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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

TO: THE LORD MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND THE COUNCILLORS OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that the Annual meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Belfast and remotely via Teams on Wednesday, 1st June, 2022 at 6.00 pm, for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Council (Pages 1 - 6)
5. Disclosure of Family Relationship
6. Official Announcements
7. Positions of Responsibility 2022/23 (Year 4)
8. Installation of the Lord Mayor
9. Installation of the Deputy Lord Mayor
10. Committee Membership 2022/23 - Selection of Remaining Places
11. Minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 7 - 46)
12. People and Communities Committee (Pages 47 - 70)
13. City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 71 - 100)
14. Planning Committee (Pages 101 - 122)
15. Climate and City Resilience (Pages 123 - 138)
16. Standards and Business (Pages 139 - 140)
17. Motion
 - a) Motion - Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill (Pages 141 - 142)

The Members of Belfast City Council are hereby summoned to attend.

John Walsh

Chief Executive

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Monday, 9th May, 2022 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Deputy Lord Mayor, (Alderman Haire) (in the Chair);
The High Sheriff, (Councillor Hussey);
Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Beattie, Black, Bradley, Bunting, Canavan,
Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite,
Donnelly, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan,
Howard, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Long, Lyons,
Magee, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCullough,
McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan,
Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Smyth,
Spratt, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey and Councillors Cobain, Hanvey and Heading.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Beattie, Lyons and O'Hara declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, under the heading "DfI Blue Green Infrastructure Fund – Active Travel Projects", on the basis that they were on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. However, as that minute did not become the subject of discussion, they were not required to leave the meeting.

Councillors Beattie, Black and McCabe declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee, under the heading "Community Provision Multi-Annual Funding 2023/2026", in that they either worked for or were associated with an organisation in receipt of funding. As that minute did not become the subject of discussion, they were not, however, required to leave the meeting.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Deputy Lord Mayor,
Seconded by Councillor Pankhurst and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 4th April be taken as read and signed as correct.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 9th May, 2022**

Official Announcements

The Deputy Lord Mayor, referred to the recent death of the father of Councillor Long and of the mother of Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor, and, together with a number of Members, extended his deepest condolences.

The Deputy Lord Mayor, together with a number of Members, congratulated former Alderman Kingston and former Councillors Baker, Brooks, McAllister, McReynolds and Nicholl on their election to the Northern Ireland Assembly and paid tribute to those Members who had been unsuccessful.

Councillor McKeown congratulated Rosario Football Club's senior team on winning promotion to the Premier Division of the Northern Amateur Football League.

At the request of Councillor McCullough, the Council agreed that the Lord Mayor forward a letter to Linfield Football Club and to Crusaders Football Club congratulating them on winning the Irish League and Irish Cup, respectively.

At the request of Councillor Whyte, the Council agreed that the Lord Mayor forward a letter to Dr. Caoimhe Rooney, a Belfast born mathematician currently employed by NASA, congratulating her on being included in Forbes' 30 Under 30 list for Science and Healthcare.

Councillor De Faoite referred to the fact that the Council meeting was taking place on Europe Day and highlighted the need to continue to strengthen relationships with the European Union.

Alderman Sandford congratulated Councillor Verner on becoming a grandmother.

Request to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive informed the Council that a request had been received from BBC NI to film the installation of former Councillor Nicholl's replacement as Lord Mayor.

The Council approved the request.

Nomination and Installation of Lord Mayor

The Chief Executive informed the Council that, following the election of former Councillor Kate Nicholl to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the position of Lord Mayor had become vacant.

He explained that, in accordance with Schedule 1 paragraph 4(1) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, where a position of responsibility had become vacant before the end of the term for which it was held, the nominating officer of the Party, on whose behalf the previous incumbent had been nominated, may nominate, to hold the

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 9th May, 2022**

position of responsibility for the remainder of the term, a member of the Council who had stood in the name of that Party, when elected.

Accordingly, he called upon Councillor Long, as the nominating officer of the Alliance Party, to nominate a Member to serve as Lord Mayor for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council on 1st June.

Councillor Long confirmed that he had been nominated by his Party to serve as Lord Mayor and, accordingly, he was installed in Office and subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

(The Lord Mayor, Councillor Long, in the Chair.)

Councillor Long thanked his Party for nominating him to serve as Lord Mayor and his family for their continued support. He highlighted the success of former Lord Mayor Kate Nicholl's term in office and confirmed that he would, over the next few weeks, amongst other things, be visiting those groups who were working tirelessly to ensure that refugees from Afghanistan, Ukraine and other countries were welcomed to the City and fully supported.

With the permission of the Council, former Lord Mayor Kate Nicholl reviewed her term in office, thanked all those across the Council who had supported her and wished the incoming Lord Mayor every success.

Change of Membership on Committees/Position of Responsibility

The Council noted the following changes to Committee membership and a position of responsibility:

DUP

- Councillor Spratt to replace former Alderman Kingston on the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee;
- Councillor Verner to replace former Alderman Kingston on the Standards and Business Committee;
- Councillor Bunting to replace former Alderman Kingston on the City Growth and Regeneration Committee;
- Councillor Newton to replace former Councillor Brooks on the Climate and City Resilience Committee;
- Councillor Tracy Kelly to replace former Councillor Brooks on the Planning Committee; and
- Councillor Pankhurst to replace Alderman Dorrian on the Climate and City Resilience Committee.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 9th May, 2022**

Sinn Féin

- Councillor Gormley to replace former Councillor Baker as the Chairperson of the Climate and City Resilience Committee.

Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 15th April, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Official Visit of US Secretary of Labor

Councillor Howard called upon the Council to reconsider the decision taken by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee not to attend the “US International Homecoming” lunch event being held on the afternoon of Thursday, 26th May to mark the official visit of the US Secretary of Labor, Martin J. Walsh, to Belfast.

In response, the Chief Executive pointed out that the visit had been postponed until September at the earliest and that a further report would be presented to the Committee for consideration, once a date had been confirmed.

Update on Physical Programme

At the request of Councillor Murphy, the Council agreed that a report be submitted to the next monthly meeting of the Committee providing an indicative date for the commencement of the public consultation on designs for the second phase of the development of Girdwood, under the Leisure Transformation Programme, and for the overall completion of the project.

Requests for the Use of Council Parks

Arising from discussion on the above-mentioned minute, it was

Moved by Councillor McMullan,
Seconded by Councillor Lyons and

Resolved – That the Council agrees:

- i. to expedite the delivery of a Council events policy, to be put in place by Quarter 1 of 2023/24;
- ii. on granting multiple year approval for Belsonic, to ensure that any events policy or other future policy adopted by the Council which would affect this or any other future events, be made a condition of

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 9th May, 2022**

approval and that any subsequent changes which do occur be communicated to the promoter; and

- iii. that the terms and conditions contained within the legal agreements to be prepared by the Council's Legal Services Section for the events set out within the minute and for all future events contain social clauses in recognition of the potential impact on local communities.

The Chief Executive undertook to bring back a report to the appropriate Committee in relation to the aforementioned issues.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 15th April were thereupon approved and adopted.

Minutes of People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Smyth,
Seconded by Councillor Mulholland and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 5th April, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 6th April be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor Donnelly,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 13th April, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Carson,
Seconded by Councillor Murphy and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 12th and 14th April, omitting matters in respect of which the

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 9th May, 2022**

Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Climate and City Resilience Committee

Moved by Councillor Gormley,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 7th April be approved and adopted.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 13th May, 2022

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Groogan (Chairperson);
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Haire);
Aldermen Dorrian and Sandford; and
Councillors Bunting, Carson, Garrett,
Heading, Lyons, McLaughlin, Murphy,
Pankhurst, Walsh and Spratt.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. T. Wallace, Head of Finance and Resources;
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Black.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in relation to item <> in that <>

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 the following 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.

Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting in January 2022, it had been agreed to allocate £500k to the Summer Community Diversionary and Festival programme for 2022. At the request of the Members, the scheme was reviewed to ensure that it was widely advertised and groups who received funding in 2022 were supported to have the capacity to deliver events in line with the relevant guidelines that the Council had in place for organising events on its land. Following that approval, the programme was advertised as an open call and officers had completed the preliminary assessment process.

Accordingly, the Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided details of the assessments and seeking approval to award funding. The report provided details also of the eligibility criteria, the two-stage eligibility assessment and the process.

July Programme

For the July programme, six applications had been received, with a total funding request of £323,301 (total amount available £250,000), which was an oversubscription of £73,301.

The Director provided the Committee with a possible option on the amount of funding that groups might receive based on the following rationale:

- The proposed allocation would allow all groups which had applied to receive funding, including two new applicants;
- As far as possible, groups would receive similar amounts to what they had received in 2021; and
- To support new applicants within the constraints of available funding, a minimum amount of £25,000 could be awarded to the groups which applied to the programme for the first time, Charter NI and Ballymac Friendship Trust.

August Programme

Four applications had been received the August programme, however, one application had been withdrawn resulting in a total funding request of £250,000.

For both programmes, groups were awarded scores based on their capacity to run events and how their projects met the aims and objectives of the programme. To support all successful applicants and, in particular, those who required additional capacity support to meet the aims of the programme, an external Event Management Company, Island Events, had been appointed. This company would work with groups to plan, manage and deliver events and ensure they complied with relevant Health and Safety and Licensing regulations. This would be a mandatory requirement; no funding would be allocated to groups unless they agree to availing of this support.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 13th May, 2022**

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to award funding for 2022 as follows:

July

Group	Overview of Project	Amount of Award £
Twaddell and Woodvale Residents Association	Events in Woodvale park and other local venues from 27th June – 11th July. These will include a community cultural activity programme, diversionary youth work and two large scale events on 8th and 9th July.	84,386
Eastside Partnership (Eastival)	Programme of music and community events 7th – 9th July. Including 'Fifes and Fusion' event, and large scale community event CS Lewis and Ballymacarrett walkway. This project will work with youth practitioners to identify relevant young people.	41,060
Ballymac Friendship Trust	Urban/ Street Festival 7th – 11th July, including outreach work, community events live music performances and animation between CS Lewis Square and Pitt Park.	25,000
Charter NI	Youth work, community, cultural, creative art and sporting events 4th – 12th July promoting heritage, educating on broader cultural contexts, and showcasing local artists.	25,000
The Hubb Community Resource Centre	Diversionary and cultural workshops from 27th June – 12th July, which will include music and community festival events in the local area.	40,663
Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT)	Coordinated programme of cultural, community and diversionary events and trips across South Belfast, with a range of community partners over July and August.	33,891
	Total	250,000

August

Group	Overview of Project	Amount of Award £
Feile (Feile August Diversionary Dance Night)	Delivery of a free Dance music event as part of Feile on the 8 August and ongoing targeted outreach work in partnership with local community groups across Belfast. A community event will also take place in Distillery Street.	100,000

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 13th May, 2022**

Feile (South and East Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme)	Delivery of outreach and diversionary work during the summer, in the lead up to 8th August. Headline two day community festival on the Lagan walkway and river 6th – 7th August and music event St Georges Market.	75,000
Feile (North Belfast Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme)	Delivery of a number of diversionary outreach activities and community and sporting events (including boxing event) in the lead up to 8th August.	75,000
	Total	250,000

Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme

The Committee was reminded that Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee weekend would take place from Thursday 2nd till Sunday 5th June, inclusive. At February’s meeting, the Committee had agreed to provide funding of £100,000 for events to take place in local communities across the city over the Platinum Jubilee weekend. It had also agreed to engage the services of the Community Foundation Northern Ireland (CFNI) to administer the fund, which would allocate a maximum of £2,000 for any group/event to take place.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that officers had been engaging with the Community Foundation over the past number of weeks to implement the programme and the following was delivered:

- The programme was advertised via an open call, advertised via Social media channels and has been published on the Council’s and CFNI websites;
- During the open application process, CFNI officers were available to advise groups on the necessary due diligence requirements that must be met to enable groups to be considered suitable for funding;
- CFNI held 5 Information sessions for groups who were interested in applying, these included in person and online;
- Approval was obtained for Umbrella’ organisations to support applications from community groups who do not have a constitution;
- All applicants submitted an application form by an agreed date;
- An additional £5,302 was secured (via the CFNI) for the programme;
- Letters of Offer have now been issued, with 100% payments being issued on acceptance of terms and conditions.

A total of 105 applications had been received (requesting an amount of £181,730), with the total amount awarded £105,302. A list of those groups which had been awarded funding had been appended to the report.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and list of groups which had received funding.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 13th May, 2022**

Update on Provision of Beacons in 2022

The Committee was reminded that beacons were a key element of the Council's Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme and that the Council had provided groups across the city with the opportunity to replace a traditional bonfire with a beacon (subject to availability, given the limited number and site suitability).

At the Council meeting in April 2022, it had been agreed that the 14 groups which availed of a beacon in 2019 and 2021 should be written to and asked if they wished to avail of a beacon this year, subject to availability and a site report. This number had been arrived at based on the responses to the same request in 2021 and with the addition of Grove Street East.

Officers had contacted the 14 groups by email on 15th April 2022 asking that they confirm their wish to a beacon this year by 26th April 2022. For those that did not respond, officers then followed up with phone calls to ensure groups were given a further opportunity to engage. Officers had direct contact with 13 groups and were advised that the 14th group was no longer in existence.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Members that 7 groups had responded positively, and those had been listed in the appendix the report. Officers were still waiting confirmation from the 8th group on the site where it wished to place the beacon, as the previous site was no longer suitable. In relation to the sites which had been confirmed, 4 of the sites were on land belonging to the Department of Infrastructure, with the remaining three belonging to the Council, the NIHE and private owners.

In the interim, an inspection of the beacons had been carried out all 16 beacons were in varying states of repair. Officers were seeking costs towards the filling, delivery and installation of 10 beacons for this year, given the current response.

An assessment of each site would now be arranged and would be undertaken by a fire engineer. Based on the findings of that report, groups would then be asked to sign an agreement regarding the use of the beacon and agreement from the landowners would also be sought.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that the Director would follow up on the potential of a further group wishing to avail of the use of a beacon.

Glór na Móna - Funding

A Member referred to a previous decision of the Committee of 25th March to allocate funding of £86,000 to Glór na Móna for the continuation of the employment of five youth worker posts and the continuation also of Irish medium youth services in the Upper Springfield area and had granted approval for Elected Members to engage with Glór na Móna and the Education Authority to discuss the funding.

He pointed out that the award of the funding had been subject to that meeting taking place but to date it had not happened.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 13th May, 2022**

Accordingly, he requested that the Committee reconsider its decision and that the stipulation that a meeting take place be removed so that the funding could be provided.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to adhere to its previous decision to award funding of £86,000 to Glór na Móna but to remove the requirement for a meeting with the Education Authority to be held and accordingly that arrangements be made to have the money released.

Chairperson

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 20th May, 2022

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Groogan (Chairperson);
Aldermen Haire, Dorrian and Sandford; and
Councillors Beattie, Black, Bunting, Carson, Garrett,
Heading, McDonough-Brown, McLaughlin, Murphy,
Pankhurst, Spratt and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director
of Finance and Resources;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and
Development; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Lyons.

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 9th 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.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following three 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 meeting during discussion of the following three items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of

B4065

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

City Hall Recovery Plan - Update on Progress

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update on progress in relation to the City Hall reopening and recovery.

During discussion, several Members requested that consideration be given to full in-person attendance at meetings of the full Council instead of the proportionality arrangements currently in place, with a view to this commencing at the Annual Meeting to held on 1st June.

In response, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that the Return to the Office Management Trade Union Working Group would be meeting early the following week and he would relay the Committee's view and advise the Members of the outcome as soon as practicable.

**2 Royal Avenue - Levelling Up Fund Round 2
Candidate Project/Capital Regeneration Programmes/
Update on Funding**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the proposal to develop an application for Levelling Up Round 2 Funding (LUF) in respect of 2 Royal Avenue and to seek its approval to do so following discussion at last month's meeting.

The report also provided an update on the scale of the Physical Programme currently underway across the City, together with an overview of key Regeneration projects and an update on current funding opportunities available to the Council, noting that officers would be designing a pipeline of projects for these future funding opportunities to ensure that the Council would be able to put forward relevant projects for funding which were in a state of readiness and aligned with strategic priorities.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i noted the further information provided on the scale of the current physical programme, key regeneration projects and proposals regarding working up a future pipeline of projects;
- ii in light of this and, given the tight timescales for the LUF Round 2 applications, granted approval for officers to develop a bid in relation to the future use of 2 Royal Avenue, with further updates to be brought back to the Committee as required;

B4066

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

- iii noted the update in respect of requests for support for other Groups and private sector led bids under LUF, including the change in the funding criteria in respect of capital delivery and that clarification was being sought from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLHUC) on the implications of this for the Council. Given that, the Committee agreed that all such requests should be brought back to a Special meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration in terms of endorsement for other applications once formal requests and clarification on the implications for Council has been received;
- iv agreed to accept an invitation from the Inclusive Growth Network for a Political leader to participate in a panel event relating to Levelling Up in the devolved nations on 22nd June 2022 and authorised the incoming Lord Mayor to attend the event and, if not available, that the incoming Committee Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson attend;
- v noted the update in relation to the Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme; and
- vi noted the plan to develop, through discussion with Party Group Leaders, a pipeline of projects to ensure the Council can access future funding opportunities in line with our strategic priorities.

Recruitment of Post of Director of Finance and Resources

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 28th March, it had:

- i approved the recruitment of the post of Director of Finance and Resources on a permanent basis; and
- ii agreed that the selection panel should consist of:
 - a. the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee (or their nominees) and Councillor Bunting; and
 - b. the Chief Executive (or his nominee) and a Director.

The Director advised the Members that neither the Chairperson nor a nominee would be able to sit on the panel, therefore, he was seeking an additional panel not representing either the Sinn Fein Party or Democratic Unionist Party.

The Committee agreed that Councillor Lyons be appointed as the third political representative on the panel.

B4067

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

The Committee noted that, if the additional Member was not available, then the Director would be contacting the Local Government Staff Commission for approval for the panel to consist of three persons.

Matters referred back from Council/Motions

Quarterly Update on Motions

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress of all motions for which the SP and R Committee is responsible.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the updates on all motions that the Committee is responsible for; and
- agree to the closure of motions 13,17, 18, 34, 82, 115, 193, 216, 220, 221, 223, 227, 230, 231, 238, 240, 246, 249 and 250, as referenced in the attached appendix and in paragraph 3.4 below.

3.0 Main Report

Background

At the SP and R Committee meeting on 25th October 2019, the following motion was agreed:

‘This Council notes that other Councils produce a monthly status report in relation to motions; and agrees Belfast City Council adopts a similar practice and produces a monthly motion update which will be brought to each full Council Meeting, detailing the following:

- 1. Date received**
- 2. motion title**
- 3. Submitted by which Councillor**
- 4. Council meeting date**
- 5. Committee motion is referred to**

B4068

6. Outcome of Committee where the motion will be debated
7. Month it will be reported back to committee
8. Other action to be taken.'

Following a review exercise, a new database containing all motions and Issues Raised in Advance at Committee was created and quarterly reporting to Committee commenced in March 2021. The latest quarterly update showing all active motions and Issues Raised in Advance for which the SP and R Committee is responsible is attached.

Closure of Motions and Issues Raised in Advance

- 3.3 At the SP and R Committee meeting on 20th November 2020, it was agreed that motions could be closed for one of two reasons:

- motions which contained an action(s) that has been completed; and
- motion which have become Council policy.

- 3.4 The Committee is asked to agree that the following 19 motions be closed:

Category 1 Recommended Closures:

- **Social Investment Fund (Ref no 13)** –This motion called for the recommendations of the SIF Audit to be taken forward. The learnings from this audit and ensuring compliance with OBA principles are now embedded into the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund programme. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Dog Friendly Policies (Ref no 17)** – This motion called for the Council to make its public properties dog friendly. The Council's current policy is that we do not allow dogs that are not guide dogs into our facilities (both staff and public facilities). There is no written policy after that. To make all council properties 'dog friendly' would be a significant policy change with health and safety, hygiene, insurance and liability and facility upgrade implications. It is recommended that the current policy in respect of guide dogs be continued due to the reasons outlined.

- **Feasibility Support Fund for each AWG (Ref no 18)** – a framework is being agreed around NRF and feasibility support is incorporated into the project proposal development process. This is now embedded in the NRF which includes feasibility support. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Unregulated Car Washes (Ref no 34)** – This motion called for a report to be prepared on the number of unregulated car washes across Belfast. The Council has no responsibility for regulating or licensing hand car washes and valet services. Responsibility for Health and Safety at such car washes lies with the HSENI. The NI Environment Agency has responsibility for enforcing the requirements of the Water (NI) Order 1999 and have advised Council officers that in line with guidance they would recommend that vehicle washes are connected to mains sewer where possible and a suitable treatment system would be required. The NIEA currently has no vehicle wash sites in Belfast on its books which hold a consent to discharge. Further enquiries with the NIEA, HSENI and PSNI has not determined that the relevant data can be sourced from elsewhere.
- **Roselawn Cemetery (Ref no 82)** – This motion requested that a further equality screening be carried out in relation to the proposed new 2 chapel crematorium and refurbishment of the existing crematorium at Roselawn. An update was provided to Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group in December, 2021 and agreed at the P and C Committee meeting in January.
- **COP 26 Global Day of Action (Ref no 216)** – All agreed actions were completed in November 2021, including the circulation of promotional materials and the illumination of the City Hall.
- **Illumination of a Council Building – Samaritan's Longest Night Event 21/11/21 (Ref no 220)** – Belfast Castle was illuminated on 21st December, 2021.
- **Illegal Puppy Trade (Ref no 221)** – As requested, the Council's views were expressed in writing to the DAERA Minister and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine on 17th December, 2021.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022

- **Support for Higher Education Staff (Ref no 223)**- As requested, the Council's views were expressed in writing to the senior management of Queens University and Ulster University.
- **Free Public Transport for Young People (Ref no 230)** – As requested, the Council's views were expressed in writing to the Minister of Infrastructure and the senior management of Translink.
- **End of Hunting of Mammals with Dogs (Ref no 231)** – As requested, the Council's views were expressed in writing to the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Committee responsible for DAERA. Their responses were noted by the P and C Committee on 8th March 2022.
- **The Samaritans (Ref no 238)** – The Council was asked to commend and recognise the extraordinary efforts of the Samaritans and the motion was passed at Council meeting on 1st March 2022.
- **Illumination of Belfast Castle for the Samaritans (Ref no 240)** – On 28th March, the SP and R Committee granted approval to illuminate Belfast Castle in green on 21st December 2022 to mark the Longest Night.
- **University Sector Industrial Dispute (Ref no 246)** – As requested, the Council's views were expressed in writing to the Vice Chancellors of Queens University and Ulster University on 14th April, 2022.
- **Illumination of City Hall – Menstrual Hygiene Day 28th May – (Ref no 249)** – the SP and R Committee granted approval to illuminate the City Hall on the evening of 28th May 2022 to mark Menstrual Hygiene Day.
- **Illumination of City Hall – An Lar Dearg – (Ref no 250)** – The SP and R Committee granted approval to illuminate the City Hall in red on 20th May to symbolise the campaign for language rights.

Category 2 Recommended Closures:

- **Racism free zone (Ref no 115)** – There have been a number of internal working groups to look at different

B4071

elements raised in this motion and the Council is also working with Inclusive Cities and has agreed to be a City of Sanctuary.

- **Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (Ref no 193)**
– The S P and R Committee, on 18th February, agreed to allocate funding of £100,000 for events to take place in local communities across the city over the Platinum Jubilee weekend (2nd – 5th June 2022). The Community Foundation NI administered the fund. The grants scheme closed on 11th April and awards will be made w/c 2nd May. The Committee was provided with an update on this activity on 25th March.
- **Holocaust Memorial Day (Ref no 227)** – Elements of this motion were incorporated into Holocaust Memorial Day held in January 2022. These will be incorporated into the planning of Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2023.

3.5 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no additional financial implications required to implement these recommendations.

3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed:

Holocaust Memorial Day

That an update report in relation to the Holocaust Memorial Day arrangements be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

Unregulated Car Washes

That officers ascertain whether the NI Environmental Agency had powers of entry.

Fertility Treatment Leave

That an updated report on the motion on Fertility Treatment Leave be submitted to the June meeting of the Committee.

Closure of Ulster Bank

Democratic Services to ascertain what responses had been received in relation to the motion of the Closure of the Ulster Bank.

Motion: Proposed Cuts in Higher Education – Responses from Ministers

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To consider a response to a motion on Proposed Cuts in Higher Education which was passed by the Council at its meeting on 1st February.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the responses and take such action thereon as may be determined.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 The Council, at its meeting on 1st February, passed the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Ferguson and seconded by Councillor Matt Collins:

‘This Council notes with alarm the budget cut proposals put forward by the Department for the Economy to reduce university places, massively increase tuition fees, slash student financial support, cut the number of apprentices, and reduce or end the Educational Maintenance Allowance.

The Council supports an end to tuition fees and an increase in the Educational Maintenance Allowance and student financial support. The Council agrees that these proposed actions and cuts are completely unacceptable, especially at a time when students across the city are already struggling to make ends meet. As noted by the NUS-USI, these cuts ‘have the potential to decimate the hopes and opportunities of an entire generation’ and could take away ‘their ability to survive day to day, and many will simply drop out of education’.

Therefore, the Council considers the proposals to constitute an unacceptable attack on students, young people, their

futures and our education provision; and stands in solidarity with demands from the NUS-USI to oppose these cuts.

The Council will write to the Economy Minister to express its anger and opposition to these proposals and to encourage the Minister to abandon them. In that letter, the Council will invite the Minister to a meeting with Councillors and representatives of the student population, in order to fully understand and appreciate the breadth of our concerns and the danger his proposals present.

The Council calls on the wider Stormont Executive to refuse to give consent to these proposals and cuts and to take all necessary action to defend student places, student financial assistance, apprenticeships, the Educational Maintenance Allowance and to oppose any increase in the cost of student tuition. Accordingly, the Council will write to each Executive Minister to this effect.

The Council also calls on the Finance Minister to work with the Minister for the Economy to find a sustainable solution to funding issues within the higher and further education sectors. The Council considers it utterly unacceptable that young people in our city should be made to pay the price for budgetary pressures and include in our letter to the Minister for Finance a demand that funding is found to secure the future for young people.

This Council recognises that many of these proposed budget cuts are as a result of the loss of EU funds due to Brexit.

Finally, the Council recognises the role of Westminster budgets in creating difficulties for public spending locally and agrees to write to the treasury on behalf of local students to demand increased budgetary funding to stave off these proposals.'

3.2 Responses to the motion are attached and are summarised as follows:

- The Rt. Hon Michelle Donelan MP, Minister of State for Higher and Further Education, stresses that Higher Education funding is a devolved matter and is not, therefore, an issue upon which she can comment (Appendix 1);

- The Private Secretary to the former Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs acknowledges the receipt of the Council's letter and confirms that it is being dealt with by the Minister for the Economy (Appendix 2);
- The Private Secretary to the former Minister for Infrastructure states that, whilst that Department has no direct responsibility in this area, the Minister is very supportive of Education, including Higher Education, and recognises the benefits which this has for society here (Appendix 3);
- The former Minister of Health points out that a stable, sustainable higher education sector is important to the Department of Health in securing the supply of high-quality local students into a wide range of healthcare professions and that it will engage closely with the Department for Economy as proposals are developed (Appendix 4);
- The former Minister for Education highlights the significant financial pressures being faced currently by all Departments and the difficult decisions to be taken around budgets. Given the absence of an Executive to agree a budget and the decision of the former Minister of Finance to pause the public consultation on the draft budget for 2022-25, she does not consider it appropriate to comment further at this time (Appendix 5).
- The former Minister of Finance, in Appendix 5, highlights the fact that the Draft Budget for 2022-25 would have seen the Department for the Economy's allocation increase from its baseline figure of £817.8 million to £832.1 million in 2022-23, £842.1 million in 2023-24 and £841.3 million in 2024-25. He points out that expenditure is at the discretion of the Minister for the Economy, based on their priorities, including Higher Education. However, there is pressure on the Department for Economy's budget due to the loss of EU funding streams which it has previously relied on.

He goes on to state that the Government's Spending Review did not provide sufficient resources to fund every pressure across all Departments, but the Draft Budget 2022-25 honoured the Executive's commitment

to prioritise health and would also have ensured that all Departments would see their budgets increase.

Finally, he points out that the resignation of the First Minister and the absence of an Executive has meant that it is not now possible to agree a Budget and the consultation on the Draft Budget has been paused. As a result, the allocations for the Department for the Economy set out in the Draft Budget were not available from 1st April 2022.

- The former Minister for the Economy, in Appendix 7, confirms that his Department submitted a package of bids, as part of Budget 2022-25, focused firstly on meeting inescapable pressures to allow the Department to just stand still, then on measures to support economic recovery, investment in skills, all age apprenticeships, innovation, tourism and green growth – all to support the delivery of 10x, the strategic vision for the Northern Ireland economy.

He goes on to state that the Minister of Finance's Draft Budget for 2022-25 does not propose to meet these bids or prioritise the economy. The Draft Budget would result in a cut in real terms to the Department for the Economy of 8% in Year 1, rising to 13% in Year 3, and totalling £259 million across the three years. This does not allow his Department to stand still, let alone improve the performance of Northern Ireland in key skills and innovation indicators.

He points out that, with inescapable departmental expenditure limit pressures in excess of £300 million over the three-year period, the Draft Budget means that the Department for Economy needs to find solutions to fund these. In a budget where three quarters is spent on education and skills, there are no easy options that will not be a setback for the economy and the lives of the people of Northern Ireland.

Whilst one third of the Department for Economy's pressures relate to key DfE services previously funded from the UK Government's contribution to Europe, this funding has not gone. The UK Government has made a commitment to replace, at a minimum, the level of EU funding that flowed into Northern Ireland. However, negotiations led by the Minister of Finance and his

Department have, to date, resulted in additional funding for Northern Ireland being managed by Westminster, with no alignment to the Executive's priorities. He adds that, unless the Minister of Finance ensures that funding into Northern Ireland from the UK Government meets the Executive's priorities, some core DfE services, such as apprenticeships and grants for innovation, remain unfunded. The only remaining option for the delivery of these key services is an increased prioritisation in future budget allocations.

The former Minister goes on to state that, as part of the Draft Budget process, Department for Economy officials have been modelling potential options to allow the Department to live within the Minister of Finance's Draft Budget. No decisions have yet been made around this.

He then emphasises the need for Northern Ireland to invest in skills, education and innovation programmes as competitor countries are not standing still. It will be a matter for the Executive as a whole to agree Departmental budget allocations and he has been clear from the outset that he is not supportive of the Minister of Finance's Draft Budget.

The former Minister concludes by recognising the concerns of the Council and student representatives in relation to the constraints on future skills investment arising from the proposed Draft Budget. He stresses the need for continued engagement and would welcome the Council's support in making a case for any future budget for Northern Ireland to provide greater priority for our economy, including investment in Skills and Education.

Financial and Resource Implications

None associated with this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

None associated with this report."

The Committee noted the responses which had been received.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

**Response to Department for Infrastructure Consultation
on Water, Flooding and Sustainable Drainage**

The Committee was advised that the Department for Infrastructure had, on 11th March, published a consultation on policies relating to water, flooding and sustainable drainage which were being considered for future amendments to primary legislation. A copy of the consultation document can be found [here](#). The closing date for responses was 3rd June, 2022.

There were nine topics included within the consultation, which covered a range of proposed new or amended powers for the Department and NI Water. The topics being consulted upon were:

- i Powers for NI Water to implement wider water shortage measures;
- ii Powers for NI Water to enter onto private land to carry out works, for flood risk management purposes including construction of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS);
- iii Provision of an enabling power for the Department to introduce arrangements to encourage developers to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) as the preferred drainage solution in new developments;
- iv Powers for NI Water to adopt certain drainage infrastructure, which is in private ownership and was constructed prior to 1st October 1973;
- v Enhanced powers for NI Water to deal with drain and sewer misconnections;
- vi Power for NI Water to register Article 161 Agreements in the Statutory Charges Register;
- vii Powers for the Department to grant fund Homeowner Flood Protection measures;
- viii Powers to provide for easements and additional compensation arrangements for affected landowners to facilitate flood storage; and
- ix Technical amendments to enable future amendment of subordinate legislation - Powers for the Department to amend, update or revoke the Drainage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 and the Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009.

Council officers had collated a draft response to the consultation and this was attached to the report and be found on the Council's website [here](#).

In summary, the response that the Council would, in principle, support the suggested changes and, where appropriate, outlined where it believed further clarification was required.

The Committee approved the draft response.

B4078

**Belfast One Million Trees Programme –
Amendment to Funding Agreement**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 20th August 2021, it had approved the establishment of a funding agreement with the Woodland Trust to the value of £45,000 for the service of volunteer coordination, community outreach and support for PR and communication for the Belfast One Million Trees Programme.

Subsequently, discussions had taken place between the Belfast One Million Trees delivery partners, namely, the Council, Belfast Hills Partnership and the Woodland Trust, which had resulted in a request for a variation, and that the funding agreement be made with Belfast Hills Partnership rather than with the Woodland Trust.

The Belfast Hills Partnership had acted as the primary support for the Council's Climate Unit in the delivery of the Belfast One Million Trees Programme. The Council would remain the co-ordinating body and continue to lead the programme, act on behalf of the city steering group, and lead on funding and the administration of the programme.

The Committee approved the amendment to the funding agreement to reflect that the Council would now work with Belfast Hills Partnership to deliver engagement and communication support services for the Belfast One Million Trees Programme.

Corporate Performance Management Framework

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Committee an update on the development of a Corporate Performance Management Framework and how this relates to measuring city-wide performance for the refreshed Belfast Agenda.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the update, including the commitment to bring forward regular performance update reports for consideration.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 Members are reminded that, within the Corporate Plan, there is a strategic priority around the development of a Corporate

Performance Management Framework and that in the recently agreed delivery plan for 2022-23 the key deliverables are:

- review performance management framework;
- procure external support to review planning and performance framework;
- ensure that oversight arrangements are in place to provide assurance on our corporate deliverables at Executive and political levels; and
- scope and develop performance dashboards in line with review of the performance management framework.

- 3.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on some of the work that is currently ongoing on relation to corporate performance management and the steps being taken to further enhance the approach to measuring the impact of the Belfast Agenda and the underpinning action plans on the city and communities.

Corporate Plan Reporting

- 3.3 Members are reminded that there is reporting mechanism in place for the Corporate Plan and that a year-end report on the 2021-22 Corporate Delivery Plan will be brought to the June meeting of this Committee. It has been agreed that a 6-monthly update on the 2022-23 Delivery Plan will be brought to Committee, in addition to the year-end report. We would anticipate that the 6-monthly report would be brought to this Committee in November 2022 and the year-end report in June, 2023.
- 3.4 As part of this cycle annual Committee Plans are also developed and regular updates on progress are brought to the relevant Committee. It is anticipated that the Committee Plans for 2022/23 will be brought to the relevant Committees next month.

Improvement Plan

- 3.5 As a Council, we must publish an annual improvement plan that sets out our improvement actions for the year ahead. This is a legal obligation referred to as our Duty to Improve. We are currently finalising our Improvement Plan 2022/23 and this will be brought to the June meeting of this Committee for consideration and approval. The new performance management framework will take into consideration our legal requirements articulated through the improvement plan.

Belfast Agenda – City’s Community Plan

- 3.6 In addition to assessing and reporting organisational performance against the delivery of the Corporate Plan, the Council is the convening lead for community planning and delivery of the Belfast Agenda. In this capacity the Council has a direct delivery role as an organisation as well as working across sectors and partners to encourage and enable collaborative action in addressing key city priorities and challenges.
- 3.7 Progress updates on the Belfast Agenda are reported on a quarterly basis to the SP and R Committee, alongside regular updates being submitted to other standing Committees (i.e. People and Communities, City Growth and Regeneration and Climate and City Resilience) on specific programmes and interventions being brought forward and their associated impact. Members will be aware that the All-Party Community Planning Reference Group has been reconstituted as a Working Group of Council reporting into the SP and R Committee. This provides a forum for Members to engage in more detailed discussions around community planning priorities and help inform the refresh of the Belfast Agenda (2022-2026) currently underway. The Members’ Working Group will also provide a forum to monitor, test and challenge both organisational, and importantly city, performance in context of community planning going forward.
- 3.8 In line with the refresh of the Belfast Agenda, work is underway with community partners to develop an underpinning monitoring and reporting framework. This will encourage and enable a structured approach to setting outcome and impact measures and indicators as well as measuring and reporting progress against these. In addition to the formal Statement of Progresses every two years. the intention would be to introduce a more frequent progress reporting on performance and associated scorecards to the Community Planning Partnership, established Belfast Agenda delivery boards and Council Committees. The University of Ulster Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC) are providing external support in developing the framework and will have a continued role as a critical friend to help support and mainstream our approach. We are also assessing the approach taken by other councils to identify best practice in this area.

- 3.9 Members will be aware that the Council and the Belfast Community Planning Partnership are statutorily required to publish a 'Statement of Progress' every two years which assesses and reports on the progress made and outcomes delivered through community planning. The second and most recent statement was published in November 2021 and provided. Whilst this provided an opportunity for partners and community planning to outline the actions and interventions which has been brought forward through community planning, it notably adopted a light touch approach to reporting on outcomes achieved.
- 3.10 Plans will be put in place to design future versions of the Residents Survey to support the measuring of progress towards the achievement of the Belfast Agenda stretch goals, targets and outcome measures alongside measurements for the Council's Corporate Plan. We will continue to work with city partners and stakeholders to explore new ways to measuring the impact and outcomes achieved through community planning and ensuring alignment with regional measures including the emerging Programme for Government. Monitoring and reporting will be an ongoing process, that will be subject to change as new priorities emerge and further data is developed.

Inclusive Growth

- 3.11 Inclusive Growth is at the centre of the Belfast Agenda and a key part of success will be determined by our ability to prioritise the outcomes and indicators which are most likely to achieve our ambition of 'leaving no one behind' and enabling all citizens to contribute to and benefit from the economic growth in the City and to assess the extent to which interventions are having the desired impact.
- 3.12 Through the Council's membership of the Inclusive Growth Network, support has been secured to draw on their expert advisors to assist in the development of a suite of appropriate measures that will support the statement of our ambition and enable an assessment of progress over time. It is intended that this Inclusive Growth Scorecard will be supported by a monitoring & reporting framework to ensure that we have the capability to capture, record and report on progress at both an organisational level for the Council and a city level through the Community Planning Partnership.

- 3.13 The Inclusive Growth Strategy includes a commitment of 'holding ourselves to account'. The scope of the Inclusive Growth Scorecard and Framework should support an element of measurement of success by the experience of growth as well as communities of interest and geography. However, as the Committee is aware, access to meaningful, detailed and timely data presents a challenge particularly at a local government level, therefore there will be limitations, particularly in the initial implementation and proxy measures may be required.
- 3.14 The application of the monitoring framework and scorecard to assess progress provides another tool (alongside others such as the decision-making framework, social value procurement policy, our employment practices and the Belfast Business Promise) to help embed inclusive growth in the Council's and Community Planning Partnership's decision-making processes.
- 3.15 Climate

The Council co-ordinates the development of both citywide and council climate plans and is responsible for the oversight of the Belfast Resilience Strategy, which is monitored through the Belfast Resilience and Sustainability Board. At city level, the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap sets out targets for the city to become Net Zero. Belfast has also begun to report to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), with the first submission made in 2021, and the second due in July 2022. Belfast has also joined global initiatives such as the Race to Zero, Race to Resilience and Glasgow Climate and Food Pledge. The key pieces of work relating to climate at Council level which will inform the performance framework are:

- The Belfast City Council Carbon Baseline and Trajectory report, and associated Energy Audits of 5 buildings across the estate, which will identify Council's current carbon baseline and makes recommendations with the aim of becoming net zero. The Carbon Baseline and Trajectory report is currently being progressed, with Energy Audits to be undertaken in June 2022.
- The Belfast City Council Climate Risk Assessment, Climate Action Plan, and Climate Investment Plan, which will be complete by the end of 2022. These plans will focus on mitigation and adaptation and will build

upon previous work undertaken by Climate NI to develop a Council Climate Adaptation Plan.

- An expression of interest exercise has been undertaken, which seeks to identify a Digital Platform that will support programme and performance management across the climate portfolio and with the potential to expand for other uses.
- In addition, the Climate Unit co-ordinates the BCC Climate Plan Programme Board, and reports to the Climate and City Resilience Committee.

Other Projects

- 3.16 Members will be aware that the Council is involved in delivering a range of other projects, some in partnership with other organisations, such as those under the Belfast City Region Deal, and these will all have associated performance and monitoring frameworks. Performance reports on these be brought through the agreed processes including regular update to the relevant Committees.

Next Steps

- 3.17 The next stage in this process will be to review the current performance framework and to commission external support to assist with this work. As part of this work, officers will undertake an exercise to consider the linkages and alignment of existing performance reporting mechanisms, including those outlined in this report, to any new Corporate Performance Management Framework. We would anticipate that officers will have the external support in place by mid-summer and will bring regular reports to Committee updating them on progress.

3.18 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no implications associated with this report. However external support will be required to assist in elements of this work and such requests will be brought through the usual approval processes.

3.19 Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment

There are no implications associated with this report.”

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

The Committee noted the update, including the commitment to bring forward regular performance update reports for consideration.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Asset Management

The Committee:

i) Corporation Street Car Park – Licence Renewal from DfI

- approved the renewal of a Licence Agreement from DfI to the Council for the off-street car park at Corporation Street

ii) Corporation Street - Grant of Licence Agreement for advertising hoarding, to Clear Channel NI Ltd.

- approved the Licence Agreement for advertising hoarding at Corporation Street site to Clear Channel NI Ltd

iii) Balmoral Estate -Deed of Variation to extend term of ground Leases at Plots 56 and 57

- approved the extension of the current term of the ground leases at Plots 56 and 57 Balmoral Estate to a term of 125 years from 2022.

Update on Physical Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The Council’s Physical Programme currently includes 170 capital projects, with investment of £150m+ via a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. This report requests a movement on the Capital Programme and provides an update on the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund.

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- **Proposed movement on the Capital Programme: City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT**

B4085

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022

community - agree that both projects be added to the Capital Programme at *Stage1 – Emerging*.

- Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund – note the update provided on the new capital fund.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1** Members will be aware that the Council runs a substantial Physical Programme. This includes the rolling Capital Programme – a multimillion regeneration programme of investment across the City which improves existing Council assets or provides new Council facilities. The Council also delivers externally focused funding streams such as BIF, LIF and SOF, as well as numerous capital programmes which we deliver for central government. Our funding partners include NHLF, SEUPB Peace IV, the Executive Office via Social Investment Fund and Urban Villages, DfC, DfI, DAERA, Ulster Garden Villages and others. When appropriate, as per Covid 19 public health guidance, the Physical Programmes Department is happy to arrange site visits to any projects which have been completed.

Proposed Movement – Capital Programme

- 3.2** Members have previously agreed that all capital projects must go through a Three Stage process, where decisions on which projects progress are taken by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. This provides assurance on the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project.

The Committee is asked to agree to the following addition to the Capital Programme:

Project	Overview	Stage movement
City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT community	The creation of two new stained glass windows at City Hall, in recognition of the Health Service in Belfast and the acknowledgement of the positive role of the LGBT community in Belfast	Add as Stage 1 - Emerging

City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT community

Members will recall that, in November 2018, the Committee agreed to progress a stained-glass window to recognise the LGBT community. All proposals in relation to stained glass windows are now taken via the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installation Working Group. At its meeting on 12th April 2022, the Installations Working Group agreed to recommend to the Committee that the stained-glass windows in recognition of the Health Service and the contribution of LGBT citizens be progressed to *Stage 1 – Emerging* on the Capital Programme. This will allow the business case to be developed with further detail to be brought back to the Committee in due course. This project is in reference to the following Notices of Motion: ‘Recognition of the Health Service in Belfast’ (Notice of Motion 03/05/2016), and ‘The acknowledgement of the positive role which the LGBT community plays in our city’ (Notice of Motion 03/04/2017). The Working Group was asked to note that there are a limited number of windows left within the City Hall, and it agreed to keep any remaining proposals under review.

Programme update - Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

- 3.3 Members will recall that, in November 2021, they agreed the programme framework including the project pathway, open call application process and the outcomes approach for the £8m Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund. The 12-week open call process has now taken place and the application stage closed on 12th May. The fund has attracted significant interest and a high volume of applications has been received. An intensive period of eligibility review and validation is now underway ahead of assessment and moderation. A project must score over a minimum threshold in order to proceed to the next stage. Members will then make recommendations via Area Working Group meetings on which projects can progress to the next stage. These recommendations will be brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval. It is anticipated that this will take place in Autumn 2022, however, due to the high volume of applications received, this timeline may be subject to change. Members will be kept updated on progress.

3.4 **Financial and Resource Implications**

Financial – None at this stage

B4087

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.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Update on Contracts

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 1**);
- approved the modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 2**); and
- noted the award of retrospective STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 3**):

Appendix 1

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Tender for MTC for General builder/wet trades for small building fabric repairs & maintenance to all Council Properties and locations	Up to 5 years	£90,000	S Grimes	The provision of building works not carried out by the Property Maintenance Unit including internal demolition, alterations, concrete work, brickwork and finishes
Digitisation of Building Control records	Up to 4 years	£100,000	K Bentley	There is the requirement to convert application forms, drawings and

B4088

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

				relevant correspondence into an electronic format. This will assist in the ability to retrieve data quicker and for disaster recovery and business continuity.
Provision of Fuels Please Note: Awarded via Crown Commercial Services framework under national fuel supply agreement	Up to 2 years	£3,000,000	C Mathews	These fuels are used throughout Belfast City Council sites to ensure the operation of vehicles and the heating of buildings
Manufacture, supply and delivery of waste compactors	Up to 12 months	£160,000	C Mathews	Replacement of compactors that have reached their end of life
Provision of planning and environmental consultancy services to enable and assist Belfast City Council's Public Health and Housing and Environmental Protection Unit to provide timely and planning consultation responses	Up to 12 months	£100,000	S Toland	There is currently a backlog of plans due to staff shortages as well as an increase in the complexity of plans that require assessment.
Maintenance & Removal of Hanging Baskets	Up to 3 years and 3 months	£170,000	R Crozier	To maintain hanging baskets for Belfast in Bloom and remove baskets at end of season
Tender for the Administration and provision of a suite of First-aid Training courses for delivery to Council staff (and potentially to organisations)	Up to 3 years	£75,000	J Walsh	Current contract period expires 31 August 2022

B4089

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

delivering Services for and on behalf of the Council)				
Belfast City Centre Connectivity Study Phases 2 and 3	Up to 8 months	£40,650	J Greer	Multi-disciplinary team in place but due to additional requirements an extension to the contact is required to deliver the final strategy. Specialist skills are required that are not within Belfast City Council.

Table 2: Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Duration	Modification	SRO	Supplier
T2085 - A Key Deliverable of the PEACE IV Shared Space & Services theme (volunteer training) Lot 2 Cycling Leads	Up to 19 months	Additional 3 months	S Toland/ R Crozier	Sustrans Limited
T2085 - A Key Deliverable of the PEACE IV Shared Space & Services theme (volunteer training) Lot 3 Walking Leads	Up to 19 months	Additional 3 months	S Toland/ R Crozier	Sustrans Limited
T2085 (b) A Key Deliverable of the PEACE IV Shared Space & Services theme (volunteer training)	Up to 12 months	Additional 3 months	S Toland/ R Crozier	Volunteer Now Enterprise Ltd
T2084 (b) A Key Deliverable of the PEACE IV Shared Space & Services theme (Intergenerational project)	Up to 19 months	Additional 3 months	S Toland/ R Crozier	Mediation NI

Table 3: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Value	SRO	Supplier
Purchase of reusable, sustainable period products to be offered to council area residents on behalf of BCC	Until delivered	£40,000	R Crozier	Hey Girls

B4090

Equality and Good Relations

Disability Action Plan 2022-2025

The Committee was reminded that, under section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ('the Act'), (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006) public authorities, when carrying out their functions must, have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

The Council's current Disability Action Plan expired in March 2022. In January, the Council carried out a disability exercise with the departments and, by doing this, was able to develop the three-year DDO Disability Action Plan.

The draft document was being presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval and would then be submitted for a twelve-week period of public consultation from 30th May – 19th August 2022. The final document would then be resubmitted to the Committee with any subsequent amendments.

The Committee:

- approved the Draft Disability Action Plan 2022- 2025, as set out in the appendix to the report; and
- approved the document for consultation for a 12-week period, from 30th May to 19th August, 2022.

Equality and Diversity: Equality Screening and Rural Needs Outcome Report – Quarter 4 2020-21

The Committee noted the contents of a report providing a summary of equality screenings and rural needs impact assessments for the period from October to December, 2021.

Minutes of Meeting of the Shared City Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Shared City Partnership meeting held on 9th May, including:

PEACE IV

Children and Young People

CYP 1 – GIGA

- To realign participant numbers between Lots 1 and 2 with Lot 1 (age 6-11) increasing by 80 participants and Lot 2 (age 12-16) reducing by 80 participants.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

CYP 3 – OTRT

- To extend participation in the project to young people/individual not involved or registered with an affiliated sports club.

CYP 5 – NIHE

- To include a Resource Allocation approach for both CYP and BPR projects, subject to the approval of the SEUPB and agreed in principle to extend delivery of the project to December 2022 subject to extended Letters of Offer from SEUPB.

Shared Spaces and Services

- To agree a three-month extension, until 30th September 2022 for the Mediation NI contract and to extend all four volunteer projects (Sustrans, Volunteer Now and The Conservation Volunteers) to 30th September 2022.

Building Positive Relations

BPR1 Cross Community Networks

- To agree a modification request from South West CCAN to hold an overnight residential in NI as part of BPR1 Stage 3 Programme Activity for participants.

BPR3 Transform for Change-NICVA

- To amalgamate the Resource Allocation for 2 projects from the Village/Westlink areas to build on their concept for Shared past Shared Future.
- To delegate authority to the BPR Chair and the PIV Programme Manager to consider requests to amalgamate resource allocations for urgent future projects.

BPR6 St. Comgalls

- To extend the project to 31st August 2022, in principle, subject to submission of a formal request.
- To agree to increasing the Peace IV NIHE contract with Park Hood by £7.5k to enable concept drawings on the redesign of a Peace Wall to be compiled.

Good Relations

- To note that a Letter of Offer had been received in the amount of £568,938.27 from The Executive Office towards the Council's Good Relations Action Plan 22/23.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

PEACE PLUS

- To agree to hold a workshop for SCP Members to consider the shaping of the design of the new Peace Plus Programme.
- To agree that officers proceed with organising area information sessions with the consultant’s consortium to update stakeholders on the emerging work with regards to PEACEPLUS Local Community PEACE Action Plans.

Operational Issues

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

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders’ Consultative Forum of 12th May.

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

The Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations made in respect of those applications received up to 6th May, as set out within the appendix to the report:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2022 EVENTS						
Belfast Film Festival	1 June 2022	Launch of Docs Ireland Festival Programme - an industry focused, all Ireland international documentary festival celebrating filmmaking and provides a platform for both national and international industries. Numbers attending 100	A &B	No (Voluntary/ NFP)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Hockey Ireland	2 July 2022	Welcome Reception - for the Irish and Scottish boys under 18 and under 16 hockey teams along with their families attending the Irish-Scottish Hockey series at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown Campus, 1-3 July 2022. Numbers attending - 100	A &B	No – Voluntary	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Probation Board NI	14 September 2022	40th Anniversary Awards Ceremony – to mark the 40 th anniversary and also mark the achievements of PBNI staff, to reward and recognise staff through our staff awards. Numbers attending - 300	A &B	Charge	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve Charge £300 Wine Reception (£500 given to their chosen caterer)
System Transmission Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI)	19 September 2022	Launch of Belfast Metropolitan Redevelopment Project to create a high-capacity underground electricity connection through Belfast,	A &B	Charge	No hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality

B4094

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		to support Northern Ireland's future renewable energy targets. Numbers attending - 150				
Education Authority, Intercultural Education Service and The Executive Office, Urban Villages	20 September 2022	Schools of Sanctuary Celebration Awards – An awards ceremony for primary and post primary schools participating in the Schools of Sanctuary programme. Numbers attending – 200	C	Yes - £115	No hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No Reception
InteleTravel UK Ltd.	1 October 2022	InteleTravel Quest Gala Dinner (ITQ) - for guests attending their 2-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending – up to 350	A & B	No (waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
2023 EVENTS						
British Fertility Society	11 January 2023	BFS 50th Anniversary Conference Dinner - for guests attending their 2-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast.	A & B	No (waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

B4095

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		Numbers attending – up to 350				
Young Enterprise NI	20 April 2023	YEA NI Awards 2023 Drinks reception, dinner and Awards Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of people across NI who completed YE Programmes. Numbers attending – 300	C	No (Charity)	Approve No Charge No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
European Society for Vascular Society	28 September 2023	Conference Dinner Reception for guests attending their 2-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending - 350	A &B	No (waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
The British Endodontic Society	10 November 2023	BES Regional meeting Conference Dinner for guests attending their 2-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending - 300	A &B	No (waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
2024 EVENTS						
British Society of Animal Science	10 April 2024	Conference Reception and Dinner for guests attending the 3-day conference	A &B	No (waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

B4096

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		taking place in ICC Belfast or QUB. Numbers attending - 200				

Minutes of the Meeting of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the City Hall/ City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group of 12th April.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group of 16th May.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Belfast Region City Deal

The Committee noted an update on the latest position in relation to BRCD and that a further report would be submitted to the June meeting

Governance

National Association of Councillors Conference

The Committee was advised that the National Association of Councillors Conference would be taking place in Southport from 24th till 26th June, 2022.

The Committee was reminded that it had appointed 8 Members to the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region) and had, in previous years, authorised attendance of its representatives at National Association Conferences.

The theme of the conference was entitled Emergency Planning and Resilience. It would look at how local Councils, emergency services and power companies react and deal with natural events to protect and assist the communities in which they live and work. It would also examine what resilience had been or could be put in place by local authorities resulting in a cohesive plan to get supplies and services to areas which suffered severe disruption.

B4097

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th May, 2022**

The fee for attendance at the conference was £350 plus VAT per delegate. There will also be travel and accommodation costs. Any expenditure in this regard can be met from within existing budgets.

The Committee approved the attendance of the Council's representatives on the National Association of Councillors at the Conference to be held in Southport from 24th to 26th June, 2022.

Chairperson

B4098

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 10th May, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Smyth (Deputy Chairperson);
Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey;
Councillors Black, Bunting,
Corr, de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, M. Kelly,
Magee, McAteer, McCusker, Mulholland,
Newton and Verner.

Also attended: Councillor McMullan.

In attendance: Mr. R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was recorded on behalf on the Chairperson, Councillor Cobain.

Best Wishes

The Deputy Chairperson congratulated former Members of the Committee Councillors Baker and McReynolds on their election to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th 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 9th May.

Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared an interest in item 3 (b) in relation to the Community Support Programme Letter of Offer 2022-2024, as they either worked for or were associated with an organisation in receipt of funding from the DfC. All Members left the meeting whilst the matter was being discussed.

- Councillor Black, on the basis that she managed the Grosvenor Community Centre;
- Councillor Verner, in that she was an employee of the Greater Shankill Partnership (Spectrum Centre); and
- Councillor Corr, in that he was an employee of Falls Community Council;

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th May, 2022**

Alderman Copeland declared an interest in respect of agenda item 3 (c), Request for the use of Belfast City Council facilities during the Orange Orders Centenary Parade on 28th May 2022, in that she was a Member of the Orange Order, she left the meeting whilst the matter was under consideration.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 4 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 4 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.

Presentation - Organiser of Bright Lights Event

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Mr. E. McCann to the meeting.

Mr. McCann commenced by thanking the Members for the opportunity to attend the meeting. He advised that following the 2021/22 event he acknowledged that there were areas where improvements could be made to enhance the 2022/23 event.

The representative proceeded to outline his draft proposals for change, which included a shorter running time, cheaper ticket price and new attractions.

Several of the Members highlighted the number of complaints that had been received around the price of tickets, lack of a family ticket and the overall environmental impact of the event in the area, specifically in regard to light and noise pollution.

During questions the promoter acknowledged that there had been little, or no public engagement and agreed with the Members that it was essential that neighbourhood consultation/notification was undertaken going forward, in keeping with clause 21 of the licence agreement.

A Member acknowledged and thanked the promoter for the 'quite time' that had been set aside for those with sensory issues. A further Member suggested that the provision of a changing places facility would be a welcome addition.

The Deputy Chairperson thanked Mr. McCann for attending and he left the meeting.

Discussion ensued in regard to the issues that had been considered, following which, it was agreed to defer any further discussion on the matter to enable a report to be submitted to a future meeting that would consider the proposed areas for improvement as outlined by the promoter and how these could be successfully implemented and also to enable the receipt of legal advice from Legal Services as to whether those Members who had received complimentary tickets for the 2021/21 should declare an interest.

**Botanic Gardens Events 2022 –
Request from Aiken Promotions**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that a request had been received from Aiken Promotions seeking permission in respect of the breakdown and egress of equipment (known as 'load out') up to 3.00 a.m. on the morning after each of the scheduled concerts at Botanic Gardens in June 2022.

As with the previous event, the Members again stressed the need for engagement with local residents to be undertaken to advise them of the events taking place and disruptions that might occur.

The Committee granted authority to Aiken Promotions Limited to conduct the 'load out' up to but no later than 3.00 a.m. after each of the concerts based on a number of mitigations being put in place. It noted that, as part of these mitigations, the promotor would liaise and seek advice from the Council's environmental noise team in order to limit the disruption to local residents.

The Committee further noted that satisfactory terms and conditions would be agreed and included as clauses within the overall licence agreement for use of the site which would include communication and engagement with local residents.

**DfC Community Support Programme
Letter of Offer 2022-2024**

The Members were asked to note that a Letter of Offer had been received from the Department for Communities (DfC) in regard to the delivery of the Community Support Programme (CSP). The letter of offer was a multi-annual covering the 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years, previously it had been allocated on a year-by-year basis.

The Committee was reminded that the Council used all the CSP funding to match its investment in Community Provision Grants supporting the community and voluntary sector to provide a broad range of community and advice services.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that the Letter of Offer made provision for a 2% increase in grant allocation for the 2022/23 financial year and again in 2023/24. This increase was specifically for salary related costs. All organisations that used the Council's Community Provision Grants towards salaries would be offered an additional 2% allocation, proportional to the Council's contribution.

The Members' attention was then drawn to the financial breakdown contained within Letter of Offer.

During discussion a Member referred to the status of the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service (BCTS) and whether its draft Business Case had been progressed.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that Council officers were continuing to work with the BCTS to produce a final draft of its Business Case and that in due course an update report would be submitted to Committee. The Members were also reminded that the

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th May, 2022**

DfC had not applied any increase to the Welfare Reform Mitigations Extension Tribunal Representation Appeals and that the Council had allocated £70,400.

The Committee agreed that the Chief Executive formally accept the Letter of Offer on behalf of the Council.

Request for the use of Belfast City Council facilities during the Orange Orders Centenary parade on 28th May 2022

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that a request had been received from the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, seeking the use of the cobbled stone section at the front of the Belfast City Hall and the use of a Belfast City Council (BCC) standing podium, to facilitate a walk by leading up to the completion of the parade to mark the Orange Order's Centenary on 28th May.

The Members noted that they were content with this request providing the erection of the podium was at no cost to the Council and that the podium itself was plain (i.e. no BCC corporate logo).

Given the date of the proposed event, delegated authority was granted to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to grant permission to The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland to use the cobbled section at the front of City Hall and to permit the erection of a podium to facilitate a 'walk by' on the 28th May, provided it was at no cost to the Council.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Motion - Nutrition Support for Children in Out of Hours School Clubs

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To provide members of the People and Communities Committee with an update in relation to action taken to address issues raised via a Notice of Motion tabled by Councillor Black in November 2019 focussing on improving nutrition support within after schools' clubs, particularly in areas of disadvantage.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the contents of the report.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

In November 2019 Cllr Black brought forward a Notice of Motion (NOM), seconded by Cllr McAteer, which stated; 'Practical healthy eating, supported by positive influence around lifelong food choices, improves children's wellbeing in physical and mental terms including their ability to concentrate and learn. Good nutrition is essential for children to grow properly, do their best in school and be happy and healthy in the future (Education Authority)'.

- 3.2 A World Health Organisation Commission had described childhood obesity as a 'growing epidemic.' Department of Health survey statistics indicated that 25% of children in this region are deemed to be overweight or obese. The estimated costs of healthcare attached to weight problems are around £450 million, representing 2.8% of total healthcare expenditure.
- 3.3 Small changes across a range of arenas can help to turn the tide. Implementing healthy snack choices, as part of the daily routine, significantly increases the capacity of positive choices becoming embedded, ultimately resulting in wider savings to the health sector.
- 3.4 Belfast City Council supports a range of services and programmes for children, including summer schemes and out of hours school clubs in areas facing disadvantage and food poverty. Such spaces provide daily opportunities for children to undertake physical activity, learning and play. It is worth noting the capacity for such spaces to further improve the health of children via the provision of small healthy snacks.
- 3.5 It is within this Council's gift to contribute to the improvement of quality of daily life for children and to cement children's positive relationship with food and nutrition.

Accordingly the Council agrees that a report, looking at clubs located in areas of disadvantage and the potential for such spaces to incorporate healthy snacks, as part of out of hours schools provision during both term time and non-term time, be prepared.

February 2020 Update

- 3.6 Officers provided members of P&C Committee with an update report re. action taken/progress against this NOM in February 2020.
- 3.7 Almost all of the 22 BCC owned Community Centres have after schools' activities in place for 5-11 year olds. Activities include a combination of drama/arts/crafts/open play/music etc. as well, to a lesser extent, sporting activities. The main focus is on recreation

and play. In general food (as in a meal) is not provided due to the short time period the child is present (less than 2hrs).

- 3.8 Food provision is different at summer schemes as children usually attend for a longer session (2 hours or more with a break included). They may attend either once or twice a day for 4 weeks. A snack is also provided morning and afternoon and there isn't currently a BCC-led healthy eating policy or guidance in place that the centres have to follow/adhere to in relation to providing nutritious meals and snacks. BCC also fund community based summer schemes via a grants scheme and one of the criteria is that the scheme *'provides activities that improve health - including physical activity/exercise/mental health/healthy diet/health behaviours.'*
- 3.9 A sample survey looking at current practice was conducted by a Council officer which found that a number of after schools' projects accommodated a short break and provided some refreshments e.g. water, diluted juice (no added sugar), fruit, plain biscuits, toast. Overall, there appeared to be a general culture of encouraging healthy options however there were no prerequisites and no formal guidance/instruction in place. There would also be limits on what could be provided in Centres due to budget constraints.
- 3.10 The report concluded by outlining the proposed actions that BHDU staff had agreed to explore further with Council's community services staff, namely:
- Further engagement with the BCC Assistant Community Development Officers Forum
 - Resource development
 - Staff training
 - Information provided for parents – and children

Covid Impact

- 3.11 Unfortunately, further action was significantly impacted by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the closure of Council's community centres and suspension of and/or restricted delivery of programming and activities within the centres when they were able to periodically open in 20/21 and 21/22.

Promoting Healthier Eating in Physical Activity and Sport resource

- 3.12 In April 2021 the two specialist dietitians based in the Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU) supporting Active Belfast, produced a new guidance document. The resource (included as an appendix with this report) aims to provide guidance to physical activity leaders and coaches on healthier food and drink options

in settings where physical activity or sport is taking place or is being promoted. This includes both indoor and outdoor activities for example in community centres, leisure centres, sports clubs and activity centres. Getting active can be a great opportunity to promote healthy eating and drinking habits and as people become more active, they may also be keen to improve their diet. The nutrition information in the guide is aimed at healthy adults, young people and school aged children.

- 3.13 Food/drink may be eaten/drunk before or after activities. It might be brought by participants themselves or it can be provided as part of programmes, events or celebrations by the organisers. This can be a great opportunity to provide healthier food and drink choices and highlight important key health messages.
- 3.14 The guide provides practical guidance on;
- a) Drinks
 - b) Healthy snacks
 - c) Celebrations
 - d) Food allergy
 - e) Preparing food safely
 - f) Cooking programmes.

April 2022 Update

- 3.15 The BHSCT dietitian based in BHDU met with the BCC Assistant Community Development Officers Forum on 26th January 2022 where she highlighted the '*Promoting Healthier Eating in Physical Activity and Sport*' resource and its potential for use by Community Services staff as well as other links and support available on nutrition which community staff could avail of.
- 3.16 Further meetings have taken place to commence planning of a practical workshop for community staff to attend (to take place on 10th May) which will focus on healthy snacks. It is anticipated that once Council officers are familiar with the resource that they will also be able to promote it, and assist external groups, to use it. They will also be looking at ways in which Council, in partnership with Active Belfast/BHDU, can provide best practice information, advice and support in relation to physical activity and nutrition to those groups who apply for funding via Council's grants schemes.
- 3.17 Funding has also been made available via Active Belfast to support the provision of 'Go bags' – easy to carry outdoor activity equipment bags (for Community Development Officers/ Playworkers to use with children) a resource identified as a need by CDOs. A small group has been established to identify the resources and the Go bags should be used/targeted.

3.18 The dietitian based in BHDU now also regularly shares information on training opportunities and other relevant opportunities to the CDO team. Some examples include:

- BHSCT Slow Cooker training
- Nutrition Awareness training for Teenagers
- Monthly Nutrition webinars (also posted on interlink and featured on BHDU's www.makinglifebettertogether.com website each month)
- A number of physical activity training opportunities such as 'Chi Me'
- Nutrition resources available to supporting Healthy Eating on a Budget

3.19 BHSCT Dietetics Service in partnership with BHSCT Health Improvement Team are planning a nutrition training calendar for 2022/23 meaning that all training available on both physical activity and nutrition – the Active Belfast dietitian based in BHDU will share this resource once it becomes available.

3.20 The Active Belfast dietitian continues to form relationships within and across Council and has linked in with the BCC Food Sustainability Group/Climate Plan Programme Board and provided feedback on a potential BCC/QUB Food Insecurity Project.

3.21 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications attached to this report, given that promotion of physical activity and nutrition is an ongoing priority work area within the Belfast Agenda and therefore staff within BHDU will be able to continue to provide support and advice in relation to taking agreed work forward in partnership with Council community services staff.

3.22 Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

The proposer of the original motion, Councillor Black, thanked the officers for their hard work in progressing the Motion.

During discussion it was proposed by Councillor de Faoite, seconded by Councillor Smyth and subsequently agreed to invite Unison to discuss its 'Free School Meals for all Campaign' to the Special Meeting of the People and Communities Committee with the Belfast Youth Council on 21st June.

Sanitary Waste Pilot Update

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that, in February 2022, as part of an update on period poverty to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, officers had reported that the Community Awareness and Waste Education teams were developing a pilot initiative that would provide access to free, reusable sanitary products.

The aim of the initiative was to raise awareness and to encourage increased use of reusable period products which would also have an environmental benefit as it would reduce the amount of period waste entering the waste stream. Whilst primarily focused on waste reduction, it also had the benefit of providing a sustainable resource for those affected by period poverty.

The pilot scheme had been launched on 30th March 2022 and was designed to provide free access to reusable sanitary products to people in the Belfast area. Council officers had worked with the social enterprise, 'Hey Girls' www.heygirls.co.uk, to deliver the scheme, where participants could register and order reusable sanitary products online.

The Director advised that the Belfast pilot scheme had received unexpected and unprecedented levels of demand with over 2,750 orders made in less than 24 hours. Such was the level of demand that the notional budget officers had allocated to the scheme had required to be increased five-fold. Social media coverage and feedback on the scheme had been extremely positive and had praised the Council for bringing the initiative forward. Over 95,000 people had been reached through Council social media on the topic, with over 225,000 people having viewed twitter posts promoting the scheme.

The Members were advised that officers were currently evaluating the scheme and the ongoing levels of interest to determine how future initiatives would be delivered. The pilot scheme had delivered products at no cost to maximise uptake, but was it anticipated that future schemes might need to include some contribution from participants to try and increase the numbers ultimately able to benefit.

A Member welcomed the scheme and its overall success but stated that she would be keen not to see a charge introduced as she felt that this would go against the ethos of the scheme.

It was proposed by Councillor Mulholland, seconded by Councillor Kelly and subsequently agreed that, given the success of the initiative, a request be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee seeking it to find the budget to enable the provision of reusable sanitary products to continue to be funded and where possible that these products should continue to be offered free of charge or for a nominal charge at a minimum.

Active Belfast 2002/23 Approach

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 secure agreement on the use of Belfast City Council’s allocation to support Active Belfast in 2022/23.

1.2 Active Belfast (AB) is a multi-agency partnership supporting physical activity and healthy eating in Belfast. It is jointly funded by BCC (£90,000) and Public Health Agency (£146,000) per annum.

1.3 The overall funding allocated for Active Belfast is £236,000 per annum and remains unchanged from 2021/22, however officers wish to request to use part of the in-year BCC Active Belfast contribution (which up until 20/21 had been fully allocated to grants) to support the work of the Active Belfast Partnership (currently being re-established post Covid) and the identified key priority areas as outlined in section three of this report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is asked to:

- Note the content of the report; and
- To agree that the BCC contribution (£90K) to Active Belfast is utilised as outlined in the proposed budget profile for 22/23 detailed in Table 2 Section 3.5.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

Members will be aware senior staff from Council, BHSCT and PHA have been considering the future of their joint working arrangements (staffing and financial resources) to address health inequalities in the Belfast area to include reviewing and reaffirming current commitments to the previous Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) and the reduction of life inequalities in line with the Belfast Agenda/Community Plan, Making Life Better and a range of forthcoming strategic developments focussing on public health. However, physical activity and healthy eating remain priority areas within the refreshed Belfast Agenda as well as wider health-focussed strategic documents. Active Belfast therefore, both as an approach and as a partnership, will continue to develop over the coming months and years.

3.2 20/21 Approach – Recap

Historically, the two main initiatives supported by the Active Belfast Partnership were the Active Belfast Grant Scheme and Jog Belfast (Couch to 5K programme) with staff in the Belfast Health

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th May, 2022**

Development Unit (BHDU) promoting, administering and monitoring both initiatives.

In 2021/22 People and Communities Committee agreed that;

- Active Belfast grant holders from 20/21 would be offered continuation funding in order to complete their original programmes/initiatives in 21/22 to increase likelihood of sustainability in the future. For some, completion/achievement of all objectives had not been possible due to Covid regulations. Continuation was subject to meeting review criteria and agreeing a new action plan with relevant leads within BHDU for key performance indicators.
- A developmental budget would be held for AB Partnership supported projects and initiatives – the intention being to further develop some of the more promising grants from last two-year period. These would be supported by BHDU, who would have responsibility for identifying priority areas for the refreshed partnership to consider. Again, this would be subject to meeting set criteria and agreeing action plans, targets, etc.
- Support would be provided in-year for Jog Belfast of £23,133 via the existing available funds – specifically from within the BCC £90K contribution to Active Belfast.
- Support would be provided for BCC’s Micro and Medium Grants Scheme for 2021/2022.

Table 1 below outlines how the budget was profiled in 21/22 (including the £56K additional contribution from PHA).

3.3 Table 1: 2021/2022 Active Belfast Agreed Budget

Expenditure 2021/22	BCC	PHA	Total
BCC Micro-Medium grants	£ 39,970	£ 39,970	£ 79,940
Jog Belfast	£ 23,133	£ 32,867	£ 56,000
Active Belfast Partnership budget to support promising AB grants from 20/21 and developmental activities	£ 26,897	£ 73,163	£ 100,060
Total expenditure	£ 90,000	£ 146,000	£ 236,000

3.4 Rationale for Proposed Active Belfast 22/23 Budget Profile

Discussions have taken place at a senior level amongst the funding partners (BCC and PHA – as well as BHSCT) and having considered a range of options the following key actions have now been agreed.

3.5 Micro and Medium Grants (£79,940)

Following discussions with officers in both lead organisations we intend to contribute a total of £79,940 to the BCC micro/medium community grants scheme (of which both organisations will give an equal contribution of £39,970) to continue to pilot this funding model to inform future resourcing of physical activity and nutrition focussed work in Belfast.

3.6 Participatory Budgeting Pilot (£64,000)

Active Belfast Partnership, supported by BHDU, will lead on the development and delivery of a Pilot Participatory Budgeting initiative (one of the key actions proposed under the Physical Activity theme within the Belfast Agenda refresh) of approx. £16,000 per area North, South, West and East Belfast.

3.7 Jog Belfast (£42,000)

In relation to Jog Belfast we intend to provide £42,000 (PHA £32,867 and BCC £9,133) to support a new funding model for Jog Belfast and confirm contributions available from partners re. same. The Jog Belfast model, and how it is resourced going forward, will be a priority item for consideration by members of the Active Belfast Partnership. Allocation of funding will support 7 sites across the City of Belfast, within North, South, West and East to deliver 3 programmes across the year.

3.8 Active Belfast Grants Rollover (£44,829)

Allocation of continuation funding to two current Active Belfast Grant holders (from 2021/22) where targets have been met and outcomes are promising, and where the contract holder has indicated that they can build on the initiative (ability to do so was built into the process at the outset). This has been proposed for two reasons, to increase capacity and foster sustainability at the local/community level, as well as to allow time for development and consideration of a new funding model for future resourcing of physical activity and nutrition focussed work in Belfast. The two projects selected are showing potential to be adopted as regional initiatives as they align with both the new Sport and Physical Activity Strategy as well as PHA commissioning priorities for Physical Activity.

BHDU will direct anyone making enquiries around funding to other potential sources of support such as the BCC Micro/Medium Grants Scheme as well as other grant opportunities such as those provided by the National Lottery Community Fund – and where appropriate directing them through the Council's Community

Services team for advice and support around grants and capacity building. BHDU staff will also link in with those awarded BCC Micro/Medium grants focussing on promoting healthier lifestyle choices to provide advice, signposting and make connections around physical activity & healthy eating to support or enhance their delivery.

3.9 Active Belfast Partnership (£5,230.80)

With the dissolution of the Belfast Strategic Partnership and the introduction of Community Planning/the Belfast Agenda and the associated Boards, etc.– there remains a need to review and rejuvenate the Active Belfast Partnership in terms of role and function, membership and priorities going forward. The three partner organisations (BCC, BHSCT and PHA), had already committed to driving forward this process during 21/22 and this will continue in 22/23 (and beyond) with the partnership taking on an active role in relation to developing and delivering on the agreed actions focussing on Physical Activity and Nutrition within the refreshed community plan for Belfast – to be overseen by the Living Here Board.

The proposed budget allocation per organisation and overall is detailed in Table 2 below.

3.10 Table 2: Proposed budget for 2022/2023 to support the key areas outlined above

<u>Proposed Expenditure 2022/23</u>	BCC	PHA	Total
Micro-Medium grants	£ 39,970.00	£ 39,970.00	£ 79,940.00
<i>Partnership innovation projects</i>			
Pilot Participatory funding	£ 26,000.00	£ 38,000.00	£ 64,000.00
<i>Business continuity</i>			
Jog Belfast (£42000 - 7 sites x 3)	£ 9,133.00	£ 32,867.00	£ 42,000.00
Active Belfast Grants rollover	£ 14,457.60	£ 30,371.60	£ 44,829.20
	£		
Resources/Training	439.40	£ 4,791.40	£ 5,230.80
Total expenditure	£ 90,000.00	£ 146,000.00	£236,000.00

3.11 Financial and Human Resource Implications

Subject to Council and PHA approval/agreement, a budget of £236,000 (as outlined in the Table 2 in 3.10) will remain available to support this work in 22/23. Belfast City Council's £90K contribution towards the £236K total has been included within the revenue estimates for 2022/23 and therefore does not represent any growth.

3.12 Kim Kensett (PHA) and Grainne McMacken (BHSCT) will continue to lead on this work within the BHDU in 22/23. Oversight will continue to be provided by Kelly Gilliland within BCC and David Tumilty within PHA with all stakeholders in the Active Belfast Partnership taking on a more active role as the year progresses and the partnership regains its focus and momentum.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of the report is for members to consider a request to become a formal partner of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Agree that Belfast City Council becomes a formal partner of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

2.2 Members are advised that in becoming a partner, Council agrees:

- To support the ethos of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and consider the Plan in policies, plans, and management decisions where possible.
- To carry out one pollinator-friendly action in the first year of signing up and plan to carry out at least three more within the following five years. The guideline document lists 30 possible actions, many of which are low cost or cost neutral.
- To update the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Team on the positive pollinator actions planned, implemented or maintained at the end of each year.

3.0 **Main report**

Key Issues

- 3.1 Insect pollination is essential to food production. ‘One out of every 3 mouthfuls’ is pollinated by insects. Wild bees pollinate between 85-95% of the UK’s insect pollinated crops, while honeybees pollinate between 5-15%. This free service is estimated to be worth £1.8 billion each year.
- 3.2 More than half of our bee species have suffered declines over the past 50 years with over 250 UK pollinators in danger of extinction. Habitat loss is a major driver of pollinator declines and in Northern Ireland we have lost as much as 97% of our wildflower meadows in the last half century.
- 3.3 Members are reminded that in 2015 Belfast City Council endorsed and supported the first All-Ireland Pollinator Plan which aimed to take steps to reverse pollinator losses and help restore populations to healthy levels.
- 3.4 Building on the success of the first Plan, the new Plan 2021 - 2025 has 6 objectives:
- **Making farmland pollinator friendly** - By working together with the farming community, we want to achieve an increased awareness of pollinators and the resources they need in order to survive on farmland.
 - **Making public land pollinator friendly** - By working together with Councils, Transport Authorities, Local Communities and others, we want to better coexist with biodiversity and help return food and shelter for pollinators to our island.
 - **Making private land pollinator friendly** - From gardens, to businesses, faith communities and sports clubs, we want to work together to create networks of biodiversity-friendly habitat across our landscape.
 - **All-Ireland Honeybee Strategy** - By supporting beekeepers, we want to achieve healthy, sustainable populations, and for honeybees to be part of a cohesive pollinator message that balances managed and wild pollinator populations.
 - **Conserving rare pollinators** - By improving our knowledge on rare pollinators, and by raising awareness through dedicated initiatives, we want to achieve a Plan that protects as much wild pollinator diversity as possible.

- **Strategic coordination of the Plan** - By continually raising awareness; addressing gaps in our knowledge through research; and by tracking where pollinators occur and how populations are changing, we want to work from an evidence base that enables us to coordinate a dynamic plan that is targeted and effective.
- 3.5 **Belfast City Council has received a request to become a formal partner of the new All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025. In becoming a partner, Council agrees:**
1. **To support the ethos of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and consider the Plan in policies, plans, and management decisions where possible.**
 2. **To carry out one pollinator-friendly action in the first year of signing up and plan to carry out at least three more within the following five years. The guideline document lists 30 possible actions, many of which are low cost or cost neutral.**
 3. **To update the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Team on the positive pollinator actions planned, implemented or maintained at the end of each year.**
- 3.6 **The Council is already contributing to the objectives of the Plan through our existing land management such as our meadow management and projects such as the successful Bee-licious Pollinator project.**
- 3.7 **Members are reminded that at February Council, BCC agreed to support the Belfast's Buzzing Pollinator Project with BugLife, which aims to promote insect pollinators in parks and open spaces as well as inform, inspire and engage local communities in the recovery of nature within their local area.**
- 3.8 **Council has agreed £5,000 funding for project work to occur on BCC land and that Council will manage these project sites for the next ten years, maintaining their biodiversity value.**
- 3.9 **The Belfast's Buzzing project will form the focus of the Council's commitment to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan over the next 2 years and to be able to link these actions as a formal partner of the Plan would strengthen existing and future funding applications.**

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 **It is not anticipated that these actions will incur any additional costs and will be met through existing work programmes.**

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

3.11 There are no known implications with this report.”

During discussion a Member sought an update on the status of a previous Notice of Motion in regard to rewilding, he continued that he would be keen to see the Council adopting a more joined up approach in regard to progressing environmental issues.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that an update regarding the outstanding Notice of Motions was scheduled to be submitted to the June meeting of Committee.

Following a query regarding the Council’s use of glyphosate-based weed killers and the introduction of alternative weed control measures, the Director of Neighbourhood Services undertook to submit an update report to a future meeting.

The Committee adopted the recommendations as outlined at 2.0 of the report.

Disability Bowls Coaching Programme

The Committee considered a report that provided the detail of a request received from the Irish Bowls Federation (IBF) seeking permission to develop a Disability Bowls Hub in Belfast, along with details of a proposed pilot project for a Disability Bowls Hub in Belfast.

The Members were advised that in 2022 the IBF had undertaken a Club Engagement Survey (response rate of 73%). The key findings and emerging priorities from this survey had highlighted the following:

- the under representation of women and girls;
- a disability gap with a surprising lack of active playing members with a disability and provision;
- an ageing demographic;
- survival of clubs; and
- a lack of any recognised club support structure to help with sustainability and growth.

The IBF had since agreed to focus upon one emerging priority area, namely, the provision of more sporting opportunities for people with disabilities.

The Members were advised that the IBF had identified Musgrave and Grove Bowling Pavilions as potential sites to develop the Disability Hub, given the availability of indoor halls for all year-round use.

The Members’ attention was then drawn to the proposed short-term priorities for the programme - June to September 2022, as follows:

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th May, 2022**

- to investigate, develop and help implement a 'Disability Bowls Hub' pilot programme;
- the provision of all equipment;
- engagement with local community groups;
- the provision of bowls coaching with experienced bowls coaches;
- to encourage and promote wellness and well-being; and
- to build a positive and inclusive sports culture.

The Longer term aims and objectives were then highlighted, as follows:

- to continue a working partnership with Belfast City Council to help promote and foster the development of talented athletes;
- the provision of suitable facilities, for example, a bowling green and pavilion that was fully accessible to all disabilities with suitable equipment (adapted wheelchairs) for use on the bowling green; and
- to develop athletes to represent Northern Ireland at prestigious International para and visually impaired events and establish the necessary infrastructure to facilitate their preparation, training and development.

The Committee was advised that Northern Ireland was the only home country, which currently did not have para or visually impaired bowls representatives at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

The Committee noted the key findings from the recently commissioned research and the level of existing support mechanisms within the sport of bowls and welcomed this proposed pilot project. Several Members stated that they would be keen to ensure that this valuable work was extended and built upon following the initial pilot.

Following discussion, the Committee:

- agreed to support a pilot project up to a maximum of £6,000 with the view of developing a "Disability Bowls Hub" to provide more sporting opportunities for people with disabilities and agreed that this pilot would be extended to include those with unseen disabilities; and
- noted the need to extend the work beyond the actual pilot and agreed that, following the pilot, officers would review its success and submit a report to Committee that would explore how the work could be continued and enhanced within the context of the Sports Development Strategy.

Operational Issues

**Request to hold events in Parks –
June/July 2022**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that several requests had been received from event organisers seeking to host events in a number of Belfast park locations during June and July 2022.

She detailed that the following applications had been received:

- Finaghy Residents Association seeking to host the Finaghy Cultural Festival to take place between 9th – 13th June at Wedderburn Park;
- County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast to host their annual Twelfth of July celebrations at Barnett Demesne and a service of remembrance at the Cenotaph in the grounds of the City Hall; and
- the County Grand Orange Lodge regarding the use of the Barnett's Demesne for its Belfast demonstrations on 12th July.

The Committee acceded to the requests, subject to an appropriate legal agreement being prepared by Legal Services and granted delegated 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 to:
 - the organisers resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
 - compliance with Coronavirus restrictions in place at the time of the event; and
 - the events meeting all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities, including terms and conditions of the Parks Entertainment License; and
 - the organisers consulting with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary.

The Members 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 taken forward in conjunction with the Council's Commercial team.

**Roll out of 'Take 5' Benches in
Belfast City Council Parks**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To update Committee on work proposed to locate approx. 16 ‘Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing’ benches across Council’s parks (up to 4 per locality i.e. North, South, East and West) in 2022/23.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is asked to:

- Note the content of the report; and
- Agree to the Department’s request to work in partnership with the Public Health Agency (PHA) to use park benches to promote the ‘Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing’ approach as well as information contained on the PHA’s Minding Your Head website, accessible via a QR code visible on each bench. Up to sixteen benches will be identified within parks across the city, four benches within each locality. Belfast Health Development Unit staff will work with BCC Open Space and Street Scene Managers to identify and agree locations.

3.0 Main report

Background to Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing

3.1 The Public Health Agency have adopted the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing messages as a key component in their work supporting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing is a set of evidence-based public health messages aimed at improving the wellbeing of the whole population. It is based on the Five Ways to Wellbeing developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) as the result of research undertaken as part of the Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing (2008).

3.2 The 5 steps are; ‘Connect, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning and Give’ – please refer to the leaflet in Appendix 1 for more information or visit: <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/take-5-steps-wellbeing-english-and-11-translations> to access downloadable PDFs. These simple and effective messages are based on solid evidence and draw on a wealth of psychological and economic literature from inter-disciplinary work. Evidence indicates individuals who practise all ‘5 steps’ have the highest level of wellbeing regardless of circumstances.

3.3 Council already supports the ‘Take 5’ approach both internally through the promotion of the ‘Take 5’ messages across all BCC

facilities as well as externally via social media, open call grant funding, and its work with partners under community planning. BCC staff located within the Belfast Health Development Unit are also supporting this work by providing resources and training opportunities linked directly to the 'Take 5' approach. BHDU have also produced a useful toolkit which can be viewed online: <https://www.makinglifebettertogether.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Take-5-Toolkit.pdf>

Background to proposed Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing Benches initiative

- 3.4 Pre-covid and following a request from the local community and subsequent meetings and discussions facilitated by staff from within the Belfast Health Development Unit, a 'Wellbeing' bench was placed in Falls Park in West Belfast in December 2019 in partnership with St Paul's ABC and Suicide Awareness Support Group.
- 3.5 In the interim period, other councils have installed similar 'Chatty Benches' in some of their parks also focussing on the Take 5 messaging (i.e. take notice and connect) such as Ards and North Down, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon and Mid East Antrim Councils.
- 3.6 Earlier this year, staff from within the Belfast/South Eastern team of the Public Health Agency approached Council via the Belfast Health Development Unit for support in promoting the Take 5 messaging specifically via the installation of more Take 5 benches within Council's parks.
- 3.7 Both elected members and council officers continue to be regularly approached by members of the public and/or community/sporting groups in relation to memorial benches. And whilst council does enable individuals to purchase memorial seats – see <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/births-deaths-and-ceremonies/crematorium/memorial-options#320-1> this can however be quite costly, and several of our parks now have reduced capacity in terms of being able to locate the seats in people's preferred locations. Council is planning to develop a memorialisation policy in due course which will look at this more broadly in terms of the related issues and proposed solutions applicable across our cemeteries, parks and open spaces.
- 3.8 However, in the meantime, officers are keen to work in partnership with statutory and community partners to promote our parks and open spaces as places where our residents can go to improve, not only their physical, but also their mental and emotional wellbeing. Thus, Belfast Health Development Unit staff have spoken with Open Space and Street Scene colleagues, alongside Property

Maintenance colleagues and with funding available from PHA, we would be able to repurpose up to 16 existing benches to become colourful 'Take 5 benches', incorporating the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing messaging, along with a QR code linking to the PHA's Minding Your Head website and placed in prominent positions within 16 of our parks across the City (4 per area).

3.9 Should the initiative be well-received, and further funding become available, we can consider a further phase/roll out in 23/24.

3.10 **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no financial or resource implications to the recommendations outlined above as the required financial resource (£5,000) has been allocated to BHDU via the Public Health Agency.

3.11 **Human Resources**

Staff within Belfast Heath Development Unit currently support Take 5 work and this will be the case going forward with this proposal.

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

There are no equality or good relations implications to the recommendations outlined above."

Several of the Members welcomed this initiative. During discussion an update of the status of the various requests for picnic benches across the City was sought and the Director of Neighbourhood Services undertook to submit an update report to a future meeting.

The Committee:

- agreed the Department's request to work in partnership with the Public Health Agency (PHA) to use park benches to promote the 'Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing' approach as well as information contained on the PHA's Minding Your Head website which would be accessible via a QR code that would be visible on each bench; and
- noted that up to sixteen benches would be identified within parks across the city, four benches within each locality and that the location of these would be progressed via the Area Working Groups.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

**Request to Present - Presentation in relation
to inclusive parks (Councillor McMullan)**

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th May, 2022**

With the permission of the Deputy Chairperson, Councillor McMullan addressed the Committee and detailed a request for representatives from PlayBoard NI and the Mae Murray Foundation to be invited to the June meeting of the People and Communities Committee. He advised that this was in relation to a Notice of Motion that was due to be presented to the Standards and Business Committee at its meeting scheduled for 24th May in relation to Inclusive Parks.

The Committee acceded to the request, subject to the approval of the Standards and Business Committee and Council ratification.

Chairperson

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 11th May, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);
Alderman Dorrian; and
Councillors, Beattie, Donnelly, Gormley, Hanvey,
Howard, Hussey, T. Kelly, Maskey, McLaughlin,
McMullan and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mrs. W. Langham, Project Director, Belfast Destination Hub;
Ms. E. Henry, Strategic Lead, Belfast Destination Hub;
and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of Councillor Ferguson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 6th 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 9th May.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Beattie, Lyons and O'Hara declared an interest in relation to item 4(a), under the heading 'Freeport/Innovation Zones' in that they were on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and left the meeting while the item was under consideration.

Presentations

Translink - Weavers Cross Regeneration Scheme

The Chairperson introduced representatives from Translink and Weavers Cross to the meeting: Mr. L. McComb, Mr D. McAllister, Mr. D. Taggart and Ms. H. Harrison, to provide an update on the Belfast Transport Hub at Weavers Cross.

Mr. McAllister outlined the ongoing building works and progress of four major projects which were being carried out on site and stated that rail and bus operations would

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th May, 2022**

continue throughout the construction process until 2024, when the site would then be occupied by Translink.

He referred to recent branding and marketing activities how the transport hub had been launched as Belfast Grand Central Station, and he stated that it had been well received with positive feedback

He explained to the Committee the investment priorities for Translink between 2020 and 2030, which included transport hubs, integrated ticketing, rail infrastructure, decarbonising its fleet and all-island connectivity.

Ms. Harrison highlighted Translink's recent success at the National Social Value awards and explained the social value activities, such as employment academies, and outlined the benefits, to date, of the Busway Bridge project.

She referred to arts and heritage activities and community engagement and plans to work with art projects in both Sandy Row and Grosvenor Road, which would allow young people in the areas to showcase what they would like to see and work to move those ideas to move forward.

Mr. McComb outlined how the project was an integral part of the newly reimagined Belfast and that, it linked to other schemes being undertaken in the city such as the new Ulster University.

Ms. Harrison pointed out how the project aligned with some key Council strategies, which included the Belfast Agenda, Bolder Vision, Resilience Strategy and the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Mr. McComb concluded the presentation with an overview of the Weavers Cross Masterplan and outlined the benefits of the project. He referred to it being the main transport hub for all of Northern Ireland with strong political and community support and exemplary social, economic and environmental credentials.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the planting of trees to improve air quality in the area, Mr. McAllister stated that diesel engines were being phased out over the following ten years in favour of electric and hybrid alternatives, in both buses and trains. He added that the building would draw all of its power efficiently using green energy forms. Ms. Harrison added that tree planting and landscape works had been designed in detail and would be in place prior to or immediately after the opening of the hub.

A number of Members expressed concern regarding displacement of traffic, particularly with regard to Sandy Row. Mr. McAllister responded by stating that the design of the new bus yard had taken into account 2000 additional passenger journeys per day, accounting for those who would previously have used a diesel or petrol car and entering the city centre and that work was being undertaken and would report those calculations back to the Committee in due course.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th May, 2022**

The Chairperson thanked the delegation for their informative presentation and the Committee noted the update.

Requests to present

Renewed Ambition Task Force

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from representatives of the Renewed Ambition Partnership Task Force, and its commissioned consultants, in relation to a report which examined the role that the built environment plays in delivering social, economic and environmental benefits to Belfast and the wider Belfast City Region.

**Department for Infrastructure –
Spring and Autumn Report 2022**

The Committee agreed to receive presentations from DfI on their Spring and Autumn 2022 reports and to delegate authority to the Director of City Regeneration and Development to schedule future DfI Spring and Autumn reports and presentations to the Committee.

The Committee further agreed to consider any strategic city infrastructure questions to put to officers from the Department for Infrastructure at the presentation of the spring report to the Committee.

**Pragma Consulting - Retail and Leisure
Performance Strategy**

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from Pragma Ltd in relation to the findings of the Retail and Leisure Performance Strategy at its Special Meeting, which was scheduled to take place on 22nd June, 2022

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Freeport/Innovation Zones

(Councillors Beattie, Lyons and O'Hara, having declared an interest in this item, left the meeting for the duration.)

The Director of Economic Development updated the Committee on developments with regard to Freeports across the UK, and that, following the publication of the English Freeport Prospectus, eight freeports had been designated.

He outlined the current Freeport model, which aimed to support a place with a clear economic geography and outer boundary that must contain at least one port, one customs site and one tax site, and that, Freeport bids had initially been expected to be led and operated by the private sector. However, due to the due diligence that would be required to draw down public funding, they had become increasingly public sector led.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th May, 2022**

He described the Scottish Government's Greenport proposal, where nine areas were being considered for the establishment of two Green Freeports and how the UK Government had indicated that it would continue to work with devolved administrations in order to extend the Freeport programme across the whole of the UK.

He referred to the emerging Northern Ireland proposition, which had resulted from a strategic appraisal of a Freeport proposition, the findings of which identified the potential for a Northern Ireland Innovation Zone to deliver innovative and sustainable economic growth for the region. He outlined a range of objectives which had emerged from the strategic appraisal, which included:

- Innovation;
- Competitiveness and productivity;
- Trade and investment;
- Regeneration; and
- Net zero.

He pointed out that the emerging proposition had considered specific circumstances in Northern Ireland which would require enhanced investment and that any Northern Ireland bid would have to be constructed in a unique way and that the submission of several Innovation Zones could result in competing bids.

The Director of Economic Development stated that the City Deals would play an integral role in supporting some of the NI Innovation Zone components and that tax incentives could increase the attractiveness of the region to the private sector and support the delivery of the priorities of various regional and sectoral economic strategies.

The Committee agreed to note the content of the report and it was

Moved by Councillor McLoughlin,
Seconded by Councillor Heading,

That officers would no longer explore the potential for a Freeport, as part of a Northern Ireland Innovation Zone.

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

**Update on Harkin International
Disability Employment Summit**

The Director of Economic Development informed the Committee that the Harkin Summit had been conceived in 2016 by Senator Tom Harkin, who represented Iowa in the United States Congress for more than four decades and had led on legislation to protect the civil rights of millions of Americans with physical and mental disabilities.

He stated that the summit was internationally recognised as a platform which brought leaders and activists together to highlight and address disability employment issues, showcase best practice and to build relationships.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th May, 2022**

He reported that the event would take place in the ICC Belfast on 7th and 8th June, 2022, which would be the first time that the summit had taken place outside of USA, and it had been expected that the event would attract more than 400 international delegates over the two days. He added that the Council would be hosting the conference reception in City Hall and that the Lord Mayor had been invited to make an address at the event.

He pointed out how the summit aligned with a new strategy which was being developed by the Department for Communities, which was to support access to employment for those with a disability and that the Department would use the event as a launchpad for a range of legacy interventions to increase access to employment for those with disabilities.

He stated that many local organisations would promote their activities during the event, which would offer an opportunity to both learn from good practice and to promote the many positive interventions underway in the city for access to employment for those with a disability.

The Committee:

- Noted the Harkin International Disability Employment Summit, scheduled to take place in Belfast on 7th-8th June 2022;
- Noted the commitment to securing a significant legacy from the event, which included the proposals around access to employment, mentoring and work experience; and
- Agreed to promote the event through networks and contacts, to maximise impact and support the wider discussion on a new disability employment strategy which was being led by the Department for Communities.

Electronic Travel Authorisation

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 At a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 6th April 2022, the Director of Economic Development was asked to update Members on the impact of the introduction of the proposed Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) for travel between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the evidence heard by and presented to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee at the House of Commons on 20th April 2022.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report
- A further update on the progression of the legislation and how the ETA will operate will be brought to a future Committee.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background to the proposed Electronic Travel Authorisation Scheme

Under new post-Brexit immigration and border control legislation going through Westminster, non-Irish EU citizens living in or visiting the Republic of Ireland would require an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) to cross the border into Northern Ireland. The Nationality and Borders Bill is primarily an asylum and immigration bill, however the new legislation extends to short visits into the UK, so tourists will have to comply.

Last month, MPs voted 298 to 216, majority 82, on the Nationality and Borders Bill to reject a Lord's amendment to the Bill which sought to remove the requirement for foreigners to need an ETA. The Bill is now at the consideration of amendments stage and it is planned that the ETA will be fully operational by the start of 2025.

The visa-waiver style scheme, which would be similar to the one used in the US, would not apply to Irish or UK citizens, who are guaranteed free movement around the island under the terms of the long-standing common travel area (CTA) agreement.

- It would require non-British and non-Irish EU citizens to apply for pre-travel clearance.
- An ETA will be required for those international tourists who want to travel onwards to Northern Ireland, even if it is just for a day trip.
- The system would be similar to the declaration that international passengers have to fill in before travelling to the United States or Canada.

The draft bill contains measures to require non-British and non-Irish nationals to apply in advance for permission to travel to the UK via an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme. The Government has not yet announced full details of the ETA such as how much it will cost, but there are concerns, highlighted by votes in the House of Lords, that the ETA could be a disproportionate response by the Government to concerns about issues such as people trafficking. The UK Government has insisted the ETA process will be simple and will not involve physical checks on the border.

- 3.2 Impact on Belfast and Northern Ireland –
Oral evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee**
- 3.3 Oral evidence on the introduction of the ETA was heard by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee at the House of Commons on 20 April 2022 and was heard from:**
- Dr Joanne Stuart OBE, Chief Executive Officer, Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance (NITA) established in 2018 and led by industry, is the voice for tourism and travel in Northern Ireland with members spanning all sectors of the tourism economy.
 - John McGrillen, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism NI
 - Shane Clarke, Director of Corporate Services, Policy and Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland
- 3.4 Dr Joanne Stuart OBE, NI Tourism Alliance (NITA) advised the Committee:**
- There had been no consultation at all with the industry on the planned introduction of the ETA and the impact in Northern Ireland and detailed information on how it will work is limited
 - We currently have seamless travel across the island of Ireland with our main gateway for overseas travellers via the Republic of Ireland, and particularly with tour operators, people come and arrange their trip based across the island of Ireland.
 - The perceived single-entry system would be unworkable and completely impractical as often people cross the border multiple times during a visit and people want to have hassle free travel. Research by Tourism Ireland on our overseas markets has shown that anything that is perceived to be an

additional obstacle or barrier to a trip could result in deciding to stay within the Republic of Ireland.

- **Recent challenges with different regulations around international travel during Covid resulted in tour operators cancelling the Northern Ireland elements of their trip due to the additional testing requirements, administration with the UK passenger locator form and the additional cost. We have seen the impact that it can have when there is not alignment across the island.**
- **About £160m of visitor spend is at risk impacting on about half a million visitors (based on 2019 NISRA figures) – not just leisure tourism; but a lot of people will travel via the Republic of Ireland into Northern Ireland to attend international conferences. Any additional administration or barrier to entry could have an impact on our competitiveness to attract those conferences to Northern Ireland.**
- **There are concerns about the impact on cross-border workers such as coach drivers and tour guides, many of whom are living legally in the Republic of Ireland due to their EU membership but are not Irish citizens. Through the EU settlement scheme people who work on a full-time basis in Northern Ireland are covered, however, a lot of coach drivers and tour guides who will come over with the tours will not be in that situation and given the skills shortage in this sector we need to make it more attractive, not put those already working here at risk.**

In summary we estimate that we have lost around £1 billion in visitor spend to tourism and the tourism economy. We are an export industry, so we are bringing money into the economy. When tours and conferences are being planned, we are looking three to five years out. The uncertainty about what the requirement is going to be and how it is going to work in Northern Ireland can be very off-putting. We ask that it be considered as a matter of urgency so that we can clarify the situation and have the opportunity to work through the detail of what, as currently laid out, we think is unworkable for us in Northern Ireland.

- **We are suggesting an exemption for those people who arrive in the Republic of Ireland and travel across the land border to Northern Ireland so that they do not require the ETA. Their trip is within the island of**

Ireland. We do have people who arrive directly into Northern Ireland from European countries. We have some European flights, and as they are arriving in an official port of entry, they will be aware that they will need an ETA and will have to have that. Also, if anybody were coming from Dublin to Northern Ireland and then on into GB, they could only get into GB via an official port of entry. At that point, they would need the ETA, which would be checked.

- Our challenge is that there are no checks, and we have been told by the Home Office that it does not intend to have any checks on the land border. Our concern is whether we are going to start having ad hoc checks and how they will determine who they check for an ETA, which could cause some problems around how they identify who they want to check. The exemption is very much specified as, or restricted to, those who are travelling from the Republic of Ireland across the land border into Northern Ireland.

3.5 John McGrillen, Tourism Northern Ireland advised the Committee:

- It has taken us a long time to build up the level of business we have got. Our fear would be if we don't make this simple or easy to understand, there is the potential for that business to be lost again.
- In 2019, which was probably the most recent year in which we got reasonable statistics, about 780,000 visitors out of the 3 million overseas visitors who visited Northern Ireland came from outside the common travel area. The estimation is that about 60% of those people spent time on both sides of the border on the island of Ireland.
- We do not have statistics for people who have arrived in the Republic of Ireland, travelled into Northern Ireland and then travelled on to GB, but I would say that the numbers of people doing that would be minimal because people typically come for a visit to the island of Ireland. The tour operators tend to operate on an island of Ireland basis, although there are a number who would operate on the island of Ireland, then go into Scotland and then perhaps return to Dublin to fly home again.
- There is a fear that many tour operators in the south would simply choose to forego trying to sell packages

including Northern Ireland over the plans advising that ‘the fact this ambiguity exists, or this level of explanation is required, will make it much easier for that agent to simply say: ‘I don’t need to be bothered with this hassle it is much easier for me to sell a trip to Cork or Kerry’.

- It is an issue for coach tour operators because that sector is very dependent on migrant labour, particularly in the Republic of Ireland. They would employ lots of Poles, Lithuanians and suchlike to drive their coaches. Imagine a coach driver who currently crosses a border 70 to 80 times a year bringing a coachload of people from Dublin to the north and back again. It is an issue for the coach tour operators, and they have raised it with us.
- The industry over the last two years has survived on visitor numbers from the Republic of Ireland and staycations. As our routes open up, those people who have been locked into the island of Ireland for the last two years will want to travel abroad. The recovery and growth of the sector will really be dependent on the numbers of visitors we attract from the rest of the United Kingdom and further afield in the years ahead. From our perspective, the growth of the tourism sector is going to come from those overseas markets.

3.6 Shane Clarke from Tourism Ireland outlined the damage the system could have island wide advising:

- At the moment, we have really seamless travel across the island of Ireland. Our main gateway for overseas travellers is via the Republic of Ireland, and particularly with tour operators, people come and arrange their trip based across the island of Ireland.
- It is not only going to be damaging to visitors that would go to Northern Ireland, but it would also be damaging to visitors who would be considering the island of Ireland as it would be just seen as another barrier.
- This is an industry that has been on its knees the last few years with Covid. They can’t really believe this kind of regulation has been brought in.

- **The only feedback from the research that we did is that tour operators and industry clearly want to be compliant with the applicable laws. That means that, from a marketing point of view, we would need to tell people that there was a difference and they needed to be compliant with the laws. Clearly, that would mean people being less likely to want to travel into Northern Ireland. The tour operators would be less willing to programme it because of the associated complexities and costs, and because they would not want their coach driver to be breaking the law inadvertently in any way. Northern Ireland is also a transit point for people going from the south of Ireland up to Donegal, so there is all that complexity.**
- **To summarise some of the findings from our research with the tour operators and the industry. They said that this was a bad idea for tourism for the island of Ireland and a really bad idea for tourism prospects into Northern Ireland. From our point of view, it is value-destroying. We have invested over £1 billion in marketing the island of Ireland and Northern Ireland over the last 20-odd years as a place where people can come with unfettered access across the island. That would need to be reworked to add in these complicating factors.**

3.7 Written evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

Written evidence was also submitted by NITA, TNI and TI included at Appendix 1 which provides additional information, statistics and detailed independent research commissioned by Tourism Ireland.

3.8 Government Response to the Evidence:

Following the oral evidence session, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Immigration and Future Borders, Kevin Foster gave evidence to the committee, defending the plans and reiterated that there would be no physical checks on the border and the system would operate electronically.

Kevin Foster said the purpose of bringing in an ETA scheme is to improve border security. People will be cleared for travel before they depart rather than if, for example, you happen to decline them at the border and then remove them afterwards. That is in relation to travel into the UK from outside the Common Travel Area (CTA) and said the move was necessary

to prevent any abuse of the Common Travel Area. There are no proposed checks on the land border.

He advised that for operators around the world, they will not have to acquaint themselves with a raft of UK immigration statuses and documents. The ETA system not only clears people for travel who are non-visa nationals, but can confirm wider immigration statuses, so people are no longer having to present UK documents to get permission to travel.

Simon Hoare, Chair of the NI Affairs Committee asked Kevin Foster why he had not engaged with NITA, TNI and Tourism Ireland. He did acknowledge that there had been no consultation with the tourism industry or tourism bodies in Northern Ireland and would be happy to do so. However, he emphasised that they had had several engagements with the Irish government and that these types of systems are becoming common around the world. The points made were:

- This type of system has been implemented in many countries and many more countries will go down this route
- The cost, although yet to be decided, will not be prohibitive and will only add a small additional cost to the total cost of a holiday
- The same immigration controls in Belfast should be the same as for the rest of the UK
- It will be the responsibility of tour operators organising trips which include NI to ensure that travellers are aware of the need to have an ETA.
- There are no planned immigration checks on the land border and any checks will be intelligence led
- The Minister did confirm that there has been ongoing engagement with the Irish Government, and they were looking at developing a solution to address the issue for those legally residing in RoI but not Irish Citizens.

One potentially positive update was the fact that the ETA will be multiple entry, as this would resolve the issue of tourists crossing the border multiple times on any one trip. and is likely to cost about £10 and would be valid for more than a year and would cover multiple trips. He also suggested it would begin operating in 2025. However, this is not currently in the legislation.

3.9 Way Forward

It is likely that the introduction of the ETA will go ahead in 2025 despite NITA's request for exemption. Council will

continue to work with our strategic partners in NITA, Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland as they engage with ministers to lobby for the inclusion of a multiple entry ETA into the legalisation and for the cost to be kept to a minimum.

Council will also work with our partners to ensure that other issues are clarified including for example liaison with insurance companies regarding car hire and use of coaches in NI; and support non-Irish residents who live in ROI to gain the required permission to work in NI. In addition, ongoing work to ensure that tour operators are supported by TNI and TI to make it as easy as possible for them to explain and to include Northern Ireland as part of their itineraries; work with airlines and other carriers to ensure that they advise visitors in advance of the ETA requirements and it is easy to access online.

Council Officers will continue to keep a ‘watching brief’ on the ETA and a further update on the progression of the legislation and how the ETA will operate will be brought to a future Committee for Member update / consideration.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 There are currently no new financial implications to this report.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.11 None.”**

The Committee:

- Noted the contents of the report; and
- Noted that, a further update on the progression of the legislation and how the Electronic Travel Authorisation would operate, would be brought to a future Committee; and
- Agreed to invite representatives from Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland, Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance, Northern Ireland Office and The Committee on the Administration of Justice, to a future meeting of the Committee, to discuss the impact of Electronic Travel Authorisation on Belfast and what could be done to mitigate its effect; and
- Agreed that Legal Services undertake to provide a report to the Committee, that would explore the legal actions available, that could be taken against the implementation of Electronic Travel Authorisation.

Belfast Stories Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report which was accompanied by a presentation, which was delivered by the Project Director and Strategic Lead of Belfast Destination Hub:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Update Members on the Belfast Stories programme as part of the Belfast Region City Deal including the development of a Stories Collection Framework.
- Outline emerging engagement plans and seek approval to undertake a public consultation.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of this report and progress against Belfast Stories programme of work.
- Agree to complete a public consultation exercise to include elements of the Stories Collection Framework as set out in Appendix 1.
- Agree to hold a Members’ workshop in August 2022 as part of the consultation process.
- Agree to receive a future report setting out the key findings of the public consultation and recommendations on next steps.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will be aware that Belfast Stories is the Council’s flagship project under the Belfast Region City Deal and is due to open in 2028. Several important milestones in relation to the project have been achieved including the acquisition of the site for Belfast Stories in October 2021 and the signing of the Deal Document for the BRCD and press launch of Belfast Stories in December 2021.

3.2 Members will be aware that majority of the site (95%) was secured by BCC for Belfast Stories and that negotiations for the acquisition of two smaller properties on the site are ongoing.

- 3.3 Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed at its meeting on 19th November 2021 to progress a number of key pieces of work, in order to ensure we meet the 2028 anticipated opening date including the appointment of the integrated design team, the exhibition design team and the stories collection. City Growth and Regeneration Committee received a programme update in December 2021 where Members noted that a further presentation would be brought to Committee in 2022.

Programme Update

- 3.4 Progress against the agreed programme is ongoing.
- 3.5 Members will be aware that an initial Outline Business Case was completed in 2020 in advance of the purchase of the site. This work will now be updated to reflect progress and project development. Following engagement with Tourism NI and the Department for Economy (DfE) and an assessment of options by the project team it is proposed that an updated Outline Business Case is submitted when concept designs have been further developed to RIBA Stage 2 in 2023, when the project would then move to departmental casework review. We have requested BRCD approval to move to this approach via the Tourism and Regeneration Advisory Board and the BRCD Executive Board.
- 3.6 To align with Belfast City Council's Net Zero Carbon Roadmap for Belfast and the Resilience Strategy, a feasibility study has been commissioned to assess the viability of using geothermal technology to meet the building's heating and cooling requirements. An initial report has been completed by Tetra Tech Ltd and concludes that geothermal is a viable option for the site with a shallow closed loop geothermal solution preferred. This would increase capital costs and alternative funding sources are being considered. However, as well as being a low carbon solution there would also be operational savings compared to air source alternatives. Further work will be required as detailed design work progresses and Members will be updated in due course.
- 3.7 Work is ongoing with Physical Programmes supported by KPMG to bring forward a number of key appointments as the project moves to the next phase of development.

These include:

- RIBA has been appointed following a tender exercise to provide the necessary expertise to conduct a Design Competition to appoint the Integrated Design Team.
- Documentation is being finalised to commence the procurement in June 2022 of an Integrated Design Team, Interpretative Planning and Exhibition Design Team and Project Management and Design Assurance Team.

- 3.8 A Benefits Realisation Framework has been developed to define and refine the range of benefits and outcomes linked to the investment spending objectives of the project and Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) funding. A key spending objective is ‘to create and sustain a diversified, vibrant city centre – attractive place to live in, invest in and work in’ and within this objective we have been examined the wider impacts on the city centre, local community, local residents and local economy. Crucial to realising the impacts will be identifying the enabling mechanism(s) to deliver against expected benefits.**
- 3.9 An important aspect of the wider benefits of Belfast Stories is to define and deliver social value including increasing secure employment and skills, building ethical and resilient supply chains, promoting wellbeing and delivering zero carbon. Social clauses will be included in all contracts in line with buy social Public Contract Regulations PPN 01/21 with the main value opportunities to be delivered during the construction phase 2025 - 2028.**
- 3.10 A Social Value, Employability, Skills and Education group has been set up to advise and input on opportunities. In addition, members of the Belfast Stories project team have attended Social Value in Construction Contracts training as part of BRCD programme, to further understand and support the key themes around creating job opportunities, investing in skills, supporting social enterprises, new businesses, voluntary and community organisations, reduce our carbon footprint, promote equality and diversity and improve mental health and wellbeing.**
- 3.11 It will be important for the Business Case for Belfast Stories to demonstrate delivery against social value outcomes. As part of the consultation and engagement process, the**

work strands of the draft engagement plan will be developed to ensure all opportunities are maximised that in turn will feed into the overall project Benefits Realisation Framework. This approach will be embedded into all aspects of the programme including opportunities as part of Stories collection.

Stories Collection Framework

- 3.12 The collection of Belfast's stories underpins the Belfast Stories concept and is key to the success of the project in meeting its ambition and delivering the benefits. To support this work, Council commissioned Lord Cultural Resources to develop a Stories Collection Framework. The purpose of the Framework is to support the development of the Belfast Stories project and delivery of Council's wider ambitions as set out in the *Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy*, the *Belfast Agenda*, the ten-year cultural strategy, *A City Imagining* and the recently finalised tourism plan, *Make Yourself at Home*. This will provide a Framework for future plans and recognises the important role that many city partners representing the community, cultural and tourism sectors have in telling Belfast stories across the city and throughout the year.
- 3.13 Members will be aware that the Belfast Stories project seeks to strengthen existing structures and networks to ensure that the benefits of the project are realised on multiple levels. The initial concept for Belfast Stories identified the opportunity for a significant new anchor in the city centre that would not only deliver regeneration in the immediate area but also act as an anchor that would help establish a hub and spoke model to strengthen connectivity and flow of visitors across the city and support community tourism projects.
- 3.14 Working in collaboration with key stakeholders and subject matter experts across the city we have developed a Stories Collection Framework (SCF). The Stories Collection Framework outlines the proposed direction on a number of areas including:
- Guiding principles – programmes such as the Decade of Centenaries have established good practice in setting clear guiding principles that inform Council's position and partnership approach.
 - Ethical parameters – there are important ethical considerations that must be assessed and necessary processes put in place to ensure best practice is

reached across engagement, collecting and telling of Belfast stories.

- **Themes – the purpose of the thematic framework is to assist in what will be a considerable undertaking to collect and arrange stories. This is an organisational tool and is not how the stories will be presented or told as this will be addressed at the next stage when the curatorial approach will be developed as part of public engagement and design processes.**
- **Partnership approach – this sets out a phased approach to a wider programme and partnership model to support cultural and tourism development in relation to collecting and telling Belfast stories. Whilst this will in turn support the building project, the potential benefits are much wider.**
- **Governance – Council is not a collecting organisation. This requires significant infrastructure and expertise. The governance is linked to the partnership model that locates Council within a wider stories ecosystem for the city and acknowledges the considerable expertise that exists in partner organisations.**

3.15 The Stories Collection Framework is a flexible tool that will evolve over time. It is critical to ensuring the authenticity and diversity of the stories represented in Belfast Stories and across multiple initiatives. In its present form, the Framework seeks to:

- **Explore new ways and perspectives of telling the stories of the people of Belfast.**
- **Bring the people of Belfast into the heart of the initiatives.**
- **Increase accessibility of existing collections across the city and beyond.**
- **Identify and address gaps in stories that have not been collected or that lack visibility.**
- **Encourage long term active engagement with partners creating a network across the city and beyond that will increase opportunities to participate in the cultural life and support neighbourhood tourism.**
- **Identify efficient and sustainable ways of sharing and putting collections to their best use.**

- Bring in new perspectives and creativity in adding to the city-wide cultural offerings.

3.16 From 2022 it is proposed that Council delivers a Belfast Stories Programme that will include:

- Story collection audit – to better understand what stories have been collected and current levels of access to these collections.
- Feasibility study – to establish what infrastructure (including digital) may be required to support a city level collecting initiative.
- Public engagement programme – as outlined below and at appendix 2 the public consultation is the beginning of a sustained programme of engagement with the city.
- Pilot projects – this would include alignment to planned activity and commissioning of new work to help test the Framework.
- Partnerships – establish joint working within Council on initiatives such as Year of Culture, UNESCO City of Music and neighbourhood tourism to deliver on shared objectives. New partnerships would also be developed (local and international) with community, cultural and tourism partners to begin to establish a Stories network in advance of the building opening in 2028.

Public consultation

- 3.17 Belfast City Council’s Consultation and Engagement Framework describes a broad spectrum of two-way communication (from consultation to engagement to involvement) between the council and its residents and stakeholders. It recognises that effective dialogue helps make decisions, policies and services that are better suited to the people they are intended to benefit. It is in line with this that Belfast Stories seeks to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are at its core, supported by a co-designed and inclusive process throughout all aspects of the project.**
- 3.18 Belfast City Council appointed Smith and Kent Consulting to provide specialist guidance and support to plan and assist with Belfast Stories consultation and engagement. This Belfast Stories Engagement Plan (Appendix 2) brings**

together a range of consultation, engagement and involvement approaches to build on best practice, statutory requirements and stakeholder expectations.

- 3.19 The overall approach seeks to build long-term relationships while using a variety of methods to engage people on the terms they want to be engaged. As an initial step it is proposed that a public consultation is carried out early in the process.
- 3.20 The purpose of the engagement plan is:
- To help make Belfast Stories a destination that resonates with local people, captivates visitors and is welcoming of all.
 - To bring Belfast Stories to life through the knowledge, insight and ideas of its people and stakeholders.
- 3.21 This engagement plan covers RIBA Stage 2 as aligned to overall Belfast Stories programme, which runs from May 2022 to June 2023. During this stage, concept designs and plans are produced in line with the requirements of the project brief. This will include plans for:
- the layout of the building
 - the design of the exhibition space
 - the Story Collection Framework
- 3.22 There will be two broad parts to our engagement between May 2022 and June 2023.

Public Consultation

- 3.23 The public consultation is planned to run for 14 weeks from week commencing 6th June to 14 September 2022. The public consultation will focus on:
- Raising awareness of Belfast Stories so that people are excited and want to continue to be engaged in its development.
 - Making sure that Belfast Stories can be a positive experience for everyone, including consultation on the EQIA, RNIA and Story Collection Framework.
 - Asking people how they would like to continue to be involved in the ongoing engagement.

Ongoing Engagement

- 3.24 Ongoing engagement will be structured around four work strands:
- Equity
 - Sustainability
 - Partnership
 - Experiences
- 3.25 These will set the foundations, building relationships and shaping further ongoing engagement up until (and possibly after) Belfast Stories opens in 2028.

Next steps

- 3.26 It is proposed that a Members' workshop is held during the public consultation period in August 2022. A report will be presented in October 2022 outlining the key findings of the public consultation and will present further detail on recommendations and next steps.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.27 There are no new financial implications to this report.

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

- 3.28 An initial Equality screening has been complete. An Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Assessment will be undertaken as part of the public consultation and will be reported on in due course."

The Committee:

- Noted the contents of the report and progress against Belfast Stories programme of work;
- Agreed to complete a public consultation exercise to include elements of the Stories Collection Framework;
- Agreed to hold a Members' workshop in August 2022, as part of the consultation process; and
- Agreed to receive a future report which would set out the key findings of the public consultation and recommendations on next steps.

Strategic and Operational Issues

**City Regeneration and Development
Work Programme 2022/23**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview on the work programme of City Regeneration & Development for 2022 – 2023, and to seek approval to progress necessary procurement for key actions in 22/23 aligned to the priorities of this Committee as well as the wide strategic corporate objectives of the Belfast Agenda.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to:

- Note the 2021 – 2022 progress across the regeneration and development activities aligned to the City Regeneration and Development Division.
- Agree the outlined activities for 2022 - 2023 as set out in the report including the budget implications as below being met from approved and existing departmental budget.
- Agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate framework arrangements) be initiated for any of the planned City Regeneration and Development activities for 22/23 as required and in line with the approved departmental budget.

3.0 Background

3.1 The City Regeneration and Development Division are focused on supporting the priorities of this Committee which include:

- Enabling and shaping city regeneration, development and investment ensuring alignment across the Place and Economy Department and wider organisation, in order to deliver on the Council’s Strategic objectives for the physical and inclusive development of the city.
- Delivery of programmes and projects within Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) and associated Masterplans together with other citywide regeneration activities, as aligned with the Belfast Agenda, Belfast: Our Recovery, Corporate

Plan 2019 - 2023 and the Improvement Plan 2022 – 2023. With an understanding that underpinning the delivery of regeneration and development is the ability to attract investment to ensure a thriving city, maximising the regeneration impact to deliver on inclusive growth.

3.2 In 2021 – 2022, despite the challenges of the Pandemic, significant progress was made across regeneration and development in the city. Specifically, some key highlights in relation to the role of the City Regeneration and Development Division this included:

- Delivery of £4.039m DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme including Business and Community Cluster Programme Grant across the city, active travel measures, new social and placemaking projects across the city, and notably the award-winning Belfast Entries programme
- Continuing to develop A Bolder Vision Strategy with DfC and DfI including the completion of the public consultation exercise. The Bolder Vision Strategy will provide a more holistic approach to infrastructure and major development investment, providing more of an onus on delivering transformative place-making and regeneration opportunities within our collective capital public and private investment plans, aligned to the principles and Key Moves of the Bolder Vision.
- The acquisition of the site for Belfast’s flagship BRCD project Belfast Stories which will be housed in one of Belfast’s most beloved heritage buildings, the art deco former Bank of Ireland building on Royal Avenue, along with the surrounding 4,000sq metres site.
- The acquisition of 2 Royal Avenue and working to develop long term and future uses collaboratively across Council for this listed heritage building, providing Council with a key opportunity to help address the challenges impacting on the city centre while protecting our heritage assets.
- Strategic Site Assessments (SSA) Phase 1 - city centre cluster sites including regeneration concept plans progression to PAD stage on a number of sites, and the completion of the initial Eol stage to attract Institutional Investment.
- SSA Phase 2 - City wide Strategic Site Assessments, including the establishment of a joint public sector housing group as the appropriate vehicle, chaired by the NIHE, to drive this forward through an agreed methodology. Continuing the comprehensive mapping

of public sector assets in conjunction with partners, assessing these assets in line with the Urban Capacity Study and the Housing Monitor to identify and bring forward opportunities for Housing Led Regeneration.

- Developing a City Centre Living Vision through focused engagement with communities and other stakeholders to inform the City Centre Living Vision Document
- Leading the refreshed City Development Board, under the Community Planning Partnership; including supporting sub structures to work towards the finalisation of draft actions plans for each priority theme of:
 - Housing Led Regeneration
 - Future City Centre Programme
 - Connectivity, Access, Active and Sustainable Travel
 - City-Wide Development and Regeneration
- Securing £207,500 funding for active travel enabling infrastructure through DfI's blue and green infrastructure fund to deliver secure and covered cycle stands and cycle repair stands.
- Securing additional funding for Belfast Entries Phase 2 and development of tactical regeneration programmes for the SW Quarter, the 5C's and Castle Street area.
- Progressing design work on a number of public realm catalyst projects utilising developer contributions including the 5C's, Little York / Little Patrick St and the North South Spine
- Providing civic leadership and regeneration advice including representation on various Programme/Project Boards) on a number of key city projects and programmes including, Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2, BRCD, the Junctions Working Group, and Streets Ahead Programme Board as well as a number of major private/public sector developments including Weavers Cross, Waterside, Tribeca, and Queens Quay
- Vacant to Vibrant Programme: includes launch of an EoI to inform the viability of a £700k capital grant scheme to incentivise both property owners and potential occupiers to bring vacant spaces in Belfast city centre back into use and support the revitalisation of the city centre
- Working with public and private sector partners to position the city to compete and promote the city for inclusive investment. Including supporting the Renewed Ambition public and private partnership, focused on promotion, advocacy and engagement and research work

on social, economic and environmental impact of real estate development.

4.0 Main Report

4.1 The focus of the Division in 2022 – 2023 is again aligned to the priorities and plan for this Committee as well as the wider strategic objectives for Council and themed across a number of programme pillars, below is a high-level outline of activities under these:

4.2 Future City Centre (FCC) Programme

- The FCC now forms an integral part of the CG&R Committee Plan and the Community Planning Partnership Board and provides a holistic oversight of the various priorities to ensure alignment and co-ordination and seeks to maximise the benefits of collective private and public sector investment across a number of strategic, cross-cutting activities /projects. These cross-cutting activities are aligned under the key pillars of the FCC Programme:
 - Physical Regeneration and Connectivity
 - Business & Investment
 - City Centre Vitality
 - Positioning the City to Compete
 - Digital Innovation
 - Clean Green & Safe.

The FCC includes programmes such as the Vacant to Vibrant scheme, Housing Led Regeneration, Strategic Acquisition of key assets, the Entries Programme, Tactical Regeneration, the Bolder Vision and Positioning the City to Compete.

- Undertaking a refresh of the overall FCC programme based on ongoing work across the pillars to ensure that the programme takes account of changing local and global situations.
- Launching and delivering the Vacant to Vibrant capital grant scheme
- Tactical Regeneration Programme feasibility, design and delivery focusing on the Grey to Green initiative, SW Quarter and 5C's Tactical Regeneration projects as previously agreed by this Committee.
- £150k from approved and existing departmental budget will be allocated to further developing and delivering the FCC Tactical Regeneration Programme.

4.3 Housing Led Regeneration

- Finalise regeneration plans, PADs and all due diligence detail on Strategic Site Assessment Phase 1 cluster sites linked to the approach around attracting an institutional investor / development partner to bring forward housing led regeneration across SSA Phase 1 Council assets and, where appropriate, together with other public sector partners (DfC, NIHE, DfI) and private sector landholdings.
- Finalise the City Centre Living Vision that will support progression of residential development aspirations for the city centre, to include engagement with relevant stakeholders and progressing recommendations as appropriate.
- Continue with work to procure an institutional investor/development partner to progress Council's housing led regeneration ambitions.
- Continuing to bring forward the Strategic Site Assessment Phase 2 city wide work via the CPP City Development Board and its substructure (Housing Led Regeneration Group) chaired by the NIHE. Finalise the extensive cross public sector mapping exercise (including LPS, DfC, NIHE) to assess landholdings identified within LDP's Urban Capacity Study and the Housing Monitor, identifying and assessing a refined list of opportunities for Housing Led Regeneration
- Analysis of public sector assets, alongside existing private sector opportunities (including key city developments) to identify barriers to delivery and potential mechanisms for unlocking, aimed at maximising opportunities and ensuring prioritisation of funding/delivery through the appropriate delivery agent.
- Progress the Inner North West Development Brief to deliver housing led regeneration by addressing barriers to unlock delivery of mixed tenure residential development.

4.4 Connectivity, Active Travel and City Infrastructure

- Finalise the Bolder Vision Strategy and Action Plan with partners in DfI and DfC; establish an integrated working approach with partners through an MoU Partnership approach and prioritise funding approaches for feasibility and delivery of the priority projects emerging from the Bolder Vision Work. £200k from approved and existing departmental budget will be allocated to developing up the Bolder Vision Action Plan suite of projects.
- Continue to provide civic leadership and direction to enable the timely delivery of capital connectivity, active travel and city infrastructure projects.

- **Develop and oversee an overarching city-wide programme to co-ordinate Council's approach (inc partnership working) to connectivity and active travel aligned to the Corporate priority on Connectivity & Active Travel and as part of the CPP City Development Board priority.**
- **Further develop the Belfast Urban Greenway in conjunction with the DfI Cycle Network and seek funding for delivery and further development and delivery of sustainable travel initiatives.**
- **Ongoing monitoring and implementation of the of the Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan in line with the emerging BMTF & LDP documents.**
- **Work collaboratively with DfI in relation to the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan, and the Belfast Cycle Network**

4.5 City Development and Investment

- **Develop a Regeneration Programme Framework for key regeneration projects including partnership projects at a citywide level; to include preparation of feasibility studies and business cases as appropriate. To include regeneration projects to support development and investment for Bolder Vision and housing / mixed uses regeneration projects.**
- **Identification of barriers preventing investment to key city regeneration and developing approaches, with partners as appropriate, to de-risk, unlock and support bringing forward development proposals.**
- **Undertake a review and purpose of the City Centre Investment Fund to align with delivery of city development aspirations.**
- **Developing long term uses and attracting funding for 2 Royal Avenue**
- **Continue to promote the Sixth investment & development opportunity**
- **Complete assembly of optimal site for development of Belfast Stories project**
- **Delivering the Vacant to Vibrant Grant Programme to address the rising level of ground floor vacancy within the city centre**
- **Overseeing the delivery of the streetscape environmental improvements of the city-wide Supporting Vibrant Business Destinations in conjunction with Officers from across the P&E Department**
- **Working across Council and via the Community Planning process to progress a joined-up approach to city wide**

regeneration and development priorities on a place based approach involving communities and wider city partners.

- Undertake a review of the priorities /projects within the Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy and progress /oversee those where Council is the lead partner.
- Chair and driving forward the regeneration work programme of the UU Community Campus Regeneration Forum.
- Continue to provide civic leadership regeneration advice, including representation on Programme / Project Boards, on key city infrastructure and regeneration projects (public and private).

4.6 Positioning the City to Compete

- Continuing to positively position Belfast globally as an attractive investment location through targeted marketing and communication interventions to support the delivery of regeneration projects across the city and inclusive sustainable growth, aligning to city recovery plans, Belfast Region City Deal, Reset for Growth, Net Zero and Innovation City Belfast ambitions.
- Support the Renewed Ambition public private partnership and the various elements of that work programme as previously reported to Committee.
- Refreshing the Invest in Belfast website to ensure the city is positioned to attract investment including across real estate development, Innovation and Green Growth sectors.
- Developing a CRM system to manage the database of investment and development contacts.
- Continue to deliver the strategic physical / real estate investment and marketing programme for the city including the implementation of a cohesive city and investment narrative.
- Launching the Building Impact Report which examines the role the built environment /real estate plays in delivering Social, Economic and Environmental benefits to Belfast and the wider Belfast City Region, including the development of a targeted action plan to support the implementation of the report recommendations to deliver enhanced social and environmental benefits.

4.7 It is also worth highlighting that as well as the above outlined activities the Division align significant officer resource to driving and facilitating regeneration and development opportunities through various city level fora, including community engagement. Specifically, this involves working

with city partners including anchor institutions, public and private sectors, developers, communities and umbrella organisations to bring forward and maximise the regeneration potential of development projects as aligned to corporate and city priorities e.g. facilitating / representing Council at reference groups / board members including, Weavers Cross, Waterside, Tribeca, Belfast Stories, High Street Task Force, Housing Supply Strategy Programme etc. This role of advocacy and influencing whilst difficult to measure is critical to shaping the future development of the city aligned to our strategic policy and growth ambitions of the Belfast Agenda, LDP and BCCRIS.

- 4.8 The Division will also continue to complete the existing Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme in line with the agreed projects and timelines and continue to develop projects to feasibility stage to attract further funding for catalyst opportunities across the city.**
- 4.9 Members are also asked to agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate framework arrangements) be initiated for any of the planned City Regeneration and Development activities including externally funded projects for 22/23 as required.**
- 5.0 Finance and Resource Implications**
- 5.1 The activities and allocation budget to these activities in this report will be resourced from the approved 2022 – 2023 budget for City Regeneration and Development and with tenders/contracts to be awarded in line with this.**
- 6.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**
- 6.1 Specific projects if not already screened will be subject to equality screening.”**

The Committee:

- Noted the 2021–2022 progress across the regeneration and development activities aligned to the City Regeneration and Development Division;
- Agreed the activities for 2022-2023, which included the budget implications being met from approved and existing departmental budgets; and
- Agreed that necessary procurement processes would be initiated for any of the planned City Regeneration and Development activities for 2022/23, as required, in line with the approved departmental budgets.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

**Cut in Student Places announced by
Queen's University - Councillor Heading**

Councillor Heading referred to an event which had been held at Queen's University Belfast, with the Confederation of British Industry and local politicians, where the Vice Chancellor had included in a speech to the group that the university might have to cut more than 1500 undergraduate student places by 2025.

Councillor Heading expressed his concern at the Vice Chancellor's remarks and the impact that such cuts could have upon the economy of Belfast and he highlighted that the Council had passed numerous planning applications for student accommodation based on the city moving forward to becoming a high-tech student city.

He stated that he felt that it would be useful for the Committee to ask representatives from the university to come and explain the reasons for a potential cut in student places and to discuss the impact on course provision, university staff, the local economy and the quality of the education system in Northern Ireland.

The Committee agreed to invite representatives from Queen's University Belfast and the Department for the Economy's Higher Education Unit to a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the decision to cut student places and its impact upon students.

Chairperson

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 17th May, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff, Councillor Hussey;
Councillors Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey,
Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Maskey, Murphy,
O'Hara, Spratt and Whyte.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management);
Mr. K. Sutherland, Planning Manager (Policy);
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Collins and McMullan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 12th and 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 9th May, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Spratt declared an interest in item 5a, LA04/2020/0559/F & LA04/2020/0562/DCA - 24 Malone Park, in that he had previously engaged with residents regarding the site. He left the meeting for the duration of the item.

Committee Site Visits

The Committee noted that a site visit had taken place in respect of the below applications on 27th April, 2022:

- LA04/2020/0559/F - Renovation and single storey rear extension to dwelling, construction of a new detached garage and new entrance gates and pillars at 24 Malone Park; and
- LA04/2020/0562/DCA - Demolition of rear extension (partly single storey, partly one and a half storey) and existing shed and summerhouse at 24 Malone Park.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

Planning Appeals Notified

The Committee 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 Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Director of Planning and Building Control, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 2nd April and 9th May 2022.

Proposed Abandonment

Land at Parkgate Avenue

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from DFI Roads, advising that Apex Housing Association proposed to abandon land at Parkgate Avenue in order to facilitate redevelopment in the area.

The Committee noted the information.

Miscellaneous Items

**Request to hold a Special Meeting
in June 2022 - verbal update**

The Planning Manager (Development Management) advised the Committee that there were a number of applications which might not be ready for the monthly meeting in June but which would need to be progressed before the July recess period.

The Committee agreed to hold a Special meeting in late June, if required.

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 item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

**LDP - Update on the proposed Modifications,
Consultation and Engagement**

The Director of Planning and Building Control provided the Committee with an update in respect of the final detail of the proposed consultation arrangements, the modifications documents and the results of the ongoing engagement with Dfl in relation to the Local Development Plan.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and appendices, including the details of the proposed modifications documentation, consultation arrangements and ongoing Dfl engagement.

Planning Applications

**THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PURSUANCE OF THE
POWERS DELEGATED TO IT BY THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(e)**

**(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2020/0559/F &
LA04/2020/0562/DCA - Renovation and single
storey rear extension to dwelling, construction
of a new detached garage and new entrance
gates and pillars at 24 Malone Park**

(Councillor Spratt, having declared an interest, left the meeting for the duration of this item)

The Planning Manager explained that the application for full planning permission had previously been listed for consideration by the Committee on 15th February and 14th April. The application had, however, been withdrawn from the meeting of 15th February meeting to allow officers time to consider a speaking note provided on behalf of the objector at 26 Malone Park. It was then deferred by the Committee at the 14th April meeting to allow it to undertake a site visit.

The Planning Manager outlined the details of the application to the Committee.

The site was a 2.5 storey semi-detached residential home finished in red brick on a large plot. The dwelling contained an existing two storey rear return. There was parking to the side elevation and extensive gardens forming the front, side and rear elevations. The surrounding area was residential and comprised large semi-detached and detached properties within large plots. The site was within the Malone/Adelaide Park Conservation Area.

The proposed single storey rear extension measured 11.95metres in length with a height of 5.75metres. When the proposed demolition was taken into account, he explained that the existing rear return of the property would be increased in length by 4.95metres. The proposed garage measured 9.5metres x 6.35metres with a height of 4.49metres. The proposed pillars measured a height of 2.02metres with the gates a height of 1.8metres.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

The key issues which had been considered during the assessment of the application included:

- character and appearance;
- design;
- impact on amenity;
- impact on Conservation Area; and
- objections.

The Members were advised that the proposal was considered to be in compliance with the relevant legislation, policy and guides. The proposed extension, garage and gates/pillars were deemed to be of an acceptable scale and massing to not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed footprint of the extension and garage were deemed to be within the 1.5 times limit as set out in the Adelaide/Malone Park Conservation Guide.

The Conservation Officer had been consulted and objected to the proposed ibex fencing. The Committee noted that that had been amended and removed from the drawings.

The Committee was advised that eight objections and two letters of support were received and were addressed within the report.

The Planning Manager outlined that the application had been withdrawn by officers from the meeting of 15th February, to allow officers time to consider correspondence from an objector.

He explained that it was alleged that the officers' analysis of the application was misconceived and, in short, that the garage, which was described as an outbuilding in the original Committee report, should not have been included in calculating the amount of permitted building coverage. He explained that officers did not necessarily accept that was the case, for the reasons set out in the original report. Notwithstanding that position, the original report had also assessed the application by excluding the garage.

The objector also alleged that officers had failed to explain that the Guide was underpinned by the statutory duty in Section 104 (11) of the 2011 Act. However, the Planning Manager outlined to the Committee that paragraph 9.35 of the original report advised that that duty was reflected within paragraph 6.18 of the SPPS and BH12 of PPS6, both of which were discussed in the original report.

The Planning Manager reported that officers were of the view that the proposed extension and garage presented a modest development which was sympathetic to both the existing site and the surrounding area, which contained both larger extensions and garages. The rationale behind the provision within the Guide was to allow landscape to remain dominant by the reference to the relationship between the proposed building mass and gardens. While the permissible building coverage would be exceeded in that calculation, in officers' opinion, it remained the case that the landscaping would still remain dominant. The proposed building coverage would make up 17% of the site.

The Committee was advised that it was considered that the proposal would preserve the character of the site and the wider Conservation Area. As set out in the original report, the

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

proposed extension almost mirrored the extension of the neighbouring semi-detached property and therefore brought an element of symmetry to the rear of the dwellings. The garage had been set behind the building line of the existing dwelling and a sufficient distance from the dwelling to ensure that views of the dwelling were not impacted.

The Planning Manager explained that regard had been given to the other guidance in the same section of the Adelaide/Malone Park Conservation Guide. It was considered that the extension had been designed as an integral part of the original dwelling. Officers felt that the extension and alterations would not detract from the character of the Conservation Area. The proposal would not give rise to unsatisfactory proportions, or seriously infringe on the setting, and would not be overbearing in relation to the form of the original building.

The Committee was advised that large garages to the side elevations were part of the character of the surrounding area. Most notably in the immediate surrounding area, garages in similar locations had been approved at 20, 21, 22 and 26 Malone Park. The proposed pillars and gates to the front of the property were considered sympathetic, the design of the pillars was of a high standard and the railings would allow views of the dwelling to be retained.

The Planning Manager explained that it was considered that the proposal complied with Section 104(11) of the 2011 Act in that the proposal would preserve the character or appearance of the Conservation Area where an opportunity for enhancing its character or appearance did not arise. By its nature, the proposal for an extension and the garage would give a limited opportunity for enhancement of the Conservation Area. However, given the considerations provided in the addendum and the main reports, it was considered that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

He added that a further objection had been received from the Malone Park Residents Association and which had been considered in the addendum report which was submitted to the April meeting.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, whereby correspondence had been received from an objector, requesting confirmation as to which plans had been taken into account to reach the recommendation to approve the application. The objector also queried whether officers had had regard to further detailed Building Control plans and stated that it was unclear from the 1947 Building Control Plan whether the original garage had been accurately depicted. The objector also stated that the 1.5 times guidance had been applied by officers in different scenarios which was an unsatisfactory approach. It stated that officers' repeated attempts to count a non-dwelling garage in a manner that made a contrived calculation was contrary to the evidence of the location plan, to the policy and double counted the garage, allowing the very incremental development that the Court of Appeal had warned about.

The Committee was advised that officers had liaised with Building Control to check the existence and availability of any relevant drawings which might have reflected the original footprint. The assessment has been based on the earliest drawings which concurred with the OSNI historical maps. The Members were also advised that the 1947 Building Control map showed the proposed summer house, which was not built, but also the projection to the east side of the house. The resolution of the maps was such that an assessment of the projection could not accurately be made. The Committee was advised that the Council reference map

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

(1937) and Building Control application (1947) showed a garage in a similar location as to the side projection shown in the OSNI historical maps. It could therefore be reasonably deduced that the side extension shown was a garage. The 1947 Building Control Application contained a scaled block plan showing the dimensions of the garage and officers had no reason to doubt the accuracy of that plan.

While officers were of the opinion that the original garage was included in the definition of the term dwelling, an assessment had also been provided that excluded the garage from the calculation. In both cases, officers had found that the proposal was acceptable for the reasons stated in the Committee report.

The Planning Manager also referred to an additional representation in support of the application, which had been reported to the Committee in the Late items pack to the meeting on 14th April 2022.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Lyons to the meeting. He advised that he objected to the application for the following reasons:

- the planning policies regarding the Conservation Areas had been drafted and agreed to protect the shared interests, both immediate in the wider area, such as environmental protections and the wider eco system;
- when you deviated from the protective policies, that could lead to a diminution or loss of protections;
- planning policy states that, when managing development within a Conservation Area, there was a general presumption against the granting of permission for the demolition of unlisted buildings where proposals were in conflict with that principle; and
- there was a general presumption that the policy should only be relaxed in exceptional circumstances and that the application did not meet that.

The Chairperson thanked Councillor Lyons for his contribution.

He then welcomed Councillor McAteer to the meeting. She advised that she also objected to the application for the following reasons:

- the Malone Park Residents Association wished to protect and conserve the built heritage of the Park;
- the Association was charged with the maintenance and management of the public areas such as the verges, footpaths and trees, as well as the preservation of the character of the Malone Conservation Area;
- Malone Park was a special and unique place with many individually designed residences with mature landscapes and a tree-lined avenue, producing the distinctive townscape character which was worthy of the utmost protection;
- the Conservation Area provided the Park with statutory protection to ensure that the character of the area was maintained; and

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

- the residents were particularly concerned that if the current application was permitted, which they believed to be over and above the 1.5 times the original size, it would set a worrying precedent.

The Chairperson thanked Councillor McAteer for her contribution.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. S. Beattie QC and Mr. M. Worthington, who represented the Malone Park Residents' Association, were in attendance to object to the application.

Mr. Beattie QC advised the Committee that:

- the policy in relation to ratio was extremely clear as it stated that "In no circumstances should building coverage be more than one and a half times that of the original dwelling";
- the officers' own presentation illustrated that it was a separate garage, and not a dwelling, as shown in the 1937 and 1947 maps;
- further, that the applicant was relying on a 1907 valuation of the property, which included "a rear yard, stables and stores" which did not make it a dwelling either;
- page 23 of the policy required that the landscaping be protected and preserved and that officers had not paid heed to that;
- whilst the officers had referred to Article 104 of the Planning Act, they had not referred to Article 104 part 7, whereby it was clear from the application that the boundary for the Conservation Area had gone, subsumed into two dwellings, one of which sat outside the Conservation Area and the boundary had indisputably changed;
- the Court of Appeal case on the policy had made abundantly clear that the reasonable lawful approach to the policy must be taken into account and that there must be a guard against incremental accretion of building development;
- the floorspace calculation of the original building, carried out by officers and the applicant, was different but that the Committee should be mindful that the policy clearly stated that there should be no incremental accretion of built development, that it was in fact a separate garage and not part of the original dwelling; and
- the reference to PPS6 was a red herring as the PPS did not in any way displace the planning policy or the Conservation Area guidance.

Mr. Worthington advised the Committee that the Malone Park Residents' Association felt that:

- the Park was under significant development pressure on a scale which had not been seen in quite some time and that the application represented a pivotal point in time for the Conservation Area;
- there were a number of applications for which the decision in this application would be critical;

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

- its approval would allow for the incremental increase in larger developments which would negatively impact on the relationship of buildings and landscape and which, when combined, would decimate the character and appearance of the area;
- its approval would pave the way for the death of the Conservation Area;
- the design guide was absolute, stating the words “in no circumstances”; and
- building coverage related to all of the buildings proposed and the original dwelling related only to the original dwelling as it was originally built, in the late 1800s.

A Member asked the representatives whether the garage was built as part of the original buildings on the site and, if it was, did it, in their view, constitute part of the original dwelling. Together, Mr. Beattie and Mr. Worthington advised the Committee that the 1907 map showed a blurred drawing. The 1937 and 1947 maps showed a clearly separated building and that it could not be said with any certainty that it was original to the site. He outlined that officers had consistently said that it was a garage and that the applicant had stated that it was stables, rear yard or stores. He explained that he found that it was therefore hard to accept as original, as the maps showed that the building was either not there at all or was separate. They did not accept that it was a “dwelling”.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Beattie and Mr. Worthington for their contributions.

He advised the Committee that Mr. W. Orbinson QC, Mr. D. Stelfox (Architect) and Mr. L. Brown (neighbour) were in attendance on behalf of the agent and applicant.

Mr. Orbinson QC advised the Committee that:

- the Court of Appeal had said, in its Gilligan judgement, that policy was not mandatory, that the Council was free to override or depart from any part of it if it considered it justified and that the Council was entitled to attribute such weight as it thought fit to any consideration;
- that was entirely consistent with what the Court of Appeal had said in Stewart, whereby planning policies did not have to be slavishly followed;
- the Court of Appeal, in Gilligan, did not say anything about the meaning of the term “original dwelling” in the Guide, nor say that that meaning was limited to the dwelling-house itself and excluded ancillary outbuildings dating back to the time the dwelling was built;
- the objector was wrong to say that including the outbuildings had opened up the same precedent that the Court of Appeal had warned against;
- as the Nelson decision had confirmed, the Guide must be interpreted by reference to its intended purpose and that the ratio’s purpose was to allow the landscape to remain dominant as compared to building mass. Original outbuildings were, of course, part of the established relationship between building mass and gardens, as what would be the logic in the Guide intending to exclude original outbuildings in order to respect and retain the established relationship between building mass and gardens. That would, in fact, fundamentally distort the relationship;

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

- the Guide itself used the words “dwelling”, “buildings” and “property” interchangeably to refer to historic built form, with no intent to distinguish between the living part of a house and ancillary outbuildings. It referred to refusing extension proposals which were “considered overbearing in relation to the form of the original buildings”, plural, which was not consistent with the notion that the only original built form that mattered was the house itself;
- nothing prohibited garages from being separate from the main house;
- the Moore judgement by the English Court of Appeal had held that converting the outbuildings of a house to holiday units involved a change of use from a single dwelling-house to use as two or more dwelling-houses, so the English Court of Appeal plainly treated the outbuildings as part of the dwelling;
- in Creighton, the PAC included a garage within the ratio;
- as the Planning officers had advised within their report, the Council could lawfully grant permission even if the Committee felt that the 1.5x ratio had been exceeded. Paragraph 7.12 of PPS 6 stated that, while the planning authority would attach ‘great weight’ to the need for proposals for new development to accord with the specific guidance drawn up for each particular Conservation Area, it was entitled to depart from guidance where material considerations indicated otherwise;
- the officers had agreed that the proposal was modest and sympathetic both to the site and to the surrounding area and, with 17% building coverage, would allow landscaping to remain dominant; and
- the proposal’s design would in fact enhance the character of the Conservation Area, in large part because the extension almost mirrored the extension of the neighbouring semi-detached property and therefore brought an element of symmetry to the rear of the dwellings.

Mr. Stelfox advised the Committee that he was an accredited conservation architect and that both planning officers and the Conservation Officer had agreed that the proposal was entirely in keeping with the Conservation Area.

Mr. Brown explained that he lived in the adjoining semi-detached property to the application site and that he was supportive of it. He outlined that it was a modest refurbishment and extension, which closely mirrored the design of his property.

Councillor Groogan sought clarity on what constituted the original dwelling.

Mr. Stelfox advised the Committee that, as part of his submission to the application, the Council’s valuation books had first described the site as “house and offices”. He explained that offices was the term used for ancillary accommodation such as outbuildings, stores, sculleries and larders and were included as part of the original dwelling.

The Planning Manager clarified a number of points to the Committee that the Guide did not specifically define what a dwelling was. From the maps available from the early 1900s, officers believed that it was reasonable to deduce that that the garage was part of the original dwelling. Notwithstanding, if the Committee was to take a more precautionary approach, it could take the view that the garage was not part of the original dwelling and that the ratio was

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

therefore in excess of the 1.5 permitted. He outlined that the statutory test in Section 104 which placed a duty on enhancement of the Conservation Area where an opportunity arose and preservation of the Conservation Area where such an opportunity did not arise. In that case, the advice from officers was that the proposal, by its nature, did not provide opportunity for enhancement and so the key question was whether the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved. If the Committee took the view that planning permission should be refused then it would need to evidence harm and why the Conservation Area would not be preserved. Having regard to the Malone Park Conservation Area guidance, the Committee needed to ask itself if the landscape would remain dominant as a result of the approval of the application and whether the ratio of building mass to landscaping would remain respected. He explained that officers believed that the landscaping would remain dominant and that the application would not upset the balance.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application and to grant delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions to the Committee.

On a vote, eight Members voted for the recommendation, two against and one no vote and it was accordingly declared carried.

LA04/2020/0426/F - Proposed re-construction of petrol station and ancillary retail until including the replacement of fuel tanks, pumps and canopy alterations. Alteration to roof of hot food take away, compactor and provision of an EV charging facility at 228-232 Stewartstown Road

The Committee was advised that an email had been received, on 16th May, from Mr. G. Magee, Quantum Law Solicitors Ltd. advising that, given the short notice of when the application was added to the Committee agenda, Counsel Robert McCausland was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Magee had requested that the application be deferred to allow a short period of time for them to prepare a summary of objections. The Committee did not accede to the request to defer and agreed to consider the application before it.

The Committee was advised that the application was previously approved by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 20th April 2021. The Principal Planning officer explained that that decision had been subject to a judicial review, which was ultimately conceded by officers upon counsel's advice. The grounds of challenge in the judicial review application had alleged, inter alia, that the Council had failed to take into account material considerations, and that the decision was flawed for the following reasons:

1. the report had failed to bring to the attention of the Planning Committee various correspondence;
2. the report had misled the Committee as to DFI's final consultation position;
3. the failure to conduct a Transport Assessment;
4. the consultation with DFI Roads had been inadequate;
5. failure to deal with the issue of inadequate parking provision; and

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

6. that the Committee had failed to scrutinise and enquire into the planning application before making its decision.

The Principal Planning officer advised the Members that, essentially, the issue in question had related to parking provision at the site. DfI Roads had initially objected to the application on the basis of insufficient parking and had requested a whole suite of information from the applicant. The information was not provided and, whilst DfI had subsequently indicated that they considered the application a significantly like for like replacement, it did not formally withdraw its initial objection or request for information. The judicial review was conceded on the basis that the case officer's report had inadvertently failed to accurately present DfI Roads' position on the planning application which had led the Committee into error.

Further to the quashing of the original decision, the Committee was advised that officers had reconsidered the proposed development.

The Principal Planning officer outlined the details of the application to the Committee.

The Members were advised that a Transport Statement, prepared by Karen McShane Transport Consultant, had been submitted by the applicant following the decision of the court.

The Principal Planning officer outlined that the Council had reconsulted with all previous consultees and re-notified all neighbours and objectors, as per statutory requirements. Further to comments from consultees and review by the case officer, further additional information was submitted, including proposed floor plans and proposed site drainage layout.

The Members were advised that one additional objection had been received, querying what plans were under consideration. The Principal Planning officer outlined that drawing numbers were confirmed and superseded following the objection. She explained that further consultation and neighbour notification had also taken place following the comments.

The Committee was advised that a Transport Statement Rebuttal had been submitted, prepared by Systra Ltd on behalf of an objector, Fernmount Trading (NI) Ltd. That document cited a number of concerns, including that:

- a vast majority of customers would travel by car. It was unlikely that customers would walk or use public transport;
- effective parking on the site was currently limited and due to existing constraints, there was no opportunity to increase the number of spaces;
- the proposed parking layout was not a realistic representation of what could be achieved, as many of the spaces were not accessible or, if occupied, would create bottlenecks and an unsafe environment for customers walking to and from their vehicles;
- the existing PFS forecourt was already congested and unsafe, leading to vehicles queuing on the Stewartstown Road;
- any increase in vehicle movements associated with the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on road safety;
- the proposed development was contrary to Policies AMP 1, AMP 7 and AMP 9 of PPS 3.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

The Committee was advised that DFI Roads had responded to the Council's consultation request on 27th January 2022, offering no objections to the proposal. However, the Council had re-consulted DFI Roads on 5th April, requesting further comments and an explanation as to why previously requested information from their response of 9th September 2020 was no longer necessary.

The Principal Planning officer explained that a further response from DFI Roads was received on 10th May 2022. In conclusion, DFI Roads had advised that it maintained its position of previous consultation response of 27th January 2022, in that no objections were offered. They advised that the information requested in their response of 9th September 2020 did not take account what weight should have been given to the extant planning permission and that the previous request for information was no longer appropriate.

In relation to site drainage, NIEA Water Management Unit (WMU) had provided comment on the proposed development and had requested a full site drainage plan to enable assessment of the impact of the proposal on the surface water environment. WMU had provided a specific list of information to be included within the site drainage plan and also enquired if vehicle washing was due to take place on the site.

In response, the agent provided Drawing No. 8 – Proposed site drainage plan. WMU had been consulted further and it had advised that, whilst it had no objection in principle, it had requested further details. As WMU had no objection in principle, it was requested that delegated authority be given to officers to deal with the outstanding matter. If WMU changed its view and/or any water management issues cannot be resolved, the application would be returned to Committee for further consideration.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, whereby it was noted that there were two other current applications under consideration in relation to the application site:

- LA04/2021/2212/F – Retrospective permission single storey temporary shop facility; and
- LA04/2021/2211/A - Shop signage and advertising boards to temporary shop.

A new drawing had also been received from the agent, Drawing No. 09 – Existing Site layout (car parking). The site layout showed the existing parking layout (pre fire). The layout showed 24 parking spaces within the application site.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. J. Scally, Carlin Planning, who was speaking on behalf of Fernmount Trading and Sharp NI Ltd., the owners of Beckett's bar, which was directly adjacent to the site and who were objecting to the application. He advised the Committee that:

- they had consistently objected to the proposed scheme during the previous and current period;
- the previous decision had resulted in a Judicial Review of the Planning Committee's decision to approve, at significant expense to the objectors;
- the JR had been successful;

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

- the objectors remained concerned that DFI Roads' position was not being accurately portrayed to the Committee;
- the objectors felt that their concerns were not being taken seriously by neither the Council nor by DFI Roads, which was evident in the conflicting consultation responses from DFI Roads over the determination period;
- the increase in floorspace had been misrepresented at the first Committee meeting;
- DFI Roads' position remained misinformed and confused – in its response of 9th September 2020 it stated that it had not taken on board the weight of the extant planning permission in that the developer could rebuild exactly what had been on site previously. That argument was fundamentally flawed, as the shop had been demolished after a fire in 2017 and the new application needed to consider the current circumstances;
- the objectors believed that the redevelopment of the unit, with a significantly larger unit, did not justify its approval, especially given that the parking arrangements had been substandard in the first place;
- they requested clarity on how many car parking spaces were being provided, as it was not clear from the report;
- in April 2022, an updated site plan had been uploaded onto the Portal, indicating an increase to the parking spaces – it was apparent that DFI Roads had not seen or commented on the latest parking layout, which was a serious concern given that it had previously stated that, if the site was to accommodate any more parking, it would have a negative impact on the safe manoeuvring of pedestrians and vehicles;
- the Glider route operated along the Stewartstown Road and no on-street parking was permitted along the Glider route;
- no consideration had been given to overflow parking in adjacent businesses, which was a material consideration;
- a Transport Statement Rebuttal had been submitted on behalf of the objector, prepared by Systra Ltd – which provided photographic evidence of the congestion on site, prior to the new retail unit becoming operational. It also showed a clear knock-on impact to pedestrian and highway safety, contrary to policy AMP 2;
- Systra Ltd had also raised fundamental concerns with the layout whereby 38 car parking spaces were proposed on site and nor did it meet the required design standards; and
- the proposals were contrary to policies AMP 1, AMP 7, AMP 9 and AMP 2.

The Chairperson then welcomed Ms. K. McShane, Transport Consultant for the applicant, and Ms. M. O'Loan, solicitor, to the meeting.

Together they advised the Committee that:

- the photographs submitted by Systra Ltd showed the temporary building which was currently on site and that it was important to note that the unit was located where a number of additional parking spaces would ordinarily be and, as a result, there was currently much less parking than what would be provided under the current application or, indeed, what was there previously;

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

- DFI Roads had given detailed consideration to the proposal and had concluded that there wasn't a safety concern;
- the planning history of the site should be given significant weight;
- the proposal constituted a modest increase in floorspace from what had been on the site before the fire; and
- DFI Roads had been re-consulted and that it was content that it had, in fact, considered the most updated parking layout and that it had no road safety concerns and no amenity issues.

The Chairperson invited Mr. Scally to address any factual inaccuracies which he felt needed addressed.

Mr Scally advised the Committee that he had referenced 17 car parking spaces with 6 additional spaces at the petrol pumps, and that that was the situation before the fire and not what was on site currently. He added that a 45% increase in the retail floorspace was not a modest increase. He reiterated that he believed that DFI Roads had not commented on the latest site plan, revision 4B.

The Principal Planning officer clarified to the Committee that DFI Roads had stated in its consultation response that the petrol filling station did not require permission and that that was incorrect. However, what it had referred to was that there was a consistent planning history on the site with 24 parking spaces prior to the fire and that it had concentrated on the additionality of the 88 square metres and that it would require the additional 6 spaces which could be found in the surrounding area. She advised the Committee that the 17 car parking spaces which Mr Scally had referred to was referenced within the old report, which had been included within the reports pack for background information.

The Divisional Solicitor clarified that, if the Committee was to approve the application, delegated authority should also be given to the Director of Planning and Building Control in relation to the previously raised water management issue.

The Committee approved the application and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and to address the water management issue.

LA04/2021/2893/F - 12 no. storey Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA), with additional use of accommodation by further or higher education institutions outside term time, comprising 774 beds with shared sports and recreation facilities (amendment to previous permission LA04/2016/1252/F PBMSA (774 beds). Maximum height of 12 storeys and varied by LA04/2017/2112/F Variation of condition 7 of LA04/2016/1252/F) on Site bounded by Little York Street, Great George's Street and Nelson Street

The Principal Planning officer outlined the details of the application to the Committee.

He drew the Members' attention to the Late Items pack, whereby a late objection had been received. The objection had stated that the proposal failed to address need. However,

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

the Planning officer explained that the principle of the development had been firmly established through the earlier planning permissions. The objection also referred to Building Control and fire safety issues which were not planning matters. Amenity issues were also raised and had been addressed within the Case officer's report.

The key issues which had been considered during the assessment of the proposed development included the:

- principle of redevelopment;
- principle of Student Accommodation;
- principle of proposed 'out of term' accommodation;
- principle of a Leisure Complex at the location;
- scale, massing and design;
- open space provision;
- traffic and parking;
- impact on amenity;
- noise;
- drainage and flooding;
- waste management;
- pre-application community consultation; and
- developer contributions.

The Principal Planning officer reported that the principle of Managed Student Accommodation had been established on the site through the extant approval LA04/2016/1252/F. The scale and massing of the scheme were virtually identical with the extant permission, with the main difference being the introduction of an internally located, purpose-built leisure facility located where the external courtyards were previously approved. The overall level of amenity provision was slightly less than previously approved, however, that was outweighed by the quality of the recreational facilities on offer, and the elevated roof terrace which would experience less overshadowing than the approved courtyard. Although located adjacent to the existing student accommodation block, given the orientation of the buildings, it was not anticipated that the internal leisure complex would impact significantly on amenity or enjoyment of the outdoor spaces, in what were already enclosed, north facing courtyards.

The Committee was advised that the design, although altered, retained the character of the previous approval, with finishes in keeping with the area and adjacent buildings. The site was ideally located to serve both Queen's University and the newly constructed Ulster University complex.

The Principal Planning officer advised the Committee that DFI Roads, DAERA and Environmental Health had been consulted and were content with the proposals, subject to conditions. Rivers Agency, Belfast City Airport, Building Control and Shared Environmental Services had no objections to the proposals. The Divisional solicitor reminded the Members that a late objection had been received, as highlighted within the Late Items pack.

He outlined that, if the Committee was to approve the application, officers recommended that it would be subject to conditions and a Section 76 Planning Agreement to secure the management of the student accommodation, controlling the use as out-of-term

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

accommodation, controlling the use of the proposed leisure facilities and to secure community apprenticeships.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Stinson (agent), Mr. N. Howells (on behalf of the applicant) and Mr. S. Deans (project architect) to the meeting.

Mr. Stinson advised the Committee that:

- the proposals involved the repurposing of the extant permission to include the development of an integrated, high quality recreational facility which would support the prospective residents of the building and the wider student community associated with Ulster University's new campus;
- it represented an additional investment of £5m in the project;
- they had worked with the planning officers through the pre- application discussion process to develop the proposals which had enabled the application to be brought before the Committee in 5 months, supporting their ambition to have the new spaces open in 2024;
- the building would be operated and managed by Student Roost, which had been operating in Belfast since 2018. It currently managed 1634 bed spaces in the city. It had a proven track record for providing high quality, managed accommodation to support students across the UK;
- the proposals had no increase in the number of student beds that were granted by the Council in 2017;
- the proposed recreational facility was centrally located and was an integral part of the building. It would deliver an active and attractive area of high quality external amenity space, allowing for informal recreation;
- the internal facilities included a multi-purpose sports hall, a wellness room, a multi activity space as well as a gym and workout space;
- the recreational facilities had been designed in consultation with the Head of Sport for Ulster University and the University's Student Life Director. It addressed their need for a dedicated space for their student population and their 78 affiliate sports clubs;
- it fitted within the University's Active Campus strategy which, at its core, was the vision for students to be 'More Active More Often';
- the external space had been refined, following feedback from planning officers, to ensure that it sat sympathetically within the courtyard space;
- a dedicated internal amenity space was also included for use solely by the student residents of the building;
- the proposed development had been noted to offer 1980square metres of internal and external communal space, in so far as it related to the student accommodation portion of the development and suggested a shortfall of 160square metres from the previous permission. The average space per unit provided in the previous permission also fell below the level identified in Creating Places. However, the shared recreational facility was intrinsically linked to the student accommodation and each resident would have access to the spaces created, providing 1400square metres of space; and
- finally, the proposals included the use of the accommodation for patrons associated with further and higher education facilities outside of term time,

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

delivering accommodation that would cater specifically for the needs of the university when, for example, catering for sports teams attending university events, external lecture series or conferencing at the new campus, therefore adding to the vitality of the area and providing year round activity.

A Member suggested that the sports facilities should be open for use by the wider community. Mr. Stinson confirmed to the Committee that the sports facilities were for use solely by patrons associated with further and higher education and that there were other facilities in close proximity of the site for public use.

A further Member suggested that a workshop could perhaps take place on the wider issue of the scale of student housing in that area of the city in the context of place-making.

After discussion, the Committee approved the application and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and the Section 76 Planning Agreement.

LA04/2021/2811/F - Application under section 54 of the Planning Act (NI) in respect of planning permission LA04/2016/1276/F (community centre and associated site works) to vary condition No.6 (seeking to remove requirement for archaeological works set out in the approved programme of works to be implemented prior to commencement of any site works or development) on Corner site between Mayo Street and Mayo Link off Lanark Way Shankill Road Belfast

The Committee was advised that the Section 54 planning application sought to vary condition 6 of planning permission LA04/2016/1276/F to amend the trigger point for the implementation of archaeological works in accordance with an approved programme of works at the site.

The Department for Communities' Historic Environment Division (HED) had been consulted. The Members were advised that HED was the key body in relation to the matter and had responded with no objection to the proposed change to condition 6, subject to revised wording in respect of ensuring that archaeological remains within the application site would be properly identified and protected or appropriately recorded.

The Committee was advised that the granting of a Section 54 application to vary conditions would create a new standalone planning permission and, therefore, should permission be granted, the other original conditions should be repeated as appropriate.

The Committee approved the application and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

LA04/2021/1769/F - Environmental improvements to include rationalisation of 3 car spaces in the courtyard car park to provide multiple seating opportunities; table tennis; a new surface level pedestrian linkage between FinTrU buildings and ancillary development. Existing service plant structures to be consolidated and 'wrapped' in matte black charred timber with a flat Sedum Green Roof System fitted to span the new section of storage created to include 14 bike racks, 2 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points and additional landscaping at FinTrU House, Gasworks

The Committee was advised that the application was before it as the Council had an interest in the land.

The application sought permission for environmental improvements and the reconfiguration of car parking space, which would result in the loss of three spaces. A new pedestrian pathway was proposed, the re-cladding of the service plant area, provision of a cycle storage area, provision of two electric charge points, seating, planter boxes and a table tennis area were also proposed.

The main issues which had been considered were:

- the principle of development;
- impact on surrounding character;
- impact on environmental issues;
- impact on Parking and Road safety; and
- impact on an adjacent listed building

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

BCC Environmental Health Service, Historic Environment Division (HED) and DFI Roads had been consulted and were content with the proposal subject to planning conditions.

The proposal had been assessed against and was considered to comply with the SPSS, BUAP, Draft BMAP (both versions) and PPS3.

The Committee approved the application and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

LA04/2021/2577/F - Detached modular temporary classroom and toilet unit to the south of the existing community facility. Existing southern fenced boundary moved due south by 8.5 metres at Gael-Ionard Mhic Goill 4 Whiterock Close

The Committee was apprised of the application which sought full planning permission for a modular temporary classroom unit to the south of the existing community facility. The unit

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

would have a footprint of 12metres by 6metres. The Members were advised that it would be 3.1metres in height, with a flat roof. The existing southern fenced boundary would be moved south by 8.5metres to accommodate the unit.

DFI Roads, NI Electricity and BCC Environmental Health had been consulted and had offered no objections to the proposal.

The Committee approved the application.

**LA04/2021/2726/F - 5 Panel printed Art
installation at 2 Midland Close**

The Committee was advised that the application was before it as the installation was subject to Council funding.

The Members were advised that the proposal sought permission for the installation of 5 printed panels measuring 2.4m x 1.2m. The proposal formed part of a Business Cluster Support Project and was an Ulster-Scots themed project. The panels were proposed to incorporate photographs and text to explain important Ulster-Scots with local connections, including the Mulholland's of York Street Mill; Thomas Gallaher's tobacco factory; motorbike pioneer, Rex McCandless, whose business was on the Limestone Road; and famous local artists John Luke and James Humbert Craig.

The Principal Planning officer outlined the key issues which had been considered during the assessment of the application included the impact on amenity and general characteristics of the area and the impact on public safety.

The site was located on the boundary wall of 2 Midland Close, located off the Antrim Road. The area was predominantly residential in nature.

The proposal had been assessed against the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS), Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP) and the Draft Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP).

The Committee was advised that the proposed panels were considered unacceptable as they did not respect amenity when assessed in the context of the general characteristics of the locality. The panels, if approved, given to their extent and position would not result in good design as outlined in the SPPS, and would be out of place in this residential setting. The panels cumulatively would result in clutter when read together and with the existing poster panel located on the gable wall of 2 Midland Close.

The scale, intrusive nature and cumulative effect of the proposed panels were considered unacceptable in this predominantly residential area. The proposal was therefore recommended for refusal.

The Committee refused the application and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the refusal reasons.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

**LA04/2021/2727/F - 1 Panel printed Art
installation at Frydays Café, 98 York Road**

The Committee was advised that the application was before it as the installation was subject to Council funding.

The Committee was advised that the proposal sought permission for the installation of 1 printed panel measuring 2.4m x 1.2m. The proposal was part of a Business Cluster Support Project and was an Ulster-Scots themed project. The panels were proposed to incorporate photographs and text to explain the relationship of soda/ potato farls and their key role in the Ulster Fry.

The site was located on the gable wall of 98 York Road. The area was mixed use in nature.

The Members were advised that the proposal had been assessed against the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS), Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP) and the Draft Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP).

The Committee approved the application for a temporary period of three years and granted delegated to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2021/2728/F - 2 Panel printed Art
installation at Winefair, 142 North Queen Street**

The Committee was advised that the application was before it as the installation was subject to Council funding.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the proposal sought permission for the installation of 2 printed panels measuring 2.4m x 1.2m. The proposal was part of a Business Cluster Support Project and was an Ulster-Scots themed project. The panels were proposed to incorporate photographs and text to explain the role of Ulster-Scots in whiskey distilling in Belfast and also the invention of Belfast ginger ale and brown lemonade.

The members were advised that the panels were located on the gable wall and boundary wall of 142 North Queen Street and the area was mixed use in nature.

The proposal had been assessed against the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS), Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP) and the Draft Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP).

The Committee approved the application for a temporary period of three years and granted delegated to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

**LA04/2021/2730/F - 2 Panel printed Art installation
at Second Time Around Charity Shop, 46 Parkmount Street**

The Committee was advised that the application was before it as the installation was subject to Council funding.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the proposal sought permission for the installation of 2 printed panels measuring 2.4m x 1.2m, located on the side and rear wall of the premises. The proposal was part of a Business Cluster Support Project and was an Ulster-Scots themed project. The panels were proposed to incorporate photographs and text to explain the role of Ulster-Scots in philanthropy, such as the foundation of the Belfast Charitable Society and the role of an American Ulster-Scots descent, General Ambrose Burnside.

The host building was commercial in nature and was located within a predominantly residential area.

The Members were advised that the proposal had been assessed against the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS), Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP) and the Draft Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP).

The Committee approved the application for a temporary period of three years and granted delegated to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions

LA04/2022/0275/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 26 University Avenue;

LA04/2022/0138/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 1 Rugby Avenue;

**LA04/2022/0276/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 27 University Avenue;
and**

LA04/2022/0277/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 65-67 University Avenue

The Principal Planning officer outlined that the applications were in front of the Committee as the awnings were subject to Council funding.

A Member queried when BMAP had been quashed and requested that the items be deferred for further information for clarity in respect of the Area of Townscape Character (ATC) and Policy PPS6.

Moved by Councillor Groogan
Seconded by Councillor O'Hara and

Resolved – that the following four applications, which were located within the same area of the city, be deferred and that a report be submitted to a subsequent meeting regarding the Areas of Townscape Character (ATC), how PPS6 is applied and when precisely BMAP was quashed:

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 15th May, 2022**

- LA04/2022/0275/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 26 University Avenue;
- LA04/2022/0138/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 1 Rugby Avenue;
- LA04/2022/0276/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 27 University Avenue; and
- LA04/2022/0277/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 65-67 University Avenue

LA04/2021/2794/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 2 Lock Keepers Inn

The Committee was advised that the application was before it as the awning was subject to Council funding.

The Committee was advised that the application site was situated at the Lock Keepers Inn at Lagan Valley Regional Park. The site fell within the designations for an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Archaeological site and Monument, listed Building Curtilage and Regional Park Node.

The Members noted that the proposed application for a retractable awning cover on a removable supporting frame was considered by officers to be minor changes to the existing façade. The proposal was in close proximity to Lock-Keepers House (Grade B1) and Lock and Bridge Milltown Road (Grade B1) which were of special architectural and historic importance and were protected by section 80 of the Planning Act 2011. The Committee was advised that the proposal would not negatively impact the Listed Building and Lock and its setting in accordance with PPS6, the SPPS and Section 91 of the Planning Act 2011.

DFI Roads had been consulted and had no objections and Historic Environment Division (HED) had no objections with conditions.

No third party representations had been received.

The Committee approved the application and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

Chairperson

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 12th May, 2022

MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOТЕLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Gormley (Chairperson);
Aldermen Haire and Rodgers; and
Councillors Canavan, de Faoite, Haire, Kyle,
McLaughlin, Newton, Sandford, Spratt and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Change;
Mr. J Greer, Operational Director of Economic
Development;
Mrs. S. Toland, Operational Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. D. Caldwell, Climate Commissioner;
Mr. R. McLernon, Climate Programme Manager - City;
Mr. R. Connelly, Policy, Research & Compliance Officer;
Mr. J. McKearney, Project Support Assistant;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors McKeown and McCann.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 7th 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 9th May.

Ciaran White and Francis Costello – Paper on EU elections **"Allowing Northern Ireland residents to vote** **in future EU Parliamentary Elections"**

Further to Committee approval at the March meeting, the Members welcomed Professor Ciaran White BL and Dr Francis Costello who addressed the Committee in relation to their research on the possibility of Northern Ireland securing European Parliament and European Committee of the Regions elected representation. Prof. White and Dr Costello provided a detailed research paper in advance of the meeting which was circulated to the

**Climate and City Resilience Committee,
Thursday, 12th May, 2022**

Members. Prof. White and Dr Costello reprised key points contained within the paper and used Cyprus and France as examples in the context of restoring a democratic deficit.

The deputation then answered a number of questions, following which it was

Moved by Councillor de Faoite;
Seconded by Councillor Flynn;

That “Belfast City Council; Recognises there are concerns about a democratic deficit in relation to the Northern Ireland Protocol and its implementation;

Agrees to write to the British and Irish Governments and the European Commission to propose that Northern Ireland be allocated representation in the European Parliament and European Committee of the Regions, with voting rights limited to matters which directly relate to or govern the Northern Ireland Protocol;

Believes that representation in both institutions should be commensurate with a member state of the same or similar population to ensure that Northern Ireland’s voice is adequately heard;

Proposes that the members of the European Parliament representing Northern Ireland should be directly elected and those members of the European Committee of the Regions shall be appointed by the Northern Ireland Assembly”.

Members thanked Prof. White and Dr Costello for their presentation. Discussion ensued around democracy and representation and some of the Members relayed comments and concerns to which Dr Costello and Prof. White responded. Councillor de Faoite reiterated his comments to Council on 9th May in the context of his proposal.

On a vote 6 Members voted for the proposal and 6 against.

There being an equality of votes, the Chairperson exercised his second and casting vote in favour of the proposal and it was declared carried.

The Chairperson thanked Prof. White and Dr Costello for their presentation.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the report 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 the following 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.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

The Climate Commissioner submitted a report to update the Members on the VPACH 2, and to consider a joint application to the UK Government's ORCS to undertake a pilot project in City Council Car parks; and to inform the Members of a new opportunity to consider the installation of a fully funded EV charging hub on Council land.

The Committee granted approval for the internal EV Officers Group to work with ESB to identify and expedite locations for charging hubs in the city and for CMT to meet with Liberty Charge to discuss the ORCS opportunity with a paper brought back for approval by CMT and the relevant Committee(s).

Port Health Update

The Operational Director of City and Neighbourhood Services referred to the report which provided the Members with an update on the Council's Port Health operations and delivery of imported food controls, in the context of the continuing UK Government/EU discussions in relation to implementation of the NI Protocol and she responded to questions from some Members.

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Update on Current Issues

Work of the Climate Unit

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 activities carried out by the Belfast City Council Climate Unit. Further updates will be provided as specific areas of work progress.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note of the key areas of focus for the Belfast City Council Climate Unit.

3.0 Main report

Council - Key areas of focus and progress

- 1. A baseline emissions analysis of BCC and a preliminary net zero target and trajectory has been completed (detailed in separate paper).**
- 2. An energy review of five buildings is underway (City Hall, Cecil Ward, Waterfront Hall, North Queen Street**

3. Community Centre, Shankill Leisure Centre). This work will be completed by August 2022.
4. A climate risk assessment, climate action plan and climate investment plan for BCC will be carried out from May-Sep.
5. 14 phase 1 pilots supported by the Climate Fund have commenced this quarter: (1) Pilot insulation programme; (2) Solar PV investigation across the estate (3) Rollout of the Hysop project – hydraulic optimisation initiative; (4) EV charging at leisure centres; (5) Pilot recycling in the city centre; (6) study to assess carbon stocks on BCC owned peatland on Belfast Hills; (7) Survey of wildflower meadows / species rich grassland at 4 sites across the City; (8) Economic appraisal of larger tree nursery/commercial opportunities; (9) Installing additional electric charging points at Duncrue; (10) HVO trial in 10 vehicles; (11) Smart chargers study (12) Furniture recycling/up-cycling pilot; (13) Carpet recycling pilot; and (14) Scale up Repair and reuse laptop scheme.
6. A climate data platform is being scoped, EOIs have been sought and received from several companies and a business case will be developed for consideration by Digital Services.
7. A pilot programme is underway to measure supply chain emissions using the Trace Data Service Pilot Platform developed by Praesideo.
8. Ongoing coordination of climate initiatives through the Climate Programme Board and the Climate and Resilience Committee.

3.2 Council - Key areas of focus and progress

1. Ongoing delivery of One million Trees and UPSURGE projects and completion of the VPACH project.
2. Social Farms & Gardens, a UK wide charity supporting communities to farm, garden and grow together, have been contracted to review the existing Belfast Sustainable Food Place (SFP) accreditation, undertake engagement with key stakeholders and propose a framework and action plan which will allow for renewal of the Bronze Sustainable Food Place award and potential progression to Silver and Gold. This work will be completed by July 2022.
3. Collation of climate data for annual submission to the Carbon Disclosure Project and the GDS Index.
4. Ongoing engagement with LSE, PCAN, GFI and UKCCIC to position Belfast as a Net Zero finance demonstrator.
5. Initial work is underway to scope a local carbon offsetting fund (detailed in separate paper).

6. Climate considerations are being mainstreamed into key strategies and investments – Belfast Agenda, BCRD,
7. Belfast Stories, City Regeneration & BV, Economic Strategy, Investment Guide, 2 Royal Avenue, Active Travel etc.
8. Ongoing climate collaboration with other cities via RCN, Core Cities and ICLEI. A Statement of Intent was signed by the Mayors Dublin, Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region ahead of a decarbonisation summit in June 22 and discussion are ongoing with officers to identify specific areas for collaboration.
9. The potential to develop a Local Area Energy Plan is being discussed with the Energy Systems Catapult. This plan would enable the Council to engage businesses and citizens in measures to reduce emissions and energy costs across the City. The plan would provide a detailed spatial representation of the most cost-effective decarbonisation measures that could be deployed in different parts of the city (heat pumps, retrofit, district heating, EV charging points, solar PV, wind etc.) along with estimated costs. The outputs could then be used to develop a series of investments across the City to improve energy efficiency, reduce emissions and create jobs.
10. ToRs for a Climate Action Plan and Climate Investment Plan (Net Zero pipeline) are being developed.
11. Ongoing engagement with NIE, PWC and other Councils to develop a place-based delivery mechanism for the Energy Strategy and Green growth Strategy. The LSE Grantham Institute have developed an outline for a proposed Just Transition Bond to enable NIHE to finance the retrofit of its entire social housing stock.
12. Ongoing engagement with businesses leading the Net Zero agenda (including NI Water, Translink, Catagen, B9 Energy, MJM Renewables etc.).
13. Ongoing coordination of climate initiatives through R&S Board and Belfast Climate Commission.

4.0 **Financial and Resource Implications**

4.1 None

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

5.1 None.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

BCC Carbon Baseline and Trajectory Report

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 draft Belfast City Council Carbon Baseline and Trajectory.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress towards a draft Belfast City Council carbon baseline and trajectory and note that a more detailed report will be brought to a future committee when the baseline and trajectory report has been finalised.

3.0 Main report

3.1 BCC Carbon Baseline and Trajectory Report

In October 2019, Belfast City Council declared a Climate Change Emergency. It was agreed that a Belfast City Council Climate Mitigation and Adaptation plan would be prepared and adopted with an aim of reducing carbon emissions by 80% compared to 2005 levels as quickly as possible.

The Carbon Baseline and Trajectory report can be used as a benchmark to record current emissions and to track performance against future emissions. The carbon footprint baseline has been undertaken in accordance with best practise guidance by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and calculated using 2019 conversion factors for the carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) published by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

The Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) were contacted to clarify which conversion factors should be used in Northern Ireland and they confirmed that the UK conversion factors, published by BEIS are the data that they would employ.

The trajectory baseline year was nominated as the financial year of 2019/20, which is the reference point to base ‘current’ emissions on and used to forecast the pathway to net zero carbon. It was decided to use this year as this represented the most comprehensive period of monitoring the energy and water usage of all assets and is considered a ‘typical’ year prior to Covid restrictions.

A selection of site surveys are scheduled to be undertaken in June 2022.

The carbon footprint is categorised into scopes, which cover:

Scope 1 (direct) emissions are from activities owned or controlled by the Council. Examples of Scope 1 emissions include emissions from combustion in Council owned or controlled boilers, furnaces and vehicles.

Scope 2 (indirect) emissions are associated with purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling. These indirect emissions are a consequence of the Council's energy use, but occur at sources that the Council do not own or control. Examples include grid supplied electricity and heat provided through a heat network.

Scope 3 (other indirect) emissions are a consequence of the Council's actions that occur at sources the Council do not own or control and are not classed as Scope 2 emissions. Examples of Scope 3 emissions include business travel by means not owned or controlled by the Council (grey fleet), disposing of the Council's own waste and purchased goods in the supply chain, etc.

- 3.2 The draft report analyses Belfast City Council's Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions and the potential measures that can be taken to reduce. The early recommendations arising from the analysis are set out below:

Short Term Action

Collect and save emissions data as it is made available for all core Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

Set up processes and procedures to request and record emissions data from suppliers and staff.

Carry out detailed energy audits of all buildings.

Calculate the likely increase in electricity usage expected from installing heat pumps and liaise with the DNO to receive a budget quotation to increase the capacity.

Medium Term Action

Develop detailed feasibility studies to identify viable energy efficiency projects, localised power generation projects and carbon offsetting schemes.

Carry out detailed engineering design.

Develop a procurement strategy to deliver projects.

Understand which funding options are available and develop a strategy on how to fund specific projects.

Liaise with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) to understand the grid capacity and how this relates to future electricity demands.

Calculate the carbon footprint of the whole Local Authority area and provide an action plan for the whole district to be zero carbon.

Long Term Action

Make a transition away from fossil fuel vehicles.

Increase electric vehicle charging network and sustainable travel infrastructure.

Develop large scale renewable heat and power generation projects.

Roll out energy efficiency and power generation projects to all buildings.

Develop on-going tree planting and biodiversity improvement schemes.

The Committee is asked to note the progress towards a draft Belfast City Council Carbon Baseline and Trajectory and note that a more detailed report will be brought to a future committee when the baseline and trajectory report has been finalised.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

4.1 The report identifies potential costs, which will be subject to further analysis during the development of the Belfast City Council Climate Plan, and Climate Investment Plan.

5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Implications

5.1 None.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Local Offset Fund

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 inform Members about a proposal to map the opportunity to develop a Local Carbon Offset Fund.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the proposal to map the opportunity to develop a Local Carbon Offset Fund.

3.0 Main report

3.1 NI has set an ambitious climate target of achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050 and the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-2024 includes a number of adaptation actions under key priority areas. Councils across NI have a key role to play in delivering of resilience and emission targets. According to the UK Committee on Climate Change, ‘more than half of the emissions cuts needed rely on people and businesses taking up low-carbon solutions – decisions that are made at a local and individual level. Many of these decisions depend on having supporting infrastructure and systems in place. Local authorities have powers or influence over roughly a third of emissions in their local areas’.

Moreover, a recent report Accelerating Net Zero Delivery demonstrates the economic and social value of locally tailored approaches. Councils are the closest level of government to communities, workers, suppliers and consumers and are well placed to deliver holistic, tangible, large scale climate solutions. However, implementing this ambition is challenging for councils due to resource limitations and capacity constraints.

3.2 The public sector can’t deliver the volume of funds required to deliver Net Zero commitments, new funding and revenue models are needed to deliver at scale and at pace. Belfast City Council (BCC) has been working in partnership with PCAN and the Grantham Institute, LSE and the UKCICC to better understand how it can mobilise the necessary finance to decarbonise heat, transport and industry across the City as well as support investments in resilience measures.

At the same time, many organisations across NI have set ambitious net zero targets. Whilst these will mostly be delivered

through emission reductions, it is likely that most organisations will need to off-set the emissions they cannot avoid or reduce by paying for a carbon credit, which allows them to pay for an equivalent amount of emissions to be reduced or removed elsewhere. Most off-setting projects are located in developing countries but there is anecdotal evidence that there is an appetite among NI companies to off-set their emissions via local projects.

- 3.3 This project would be a collaborative exercise between Belfast City Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, Ards and North Down Council, and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Working in partnership, these Councils have identified a need to carry out a desktop review to quantify the opportunity for establishing a regional Carbon Offset Fund that could be used to finance a pipeline of climate investments across NI. These could range from investments in energy efficiency, decarbonised heating supply and renewable energy to habitat restoration and other nature-based solutions that enhance resilience and sequester carbon.

- 3.4 This would require a joint procurement by interested Councils to identify a suitably qualified supplier with experience and expertise in climate finance and developing climate plans and programmes, to undertake a mapping exercise to help us understand the extent of the opportunity for local off-setting in NI.

- 3.5 This work is being aligned with ongoing work by SIB and DAERA to develop funding mechanisms to deliver against Net Zero targets. The off-setting fund would provide a source of finance to support the development and delivery of a Net Zero pipeline as well as help to deliver against targets in the Energy Strategy and the Green Growth Strategy but in a very place-specific (rather than sector or departmental based) fashion.

This is an initial piece of mapping work to develop the evidence base and provide an opportunity for the Councils, SIB, DfE and DAERA to start working together on the financing / delivery challenge. It would need to be followed up with further scoping work.

- 3.6 The overall objective is to undertake a mapping exercise to help the partners understand the extent of the opportunity for local off-setting in NI. This survey and analysis will be informed by the work of Anthesis around Authority-based insetting and

other work in this field. We will draw on our linkages with PCAN and LSE to peer review and supplement the findings with research and analysis on place-based financing from other parts of the country.

- 3.7 The intended outcome is that, based on a survey of emitters from key sectors, the potential for establishing a local off-setting fund will be better understood along with an estimate of the potential annual income that could be achieved by such a

scheme. It is anticipated that the survey results will lead onto further preparatory work that could be used as part of a business case or funding application. In particular, the survey will determine the following:

1. What is the current value of the offset market in Belfast and more widely across NI i.e. what amount of GHG emissions are currently offset?
2. What level of investment is needed to satisfy GHG offset targets currently?
3. What is the current trend in offsetting across the organisations (increasing/decreasing)
4. What is the likely value of the offset market in Belfast and more widely across NI through to 2030 based on trends in carbon prices and expected volume of offsetting?
5. Who are the largest emitters? What is their individual and combined GHG emission output?
6. What is the level of interest from organisations (public, private) in offsetting locally?
7. How much of their current offset would they be willing to channel into a local fund?
8. What types of projects are they interested in? Are there any restrictions on what they can and can't fund?
9. What are the key barriers or enablers to offsetting locally?
10. What type of support do they require in relation to carbon offsetting?
11. Highlight examples of best practice elsewhere which can be shared with others, and which highlight the opportunities for regional carbon offsetting.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.1 The total budget for this study is £15,000 which would be divided across the seven Councils. £2500 has been allocated from within the existing City and Organisational Strategy budget to finance BCC's contribution.

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

- 5.1 Any good relations or equality implications will be identified as part of the Council’s screening process.”**

The Committee approved the proposal to map the opportunity to develop a Local Carbon Offset Fund.

Belfast Fairtrade Update

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 and seek approval from Members for the installation of new ‘Belfast is a Fairtrade City’ signage at various locations across the city and to update members on the planned actions of the Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group to mark World Fairtrade Day on Saturday 14th May.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the installation of the ‘Belfast is a Fairtrade City’ signage and to note the update for the Belfast Fairtrade Steering Groups plans to mark World Fairtrade Day on Saturday 14th May.**

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Belfast has held the Fairtrade City status from the UK Fairtrade Foundation since 2005 and was the first city to gain dual Fairtrade accreditation when receiving Fairtrade City status from Fairtrade Ireland also in 2006.**

- 3.2 The City & Organisational Strategy Department leads the maintenance of Belfast’s Fairtrade City status. The department supports the Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group, a group co-Chaired by Council Members, Cllr Donal Lyons and Cllr Ross McMullan with representation from Council and the business, voluntary and community sectors. The Steering Group is responsible for maintaining Belfast’s Fairtrade City status through continued promotion and awareness of Fairtrade. The group is for all those interested in trade justice and international development through Fairtrade and membership is open to the public. The Group meets approximately every two months to discuss ways to advance Fairtrade in Belfast and to support group members in achieving this.**

3.3 'Belfast is a Fairtrade City' signage

Fairtrade City status is conferred by the Fairtrade Foundation on a biennial basis. It is awarded after the completion of a comprehensive audit of Fairtrade outlets in the city, and after undertaking considerable marketing and promotional activities by the Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group. Belfast was granted this city status in 2005 and biannually since. The Fairtrade certificates awarded are displayed in the Lord Mayors office.

3.4 The marketing and promotion of Fairtrade activity in the city is key to retaining Fairtrade City status. The Fairtrade Foundation recommend the display of one of the approved formats or logo's for each Fairtrade Town, City or Borough that has achieved this accolade. This is standard practice across the UK and Ireland and has been adopted in Northern Ireland by seven other Local Authorities with two more progressing on this action and will be joined soon after by the final Council authority in NI to receive Fairtrade status once application is approved in the coming weeks.

3.5 Fairtrade City signage erected in a prominent place recognises the City's endeavours in promoting the global campaign of increasing Fairtrade products. Fairtrade is the gold standard of ethical labelling and can only appear on products from the developing world. Fairtrade is a local ethical consumerism led by cross community, public/private sector demand and statutory obligations: UN Sustainable Development Goals, 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. This campaign is supported by the City Council who host the Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group and Fairtrade Belfast webpage.

3.6 Following a request from the Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group, Belfast City Council officers agreed to conduct a review of Council sites to host Fairtrade city signage. This review has been completed and approval is sought from this Committee for the following installations:

'Belfast is a Fairtrade City' signage (See Appendix one)

- A3 portrait signs for park display stands in north, south, east and west of the city.
- 2 x A1 landscape signs for St George's Market

- 2 x A2 landscape signs for 2 Royal Avenue

3.7 Members are asked to consider this proposal by the Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group to erect 'Belfast is a Fairtrade City' signage at locations outlined above for launch on World Fairtrade Day on Saturday 14th May,

World Fairtrade Day – Saturday 14th May

The Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group intend to mark World Fairtrade Day on Saturday 14th May with the following actions:

3.8 **Signage**

Pending Committee approval of the above 'Belfast is a Fairtrade City' signage request, there are plans for a press release and photo call with Steering Group members to announce this installation with circulation across the multiple Belfast City Council social media platforms.

3.9 **Mesh Banner**

There will be a temporary mesh banner placed at City Hall railings for Fairtrade Day weekend. This can be removed upon conclusion of the weekend and stored for future use during key Fairtrade calendar events such as Fairtrade Fortnight or Fairtrade Day.

3.10 **Pop-Up Stands**

A number of pop-up stands have been created and will be placed inside City Hall visitor areas over the Fairtrade Day weekend to raise awareness of the campaign and Belfast's commitment to Fairtrade. These can be used again during future Fairtrade events.

3.11 **Fairtrade Materials Distribution**

Councils is planning to create posters, cards or window stickers to distribute to Fairtrade outlets showing the 'Belfast is a Fairtrade City' artwork. This will have the effect of increasing the idea of shared ownership and using appropriate venues across the city to help spread the word.

3.12 **Lighting**

City Hall will be illuminated green, blue and black, the colours of the Fairtrade Foundation logo for Fairtrade Day on the evening of Saturday 14th May.

3.13 City Matters

There are plans for the inclusion of a Fairtrade educational piece in the next edition of City Matters using 'Belfast is a Fairtrade City' branding along with a call-to-action to seek new Belfast Fairtrade Steering Group members.

3.14 Asset library

Various Communications Assets with the new 'Belfast is a Fairtrade City' logo have been designed. These graphics can be used on the branding/web/social content during the promotion of Fairtrade Day but also for future Fairtrade marketing and communications.

3.15 BCC Fairtrade Hamper Staff Giveaway

A hamper containing multiple Fairtrade branded food and drinks items will be featured as part of a BCC staff giveaway along with accompanying Fairtrade article on Interlink. All hamper items have been sourced within Belfast with inclusion of more than 50% of the budget for the hamper contents spent on items produced by Belfast based SME's.

3.16 BCC Fairtrade Resources

An order has been placed with the Fairtrade Foundation by Council for new resource materials, posters, information leaflets etc. These will be displayed in Staff and Visitor areas across multiple Council sites in order to raise awareness among staff and visitors of the importance of the Fairtrade campaign.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

4.1 Financial

The Fairtrade signage will be created by the Council's in-house Reprographics Team at nominal cost to Belfast City Council.

4.2 Resource

Staff time will be required from Officers in the City & Organisational Strategy Department, City & Neighbourhood Services and Physical Programmes Department in order to undertake the signage installation.

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

5.1 None.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report and approved the installation of ‘Belfast Is a Fairtrade City’ signage.

Belfast Net Zero Carbon Road Map

The Committee agreed to defer until its next meeting consideration of a report on the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Road Map.

Recap on suggestions for future meetings

The Resilience Co-ordinator updated the Members on the list of actions from previous meetings and confirmed that Climate Emergency Training for the Members had been scheduled for Saturday 3 September.

The Policy, Research and Compliance Officer provided the Members with an update on the invitation which had been sent by the Chief Executive to the Shared Island Unit further to a Notion of Motion. The officer advised that the Shared Island Unit had confirmed that it was available to attend the Committee in June to give a presentation.

The Committee approved an invitation to be sent to the Shared Island Unit to attend the June meeting.

Chairperson

Standards and Business Committee

Tuesday, 24th May, 2022

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McCullough (Chairperson);
Councillors Black, Bunting, Corr, de Faoite, Ferguson
Gormley, M. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, McAteer and McCabe.

In attendance: Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer,
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor,
Mrs S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Canavan, T. Kelly, McDonough Brown and Pankhurst.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 30th 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 4th April, subject to the omission of those matters which had been delegated to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were recorded.

Motions

The Committee considered a report in relation to Notices of Motion which had been received for consideration by the Council at its meeting on 1st of June.

The Committee considered each motion in turn and agreed the following:

Notice of Motion – Belfast City Council Inclusive Play Parks

That the motion in relation to Belfast City Council Inclusive Play Parks should be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

Notice of Motion – Cleansing Task Force

That the motion in relation to Cleansing Task Force should be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

**Standards and Business Committee,
Tuesday, 24th May, 2022**

**Notice of Motion – Northern Ireland Troubles
(Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill**

That the motion in relation to Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

Chairperson

Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill

“This council, noting the UK government’s introduction of the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill, believes that the proposals within this Bill fail to honour the UK’s obligation under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to carry out proper investigations into deaths and serious injuries that occurred during the NI conflict. This council also recognises this bill is a unilateral move by the UK government to abandon its commitment to the Stormont House Agreement, again demonstrating contempt for agreements made with international partners.

Furthermore, this Council echoes fears made by civil society and victims organisations that, under these proposals, the Secretary of State may in practice decide who gets immunity from prosecution.

Accordingly, this Council calls on the UK government to abandon this Bill and return to the already agreed structures as outlined in the Stormont House Agreement and to recognise to state or non-state actor should have control over how a victim seeks truth and justice.”

Proposer: Councillor Lyons

Seconder: Councillor Whyte

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