Opinion in November 2020 advising of its intention to grant planning permission and listing the proposed conditions (see Appendix 2). The Planning Service responded to the Notice of Opinion advising that the Council is content for the Department to proceed with determination of the planning application.

Proposed changes to conditions 14 and 36

- 3.6 The Department is in the process of finalising the S76 planning agreement for the application so that the decision can be issued. During this process it has identified the need to amend proposed conditions 14 and 36 in the Notice of Opinion. The Department is seeking the Council's agreement to these changes by no later than 24 May 2021 so that the drafting of the S76 planning agreement can be finalised.
- 3.7 The proposed changes are set out in the Department's letter at Appendix 1.
- 3.8 The proposed change to condition 14 is to make it clear that the Events Management Group must be established 2 months prior to the initial scheduled event or fixture whereas the original wording of the condition could have been interpreted such that the Events Management Group could have been established within 2 months after the initial scheduled event or fixture which would have defeated its purpose. The amended wording is considered necessary, more precise and is welcomed.
- 3.9 The proposed change to condition 36 allows the Event Management Plan to be modified if the modification is the requirement of a statutory body/licensing body making a decision pursuant to its statutory functions and duties without requiring the Event Management Group to reconvene. This is considered to be a practical approach which would reduce the administrative burden on the Event Management Group, and is considered reasonable.
- 3.10 It is therefore recommended that the Council agrees to these changes. It is also recommended that delegated authority is given to officers to respond to any further changes to the proposed conditions provided that those changes are of a minor or technical nature.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Thursday, 20th May, 2021**

4.0 Finance and Resource Implications

4.1 None identified.

5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

5.1 None identified.”

The Members of the Committee recommended that the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would exercise her delegated authority to agree the proposed changes to the wording of conditions 14 and 36, as set out in the Department's letter of 17 May 2021, and to any further changes to the proposed conditions provided that the changes were of a minor or technical nature.

Planning Application

**THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING
ITEM IN ORDER TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO HER BY THE COUNCIL
ON 4TH MAY, 2021**

Withdrawn Item

The Members noted that the following application had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- **LA04/2019/2653/F** - Demolition of existing property and erection of a 9 storey building (overall height 37m) comprising a ground floor retail unit together with cycle parking and plant areas: and 8 floors of grade A office accommodation. (amended plans & updated technical information) Chancery House, 88 Victoria Street.

Restricted Item

The information contained in the report associated with the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion of the item as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

LA04/2021/0666/F - Window installation to east facing elevation (2 No. Windows) at first & second floor. Installation of patio doors leading to raised seating area at split level ground entrance floor at 1 Downview Avenue

The Members were provided with the details of the application. They were advised that the proposal would not adversely impact the character and appearance of

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Thursday, 20th May, 2021**

the surrounding area and that it was considered to be sympathetic in its built form, scale, massing and appearance with the existing property and with surrounding neighbouring properties. It was also considered that the proposal would not raise any issues in relation to residential amenity including overshadowing, loss of light, dominance or overlooking.

The Planning Manager outlined that no letters of objection had been received.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive, or her nominated officer, would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application, subject to conditions.

**Query in respect of Members Referring an application to
the Planning Committee**

A Member requested information regarding the process for Members requesting that applications that would ordinarily be determined under Delegated Authority were brought before the Committee for consideration. The Planning Manager undertook to speak with the Member directly regarding the procedure.

Thanks

A number of Members paid tribute to the outgoing Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, as well as the staff, who had dealt with a number of changes to Council procedures and processes since the Covid-19 pandemic began.

Chairperson

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DECISIONS, TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR THE BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 17th May, 2021
**COMPILATION OF COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CX:** 18th May, 2021
DEADLINE FOR CX's COMMENTS: 19th May, 2021

FINAL CX DECISION REGISTER PUBLISHED: 19th May, 2021
FINAL DATE FOR CALL-IN (10am): 26th May, 2021

	Topic	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call-in
<u>Restricted Items</u>			
2a	Performance Report for Q4 2020/21	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the content of the report.	Yes
2b	Draft Business Plan 2021/22	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the content of the report.	Yes
2c	Capital and Maintenance Update	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note this update; and Note the updated position in respect of the escalators and that it is proposed that the full three sets of escalators are replaced as part of this project and not just the two sets as originally planned. 	Yes
2d	Approach to Casual Workers	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the content of the report.	Yes
2e	Governance of BWUH	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the detail provided relating to the background to the establishment of BWUH Ltd; and 	Yes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the legal advice received from Belfast City Council on this matter. 	
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Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link: [Agenda for BWUH Ltd Shareholders Committee on Monday, 17th May, 2021, 5.15pm](#)

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

Monday, 17th May, 2021

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Alderman Haire (Chairperson);
Alderman Copeland;
Councillors Canavan, Matt Collins, Flynn,
Kyle, Magee, McAteer, McCabe,
Mulholland, and Newton.

In attendance: Ms. J. Corkey, Chief Executive, ICC Belfast
(Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.);
Mr. I. Bell, Director of Finance and Systems, ICC Belfast
(Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.);
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. Pièr Morrow, Tourism Culture Heritage & Arts
Development Officer
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. K. McCrum, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for the inability to attend was reported from Councillor M. Kelly.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 4th March were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st April.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the report associated with the following 5 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders Committee
Monday, 17th May, 2021

Performance Report - Quarter 4, 2020/21

The Director of Finance and Systems at ICC Belfast/BWUH Ltd provided an update on the company's performance during 2020/2021.

As the venues had been mandated to close from 16th March, 2020, the Members were advised that there had been a major impact on sales revenue results and the majority of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). However, live steaming with the Ulster Orchestra along with a number of other small events had allowed some revenue to be generated. The Director of Finance and Systems advised that, due to performance across previous financial years, targets around the number of delegate days and out-of-state delegate days remained ahead of target.

The Committee was advised that one of the main objectives during the last year had been to minimize the reduction in economic impact and, as such, work was continuing to retain conferences for future years and to establish multi-year deals. He added that ticket sales had increased as lockdown restrictions had eased, demonstrating that demand for the venues remained.

The Director of Finance and Systems provided an update regarding ongoing engagement with the staff team, as well as training and development work that was underway. He added that training was available to all staff, including those on furlough, and would ensure that the level of Health and Safety knowledge within the company was enhanced.

The Members of the Committee commended the work that had been undertaken given the difficult circumstances and recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the update which had been provided.

Draft Business Plan 2021/22

The Chief Executive of ICC Belfast/BWUH Ltd. provided the Members with an update on the direction of travel for 2021/2022. She confirmed that a date for reopening had now been provided, however, the parameters in terms of capacity and social distancing were, as yet, unknown.

The Members were reminded of some of the key achievements from 2019/2020 and of the interim Mission Statement that had been agreed in April, 2020, in light of Covid -19.

The Chief Executive of ICC Belfast provided details of their SWOT Analysis, with key strengths, including strong business retention and market engagement throughout the pandemic, strong team engagement and the development of the hybrid delivery model which had received a number of industry awards. The uncertainty around reopening and restrictions to international travel were raised as potential threats to the business.

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Details on a range of Strategic and Corporate Projects were provided, each designed to address a particular issue or ensure a strong return to the market, utilising both short term and longer term KPIs. The importance of supporting staff to return to the workplace was highlighted.

In conclusion, the Chief Executive of ICC Belfast again underlined the importance of the development of the hybrid model to event delivery, as well as the venues remaining safe and covid secure. She explained that their focus was to ensure that once reopened, the venues were sustainable, accessible and operating at full capacity.

The Director of Finance and Systems provided a financial overview for 2021/2022 which was currently based on a reopening date of 1st October, 2021. He suggested that, as this date was likely to be brought forward, it was probable that the anticipated financial performance would improve. He added that the Corona Virus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) was due to end of 30th September, and, whilst the hospitality industry was lobbying for further support, this remained an unknown area of expenditure. For these reasons the Members were advised that it was a challenge to provide an accurate forecast at this time, however, a greater degree of accuracy could be provided once more clarity regarding the easing of restrictions was provided.

The Director of Economic Development added that it had been a difficult year but, due to the work of the sales and marketing team in rebooking events, he was hopeful of a successful recovery, however, this would be very dependent of the operating environment that all events would be subject to.

A number of the Members commended the work of staff during a difficult year.

In response to a query regarding how prices would be impacted should capacity be limited to 30%, the Chief Executive of ICC Belfast advised that with respect to entertainment, it would be at the discretion of the promotor as to whether they wished to hold an event with reduced capacity. With regards to conferences, she advised that ICC Belfast would not be encouraging a price rise to the consumer as a result of reduced capacity. She added that as a result, many promoters and conference organisers were moving dates into the future in the hope of increased capacity. She also suggested that, while fuller capacity events were preferable, lower capacity events at the outset would build consumer confidence.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the update which had been provided.

Capital and Maintenance Update

The Director of Physical Programmes provided the Committee with an update on the ongoing capital and maintenance works at the ICC Waterfront Hall.

The Committee was reminded of the three major capital projects that had been identified at the Waterfront Hall, namely, the replacement of the escalators and of the chiller units, as well as works to the roof.

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In respect of the escalator replacement, she explained that previously it had been agreed that two sets of escalators would be replaced between November, 2021 and February, 2022. She added that the tender process had now been completed and a supplier recommended.

The Committee was advised that, while the submission was within the ringfenced allocation, an additional option had been included to replace the third set of escalators. Following discussions with ICC, it was agreed that it would be preferable to replace all of the escalators in order to simplify installation, maintenance requirements and to ensure that they all had a 25-year life span. She added that this change would not impact the timeframe already agreed and the additional financing was within the affordability limits of the Council. She confirmed that, on this basis, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 23rd April, had agreed to replace the 3 sets of escalators at a cost of £1.02million, and as a result, the tender had now been awarded.

With regards to the chiller units and works to the roof, the Members were advised that reports on both were due to be delivered in late May, however neither had associated financing and so both would need to go through the appropriate governance processes and seek Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approval.

Finally, the Director of Physical Programmes advised that a series of thematic sessions would be held over the coming weeks with Departments across the Council to determine future capital works priorities, the Waterfront being one of these sessions. She confirmed that any update from these meetings would be brought back to the Committee.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the update and the updated position in respect of the replacement of three sets of escalators, rather than the two sets as originally planned.

Update on Casual Workers

The Director of Finance and Systems at ICC Belfast advised that, since the last meeting of the Committee, individual consultation meetings had been set up with 23 casual workers, however, 4 workers subsequently communicated their withdrawal from the process indicating that they wished to remain on a casual working arrangement.

He added that further meetings were scheduled in the weeks ahead, and that it was anticipated that the process would be complete in late May to early June. He reminded the Members that these staff were eligible to be furloughed via the Corona Virus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) until 30th September.

In response to a question as to whether there had been any feedback from the staff involved, he confirmed that to date the response had been positive, and that more in-depth conversations would be had in the weeks ahead.

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The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the content of the report.

Governance of BWUH

The Director of Economic Development reminded the Members that, at their meeting on 4th March, they had requested that a report be circulated covering the issues which had been discussed at the BWUH Governance Workshop in December 2020 and that a legal opinion be sought as to whether the governance operating model for BWUH Ltd. could be changed; specifically, how a mutual agreement would work and if Elected Members of the Council could be appointed directly to the Board of Directors.

The Director subsequently provided background information on the management of the Waterfront Hall by the Council, and explained that, in order to secure ERDF grant funding to expand the economic impact of the venue, it was considered necessary to review the business operations of the Waterfront Hall. He outlined the various operating models that had been reviewed in order to deliver on the targets within the Letter of Offer from the then NI Tourist Board, and confirmed that the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed in September, 2014, that two options should be examined further in order to determine the best governance arrangements. These were an arm's length trading company and enhanced in-house options.

The Members of the Committee were advised that, following study visits to review similar models, a recommendation was made to and agreed by the Council, that an arm's length company was the most likely option to be able to deliver the required outcomes and outputs. The Director added that it had been agreed that the Council's oversight should be via a Shareholder Committee and not Member Director given the onerous nature of a Director's role in that they would be required to have both extensive commercial knowledge and experience, as well as be prepared to accept legal liability risks.

In terms of the legal opinion, the Members were advised that the advice stated that current governance arrangements could not be reviewed as the Council, in April 2016, had entered into a 10 year contract with the company to run and manage the venues, and any breach of this contract could result in litigation. In addition, the Committee was advised that the Letter of Offer with Tourism NI was still active and so any change to the governance model would also require their agreement so as to avoid the risk of a funding clawback. He also confirmed that this legal opinion had been sought as a result of the request made by the Committee in March, 2021.

A Member questioned whether the requirements within the Letter of Offer in terms of delegate and conference numbers had been met by the 2020 deadline, and whether it would be possible to amend the current contract if all parties were in agreement. He also questioned what engagement had taken place with ACC Liverpool about their experience of having Member Directors.

The Director of Economic Development confirmed that all of the targets had been achieved and were subject to audit by the managing authority, the Department for the Economy, as well as a further 10 years of monitoring against ongoing targets agreed to

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alongside Tourism NI. With regards to engagement with ACC Liverpool, the Members were advised that a number of operating models had been reviewed in detail by RSM and this had formed the foundation of the recommendation to Council.

He added that the key consideration with regards to any change in governance arrangements would be the agreement by the Council, Tourism NI and the current Board of the Waterfront Hall. The Members were reminded that the Council had previously opted for a Shareholder Committee rather than Member Director given that they could be made personally liable for issues such as financial loss or health and safety breaches.

Following further discussion, it was suggested that any further queries regarding the governance arrangements could be raised directly with the Director of Economic Development.

The Members of the Committee subsequently recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the detail provided relating to the background to the establishment of BWUH Ltd., and note the legal advice received from Belfast City Council on this matter.

Chairperson

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DECISIONS, TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR THE BREXIT COMMITTEE



Belfast
City Council

DATE OF MEETING: 13th May, 2021
COMPILATION OF COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CX: 14th May, 2021
DEADLINE FOR CX's COMMENTS: 17th May, 2021

FINAL CX DECISION REGISTER PUBLISHED: 17th May, 2021

FINAL DATE FOR CALL-IN (10am): 24th May, 2021

	Agenda Item	Chief Executive's Decision	Subject to call in
2	EU Settlement Scheme Update	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the content of the report.	Yes
<u>RESTRICTED ITEMS</u>			
3a	Update on Meeting with DEFRA (Verbal Report)	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the content of the report and agree that a site visit to the Port Health Unit would be undertaken by the Members of the Brexit Committee.	Yes
3b	Update on AERA Investigation into withdrawal of Port Staff (Verbal Report)	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the content of the report.	Yes
3c	Update on Legal Correspondence (Verbal Report)	In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority to note the content of the report.	Yes

Please note that the agenda/reports associated with the decisions listed above can be accessed on the app and on the web, via the following link: [Agenda for Brexit Committee on Thursday, 13th May, 2021, 5.15 pm](#)

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Brexit Committee

Thursday, 17th May, 2021

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BREXIT COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Flynn (Chairperson); and
Aldermen Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Baker, Brooks, Canavan, de Faoite,
Ferguson, Gormley, Kyle, Long, McLaughlin, McMullan,
Newton, Spratt and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Ms. K. Walsh, Business Research and Development
Manager;
Mrs. C Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer;
and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were reported from Alderman Haire and Councillors Hanvey and Whyte.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 15th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th May.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

EU Settlement Scheme

The City Solicitor provided the Members with an update on the most recent statistics from the Home Office in relation to the EU Settlement Scheme.

He advised the Committee that the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) enabled EEA and Swiss citizens that lived in the UK, and their family members, to obtain the UK immigration status they would require to live, work and study in the UK after 30th June, 2021.

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 17th May, 2021**

He provided the Committee with an overview of the statistics covering the period up to 31st December 2020 which had been released on 25th February 2021 and included a breakdown of the applications for Northern Ireland by local council. Some key facts were:

- As of 31st December 2020, just under 5 million (4,916,280) applications had been received, with 90% received in England, 5% in Scotland, 2% in Wales and 2% in Northern Ireland;
- 79,110 applications had been made in Northern Ireland and 15,640 of these had been made in Belfast;
- Northern Ireland had a noticeably higher proportion (18%) of applications from applicants under 18 compared to the rest of the UK (less than 15% for each other nation);
- In Belfast, the highest number of applications had been from Polish (4,380) and Romanian (2,740) nationals; and
- Of the applications submitted in Belfast, 91% had been concluded and of these 56% were awarded settled status and 41% pre settled status.

The City Solicitor reminded the Members that the application process would close on 30th June 2021 and that the Council were promoting any notifications around the process through its normal communication channels.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the content of the report.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the discussion and presentation associated with the following 3 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Members of the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during the presentation and discussion on the following item as, due to its nature, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Update on Meeting with DEFRA

The Director of City Services provided the Members with an update from a meeting which she had attended with representatives from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on 6th May, 2021.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 17th May, 2021**

the content of the report and that a site visit to the Port Health Unit would be undertaken by the Members of the Brexit Committee.

**Update on AERA Investigation into
withdrawal of Port Staff**

The City Solicitor and the Director of City Services provided the Members of the Committee with an update on the Northern Ireland Assembly's Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (AERA) investigation into the withdrawal of port staff.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the content of the report.

Update on Legal Correspondence

The City Solicitor updated the Members of the Committee on recent legal correspondence.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the update.

Chairperson

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**Private Members Bill to introduce Safe Access
Zones around all facilities providing sexual and
Reproductive health care services and information**

“This Council notes the increasing occurrence of harassment outside healthcare facilities in Belfast, Newry and across Northern Ireland at healthcare premises that offer reproductive and family planning services. This often includes the display of traumatising graphic anti-choice imagery, which this Council has already undertaken to seek to regulate, and attempt to interfere with the ability of patients and staff to access healthcare.

This Council condemns all forms of harassment and intimidation directed at patients and staff within our Health Service.

This Council reaffirms its belief in the right of all individuals to have safe access to healthcare, free from attempts to harass, frighten and intimidate and supports Clare Bailey MLA's Private Members Bill to introduce safe access zones around all facilities providing sexual and reproductive health care services and information.”

Proposer: Councillor Groogan

Seconder: Alderman Copeland

(To be debated by the Council)

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The Employment Rights (NI) Order 1996

“That this Council notes with alarm the growing number of employers, especially in the retail, hospitality and aviation sectors, who are making employees redundant before re-employing them on less-favourable terms and conditions; believes that these employers should instead be focused on supporting their employees through this pandemic; agrees with Unite the union and others that this fire-and-rehire practice makes a mockery of workers’ rights.

This Council therefore calls on the Department for Economy to close this legal loophole as a matter of urgency, for example by amending The Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 to specify that such redundancies should automatically be regarded as unfair dismissals.”

Proposed: Councillor Lyons

Seconder: Councillor Heading

(To be debated by the Council)

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**Request to the Irish Government and the UK
Government to expel from office Israeli Ambassadors**

“The Council notes:

That Palestinians have endured the longest ongoing refugee crisis in the world, and respects the right of return as enshrined in international law;

That the current escalation of violence was instigated by the attempt to evict 28 Palestinian families from the Sheikh Jarrah area of Jerusalem as part of an ongoing and systematic campaign of illegal Israeli settlements and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their land;

That Israel’s military operation in Gaza amounts to the ongoing ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, and illegal settlement expansion, represents flagrant breaches of international law;

That a growing list of human rights organisations have determined that Israel’s action amount to apartheid, including the latest report by Human Rights Watch;

That normal co-operation with the Israeli state is therefore untenable in these circumstances.

The Council recognises the rich history of solidarity and activism in this city from all communities for Palestine, including very recently when a huge demonstration called for an end to Israeli mistreatment of the Palestinians; and that such solidarity on the part of our citizens can be an important tool in dismantling support for Israel’s actions.

The Council therefore condemns the actions of the Israeli state, as listed above, and agrees to write to the Irish Government and the UK Government, urging them to expel from office Israeli ambassadors, with immediate effect.”

Proposer: Councillor Ferguson

Seconder: Councillor Matt Collins

(To be debated by the Council)

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Ballymurphy Massacre

“That this Council commends the Ballymurphy families on their long campaign to vindicate the memory of their loved ones murdered by the British Army in 1971; welcomes the findings of the Coroner that all deceased were entirely innocent of any wrongdoing and acknowledges her criticism of the British State’s shocking and abject failing to investigate what happened as further evidence of its ongoing attempts to frustrate truth and justice for bereaved families; reaffirms the Council’s support for the full and immediate implementation of the Stormont House Agreement legacy mechanisms in a human rights compliant manner; and rejects any attempt by the British Government to introduce an amnesty or statute of limitations in relation to the conflict.”

Proposer: Councillor Corr

Seconder: Councillor Donnelly

(To be debated by the Council)

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Local Government Pension Scheme – Responsible Investment Strategy

"This council notes that recent weeks have seen the most serious escalation of violence in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory since 2014, with a tragic impact on innocent civilians and loss of life, including the deaths of over 60 children. Condemns the indiscriminate targeting of civilian populations and infrastructure, and the disproportionate impact this has had, particularly in the Gaza strip.

This council recognises that the displacement of Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem and across the West Bank, and the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements, undermines the prospect of peace – not just in recent weeks but over decades – and represents a flagrant violation of international law.

Therefore, this council will write to the Local Government Pension Scheme to seek as part of its responsible investment strategy that it will begin the process of divesting from any Israeli State owned company or private company involved in the occupation and the violation of Palestinian human rights. This will include any companies listed by the United Nations as operating in these illegal Israeli settlements within the occupied Palestinian territories.

We will also ask that NILGOSC carry out its own due diligence into any other companies which are not included on this list but are known to be involved in or with these illegal settlements.

Finally, this council will ask that the divestment process is time bound to a period of 12 months from when NILGOSC makes those companies involved first aware of the complaint and intention to divest."

Proposer: Councillor Murphy

Seconder: Councillor Walsh

(To be debated by the Council)

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End Child Poverty

“This Council notes the recent report commissioned by the End Child Poverty coalition into levels of child poverty.

This Council further notes from the report one in four children are growing up in poverty with two thirds growing up in families where parents are in work.

The Council therefore calls on the NI Executive to adopt the following:

1. To expedite the recommendations on child poverty by an expert panel to the Department of Communities
2. Strengthen the welfare mitigations and drop the two child limit within Universal Credit
3. Support the £20 uplift in Tax Credits and Universal Credit by lobbying the Chancellor to continue this increase beyond September 2021.”

Proposer: Councillor Heading

Seconder: Councillor McCusker

(To be debated by the Council)

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Peace 4 to Peace Plus Programmes

“This Council calls for and supports the seamless transition of the current PEACE 4 to PEACE Plus programmes, currently administered under SEUPB. In particular, in light of the projected gap in funding of 18 months, it calls for the continuation of the vital youth provision within Belfast under the peace4youth STRIVE Programme.

The Council will write to the Executive Office and SEUPB asking that the necessary funds are made available to ensure the transition is, as promised, seamless.”

Proposer: Councillor Kyle

Seconder: Councillor Heading

(To be debated by the Council)

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