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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

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

Notice is hereby given that the monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber and remotely, via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 1st November, 2022 at 6.00 pm, for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of Council Meeting (Pages 1 - 8)
5. Official Announcements
6. Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 9 - 54)
7. Minutes of People and Communities Committee (Pages 55 - 78)
8. Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 79 - 116)
9. Minutes of Planning Committee (Pages 117 - 124)
10. Minutes of the Licensing Committee (Pages 125 - 140)
11. Minutes of Climate and City Resilience Committee (Pages 141 - 144)
12. Minutes of Standards and Business Committee (Pages 145 - 150)
13. Motions
 - a) Citizen's Forum for Belfast (Pages 151 - 152)

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



Chief Executive

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Council

MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Monday, 3rd October, 2022 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

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

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Heading.

Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 22nd September, under the heading "Update on Community Provision Funding", in that they worked for or were associated with the organisations listed:

- The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black) - Grosvenor Community Centre;
- Councillor Beattie - Blackie River Community Group;
- Councillor Canavan - Blackie River Community Group;
- Councillor Carson - Upper Springfield Development Trust;
- Councillor Corr - Falls Community Council;
- Councillor Donnelly - Upper Springfield Development Trust;

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- Councillor Gormley - Lower Ormeau Residents' Action Group
- Councillor McCabe - Féile an Phobail;
- Councillor McCullough – Greater Shankill Partnership; and
- Councillor Verner - Greater Shankill Partnership.

Councillor Long declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 22nd September, under the heading “Regulation of Cosmetic Treatments in Northern Ireland”, on the basis that his practice provided non-surgical cosmetic treatments.

The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly) and Councillors McMullan and Smyth declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 22nd September, under the heading “Carew Family Centre: Bridging Support”, in that they were on the Board of the Eastside Partnership, which had been recommended for funding.

Councillor Thompson declared an interest in the minute of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 23rd September, under the heading “Update on Area Working Groups”, in that she was a member of the Greater Shankill Community Council which had been recommended for funding by the West Belfast Area Working Group.

As none of the aforementioned items became the subject of discussion, those Members who had declared an interest were not required to leave the meeting.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Black),
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 1st September and the special meetings of 25th August and 11th September be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of the father of Alderman Dorrian and the sister of Councillor McAteer and, together with a number of Members, extended her deepest condolences to both Members.

Alderman Dorrian and Councillor McAteer thanked the Lord Mayor and the Members for their kind remarks.

Alderman Rodgers referred to the recent death of former Councillor James (Junior) Walker and, at his request, the Lord Mayor agreed to forward a letter to Mr. Walker's family expressing the Council's deepest condolences.

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At the request of Councillor T. Kelly, the Lord Mayor agreed to forward a letter to Sandy Row Football Club congratulating it on winning the Irish Football Association's 2022 Grassroots Club of the Year Award for Belfast.

Alderman Rodgers pointed out that this would be the last meeting which would be attended by Mr. Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources, as he was due to retire from the Council at the end of October, having completed twenty-eight years' service. He, together with a number of Members, highlighted the significant contribution made by the Director in managing the Council's finances and wished him well in his retirement.

The Lord Mayor, together with a number of Members, paid tribute to Mrs. Jayne Byrne, the former Executive Manager in the Office of the Chief Executive, who had recently left the Council after twenty-eight years' service to take up a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The Lord Mayor congratulated Mrs. Louise McLornan, Democratic Services Officer, on the recent birth of her daughter, Anna.

Several Members referred to the fire which had, earlier that morning, caused significant damage to the Old Cathedral Building in Donegall Street and highlighted the considerable impact which it would have upon businesses and organisations in that area and their need for support.

Councillor Nelson expressed his disappointment that the multi-agency City centre revitalisation task force had yet to be convened and was informed by the Chief Executive that work was underway to identify potential participants.

Councillor McKeown reminded the Council that it had, at its meeting on 1st December, 2020, adopted his motion to invite the then President-elect Biden and the then Vice President-elect Harris to Belfast at the earliest opportunity, when circumstances safely permitted it. He referred to recent reports of a potential visit by President Biden to the United Kingdom and secured approval from the Council for the Chief Executive to write to the United States Embassy in London to formally invite the President to visit Belfast.

The Lord Mayor congratulated the Ulster University on the recent opening of the final phase of its enhanced Belfast campus.

Change of Membership on Outside Body

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Democratic Unionist Party that Councillor Douglas had replaced Councillor Pankhurst on the National Association of Councillors.

The Council noted the change.

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Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor McDonough-Brown,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 23rd September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Update on Physical Programme

Moved by Councillor McKeown,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite and

Resolved - That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 23rd September, under the heading "Update on Physical Programme", insofar as it relates to the Alleygating Phase 5 Project, be amended to provide that the Council agrees to write to the Justice Minister requesting that the Department of Justice match the Council's allocation of £500k to this phase of the project.

(Councillor Long declared an interest as soon as the foregoing amendment had been proposed, on the basis that his wife was the Justice Minister and left the meeting for the duration of the discussion.)

Amendment

Update on Contracts

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 23rd September, under the heading "Update on Contracts – Other Single Tender Actions", to approve Single Tender Actions for i. Fiat and ii. Mercedes Benz Original Equipment Manufacturer approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs, be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees to undertake a full public procurement exercise.

On a recorded vote, forty-six Members voted for the amendment and ten against and it was declared carried.

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For 46	Against 10
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black); The High Sheriff (Councillor Hussey); Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, Haire, Rodgers and Sandford; and Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Donnelly, Douglas, Duffy, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Howard, T. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, Magee, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCullough, McKeown, McLaughlin, Murphy, Newton, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Smyth, Spratt, Thompson, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); and Councillors Bower, Hanvey, Hutchinson, Long, Maghie, McDonough-Brown, McMullan, Murray and Nelson.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 23rd September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor McMullan,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 6th and 22nd September be approved and adopted.

**Cherryvale Gate Anti-Social
Behaviour Measures Consultation**

At the request of Councillor Long, the Council agreed that local residents also be invited to attend the meeting of Elected Members from the Lisnasharragh DEA to be held to agree the final remedial measures to mitigate against any anti-social behaviour arising from the reopening of the gate at Cherryvale and that this meeting be convened as a matter of urgency.

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Amendment

**Request for the Renaming of
Moltke Street Playground**

Moved by Councillor T. Kelly,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting and

Resolved - That the decision of the People and Communities Committee of 22nd September, under the heading "Request for the Renaming of Moltke Street Playground", to name the playground the Ruby Murray Park, be amended to provide that it be named the Ruby Murray Village Green instead.

**Update on Cemeteries and
Crematorium Working Group**

In response to an issue which had been raised by Alderman Rodgers around the delay in the planning process for the new crematorium, the Chief Executive undertook to raise the matter with the Chief Executive of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendment and additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 6th and 22nd September were 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 28th September be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Smyth,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 21st September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Pavement Café Licensing Scheme

At the request of Councillor Canavan, the Council agreed that, in addition to extending the current temporary pavement café licensing scheme for a further twelve

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months, Council officers would consult with businesses on a proposed permanent scheme and associated guidelines.

In response to an issue which had been raised by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly), the Council agreed that the operation/enforcement of pavement cafés be placed on the agenda of the newly established Working Group on Disability.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 21st September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Whyte,
Seconded by Councillor Murphy and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 31st August and 20th September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Standards and Business Committee

Moved by Councillor Hanvey,
Seconded by Councillor Pankhurst and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 27th September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

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Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 21st October, 2022

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly);
Alderman Dorrian and Councillors Bradley, Bunting,
Ferguson, Garrett, Groogan, Long, Lyons, McLaughlin,
McMullan, Murphy, Pankhurst, Spratt, Verner and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillors Flynn and McKeown.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of
Finance and Resources;
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor and Director of Legal
and Civic Services;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and
Development;
Mrs. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mrs. D. Colville, City Innovation Manager;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Alderman Haire and Councillor Beattie.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 23rd September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 3rd October, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

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Declarations of Interest

Councillors Garrett, Groogan, Murphy and Spratt declared an interest in respect of agenda item 6a – Update on Physical Programme, in so far as it related to the Cathedral Gardens Project, on the basis that they would, as members of the Planning Committee, be required to determine a planning application at some point and took no part in the decision-making process.

Councillor Lyons declared an interest in relation to agenda item 10a – Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund, in that he owned shares in a community energy project, the value of which was below the beneficial interest threshold.

The Chief Executive advised the Member that his declaration was not of such significance as to necessitate his withdrawal from the meeting whilst that item was being considered.

Restricted Items

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

**Medium Term Financial Plan
and Efficiency Programme**

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided an assessment of the key issues which would influence the rate setting process for 2023/24 and the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for 2023/24 - 2025/26.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the challenges to be taken into consideration as part of the annual and medium-term rate setting; and
- ii. agreed to continue to receive monthly rate update reports to enable the striking of the district rate by February, 2023.

**Augment the City Innovation
and the Visitor Experience**

The City Innovation Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing information on a twelve-month project, entitled Augment the City, which was being developed currently by the Council. The project sought to help Belfast City Region

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partners to better understand, and plan for, new digital technologies which would be likely to shape the content and presentation of major visitor and cultural investments over the next five years, including Belfast Stories, the City Hall exhibition and other visitor locations across the city region. The report also outlined the complementary strands of work which would make up the Augment the City project, as well as a range of substantial industry co-investments and additional benefits which the project could attract to Belfast.

Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee:

- i note the proposal for the Augment the City project and the benefits which it was expected to generate for Belfast;
- ii approve the development and submission of a £1 million business case to the Belfast City Region Deal Digital pillar to deliver a Small Business Research Initiative challenge competition for the region's creative and digital SME sector;
- iii approve the development of a collaborative agreement with BT and other key industry partners to create a timebound world-class visitor immersive showcase in the City Hall; and
- iv note that any proposals for the world-class visitor showcase would be presented to the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group for consideration.

As the Committee had failed to reach a consensus, a vote was taken. Fifteen Members voted in favour of adopting the recommendations and one against and, accordingly, they were adopted.

Update on Employees on Temporary Contracts and Agency Workers

The Director of Human Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing an update on the number of employees on temporary contracts and agency assignees engaged by the Council and outlining the steps being taken to reduce the Council's reliance on these two categories.

She reported that, at 30th September, 227 staff had been filling posts on a temporary basis, 138 of whom were permanent staff and would return to their substantive post when no longer required. The other 89 were Fixed Term Contract employees who did not have a substantive post to return to. 333 agency assignees had been engaged by the Council on that date.

The Director then outlined the actions which had been taken to reduce the number of long-standing temporary posts. She reminded the Committee that the Council, at its meeting on 4th October, 2021, had adopted a motion agreeing to seek a legal opinion on the potential for anyone on a temporary contract who had been employed for twelve continuous months, regardless of job title, to have that contract made permanent if they so wished.

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She confirmed that Senior Counsel had since advised that the implementation of this proposal could give rise to breaches of the statutory Local Government Staff Commission's Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection and that there were unforeseen potential consequences of these matters which could well emerge and result in litigation. She and the City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services were due to meet with the Local Government Staff Commission on 28th October and, subsequently, with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to consider the legal opinion and discuss measures which were being considered to prevent similar situations arising in the future.

She went on to point out that a recent external recruitment exercise for General Operatives within the City and Neighbourhood Services Department had resulted in the appointment of 45 permanent staff and that the recruitment of permanent Sweeper/Driver Labourer's, Recycling Operatives, Park Operatives and Gardeners was planned. A recruitment exercise to appoint 40 Business Support Clerks on a permanent basis had also been completed. The filling of all of the aforementioned posts would reduce the requirement for temporary/agency staff moving forward. Officers would, she stressed, continue to prioritise addressing temporary posts which had been in place for a considerable period of time, with the Corporate Management Team providing oversight of this work on an ongoing basis.

The Director concluded by seeking approval from the Committee to engage an external consultant to undertake a feasibility study to determine whether an in-house agency might offer better value for money for the Council. The feasibility study would cost approximately £30,000 and would be met from existing budgets.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the contents of the report;
- ii. granted approval to engage an external consultant to undertake a feasibility study on the potential for establishing an in-house agency;
- iii. agreed that a report be submitted to its next meeting on the outcome of the meetings with the Local Government Staff Commission and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland; and
- iv. agreed that information be submitted to a future meeting on external consultancy costs incurred over the course of the current Council term.

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**Organisational Reviews
and Change Programme**

The Committee noted the contents of a report providing an update on the indicative timescales and prioritised work programme associated with the Organisational Reviews and Change Portfolio.

Glass Recycling Collection Service

In response to a request by Councillor Long for clarification around the timeframe for the resumption of the glass recycling collection service, the Director of Resources and Fleet confirmed that a recruitment exercise to appoint drivers had been completed and that it was anticipated that the service would resume shortly.

**Update on External Funding
(Shared Island and Peace Plus)**

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing an update on the work which was underway to identify and maximise funding opportunities, including recent feedback received on project Concept Notes which had been submitted under PEACEPLUS Measure 1.4 (Reimagining Communities). Approval was also being sought to purchase a licence for a GrantFinder management solution, an advanced funding and grants database and portal covering local, national, European and international funding opportunities and open calls.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee:

- i. note the update provided in relation to work underway around open funding calls;
- ii. note the feedback received from the Special EU Programmes Body on the Concept Notes submitted under PEACEPLUS Investment Area 1.4 and agree to further develop the LGBTQ+ Hub and the Reconnected Belfast (including redevelopment aspects of the Waterworks and Alexandra Park) proposals to ensure their readiness for application stage;
- iii. note that officers were currently progressing work to establish candidate projects for Investment Area 5.5 - Geothermal Demonstration Programme, alongside ongoing work for Peace Plus Investment Areas 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4; and
- iv. approve the purchase of a two-year license for the GrantFinder funding portal, with the option to extend for a further period, subject to funding availability.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that Members also be provided with access to the GrantFinder funding portal.

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Additional Funding Streams

At the request of Councillor Walsh, the Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining the potential for applying, firstly, for a share of the €15m which had been allocated, through the Shared Island Fund, to a shared island electric vehicle charging infrastructure project and, secondly, for a share of the €3m which had been allocated to the Community Climate Action Plan.

Update on PEACE IV Programme

The minute for this item has been restricted. The restriction will be lifted once the tender process has concluded.

City Centre Property – Targeted Acquisition

The Committee:

- i. noted the decision of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 12th October to agree to undertake a scoping exercise in relation to the potential acquisition/transfer of two derelict properties within the City centre area;
- ii. noted the details of the scoping exercise which was currently underway in relation to these properties and that one of them was being marketed, with offers being sought;
- iii. agreed, given the open market timeframe for this property, that a without prejudice bid be made, subject to the conditions set out within the report, and, if the acquisition is to progress further, that the decision be ratified by the Council before proceeding with a confirmed bid; and
- iv. agreed that officers undertake further engagement with the Department for Communities to explore the next steps in relation to the other property.

Matters referred back from Council/Motions

**Motion: Suspension of Government Debt Recovery
for those in receipt of Benefits and Universal Credit –
Response from Department for Communities**

The Committee was reminded that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 23rd August, had agreed to adopt the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Matt Collins and seconded by Councillor Ferguson:

"This Council notes new research carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation documenting the alarming cost of living impact due to benefit deductions and debt recovery.

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Many in receipt of means tested benefits and on Universal Credit, including many in work, are in bill payment arrears; taking on unaffordable debt; are going without household essentials; and are unable to properly heat their homes or feed their families. With inflation continuing to rise and the hardship emergency predicted to become more extreme as we face into the winter months the situation for many is set to worsen in the absence of immediate intervention.

Benefit reductions to repay government and utility providers at unaffordable rates are compounding the hardship crisis faced by many of those struggling the most. Government departments are in some cases claiming back debts at higher rates than private creditors. Many people are unaware that they can receive debt reduction help.

The Council will write to the Department of Communities' Minister requesting the immediate suspension of government debt recovery for those in receipt of benefits and universal credit.

The Council also requests that the Department of Communities provide information on how many benefit and universal credit claims were subject to deductions in the most recent month for which data is available, broken down by Council area; how much on average was deducted in each Council area; what the total sum was of deductions in each Council area; and what proportion of each of those sums was deducted to repay advance payments."

The Interim City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services informed the Committee that a response had been received from Ms. L. McLaughlin, Director of Pensions, Disability, Benefit Security and Debt, on behalf of the Minister for Communities.

Ms. McLaughlin had begun by assuring the Council that the Department for Communities understood the financial hardship which many people were experiencing as a result of the current cost of living crisis. The Department was continuing to consider options to provide both immediate and medium to longer term interventions to help alleviate financial pressures, including supporting individuals who were struggling financially.

She had then addressed the reference within the motion to deductions which were made to repay utility providers by confirming that customers in receipt of certain benefits may have deductions taken from their benefit and paid to a creditor, under what was known as the Third-Party Deductions Scheme. There were, however, limits to the level of deductions from benefit which could be made under this Scheme and she provided an assurance that third party deductions would only be made when it was considered to be in the best interest of the individual or their family. These were last resort deductions and were taken when an individual was in rent or utility arrears and where there was a risk of eviction, or their energy or utility supply being disconnected if payment was not made. It was, therefore, a safeguarding measure for many vulnerable individuals and their families.

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Ms. McLaughlin had then referred to the request within the motion for the Minister to consider an immediate suspension of government debt from benefit and Universal Credit claimants, to help ease the financial burdens. She had pointed out that the temporary suspension of debt recovery, which had, in 2020, been implemented as part of the Department's Covid pandemic response, was in line with and supported by the Department for Work and Pensions. The Department for Work and Pensions was not considering a further pause in recovery activity at this time.

She had gone on to stress that to implement a unilateral suspension of recovery in Northern Ireland would be a complex process, relying on manual action in respect of over 200,000 cases. More significantly, it would constitute a break in parity with the Department for Work and Pensions' approach and would, therefore, require Treasury approval. Pursuing a temporary suspension in Northern Ireland would also result in financial penalties to the Northern Ireland Executive's Block Grant at a time of significant existing funding pressures. The financial cost of any divergence from parity, of this nature, would require Executive agreement.

However, the Department for Communities had a level of existing discretion to reduce, defer and, in exceptional circumstances, to waive social security debt. As an alternative to suspending all debt recovery, the Department encouraged those people who were experiencing difficulty with their repayments to contact the Debt Management Service. Staff there were trained to support and work with individuals to help put in place a more affordable and sustainable repayment plan and could signpost individuals to organisations delivering independent debt advice and other support services. The Department was currently finalising a programme of communications aimed at raising public awareness of the support available in respect of debt recovery and officials were working closely with the independent advice sector to ensure that information and support reached those who needed it.

Ms. McLaughlin had concluded by pointing out that the Department for Communities had been unable to provide the information requested within the motion on the number of benefit claims which were subject to deductions, how much on average was deducted, the total sum of deductions and the proportion of deductions made to repay a Universal Credit advance, as it was not collated on a council-by-council basis. Annex 1 of the response did, however, provide the data requested on all benefit claimants in Northern Ireland who had been subject to benefit deductions during August 2022, although this data had not been quality assured to Office of National Statistics standards.

The Committee noted the response.

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 provide an update on the progress of all motions for which the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the updates on all motion for which the SP and R Committee is responsible; and
- agree to the closure of motions 52, 74, 80, 97, 99, 136, 248, 253, 256, 259, 260 and 261 as referenced in paragraph 3.4 below.

3.0 Main Report

Background

3.1 At the Committee meeting on 25th October 2019, the following motion was adopted:

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

1. Date received
2. Notice of motion title
3. Submitted by which Councillor
4. Council meeting date
5. Committee motion is referred to
6. Outcome of committee where Notice of Motion will be debated
7. Month it will be reported back to committee
8. Other action to be taken.’

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

Closure of Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance

3.3 At the 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

- Motions which have become Council policy.

3.4 The Committee is asked to agree that the following 12 motions are now closed:

Category 1 Recommended Closures:

- National Armed Forces Day (Ref no 97) – This motion called for the Council to bid for the National Armed Forces Day to be held in Belfast in June 2022. The Committee voted against the motion in September 2020 and, therefore, it is recommended that this motion be closed.
- Summer Youth Employment Programme (Ref no 99) – This motion called for the Council to work with other public sector bodies, the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and the private sector to develop a summer Youth Employment Programme, aimed at 14 – 21 year olds primarily from areas of multiple deprivation. The Employability and Skills team delivered a pilot 6 week paid ‘Belfast Summer Work Experience’ programme to 30 young people of which 30 achieved Level 1 City and Guilds accreditation in Personal Development and Employability Qualifications. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion be closed.
- Re-opening doctors’ surgeries (Ref no 136) – As requested, the Council’s views were expressed in writing to the Minister of Health.
- 50th Anniversary of Bloody Friday (Ref no 248) – This motion called for the Council to provide citizens with the opportunity to engage in a programme of commemoration and education, designed to build positive relationships for the future. An event was held on 21st July 2022 in response to this motion and it is, therefore, recommended that this motion be closed.
- Belfast Region City Deal (Ref no 253) - This motion requested that a further update on the latest position of the BRCD be presented to the Committee in June 22. This update was provided and, therefore, it is recommended that this motion be closed.
- Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill (Ref no 256) – This motion was a request for the UK Government to abandon the aforementioned Bill.

This Bill has now made its way through the House of Commons and is at second stage in the House of Lords. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion be closed.

- Care home and top up fees (Ref no 259) - As requested, the Council's views were expressed in writing to the Department of Health and it is recommended that this motion be closed.
- Support the Caterpillar strike for fair pay (Ref no 260) – The Council was asked to write to the senior management urging them to enter discussion with trade unions to negotiate a fair pay increase. As the proposed strike was called off, no letter was required and it is recommended that this motion be closed.
- Continuance of hybrid meetings (Ref no 261) – As requested, the Council's views were expressed in writing to the Department of Communities, with an update provided to this Committee on 19th August 2022.

Category 2 Recommended Closures:

- Menopause Awareness (Ref no 52) – This motion called for the Council to work with Trades Unions to ensure that the council and its staff are menopause aware, have an understanding of the support available and recognise it as a workplace issue. The Menopause Policy has now been agreed with the Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee and will be implemented. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion be now closed.
- Disabled People and Older People (Ref no 74) – This motion called for the Council to recommit to the commitment made in the Belfast Agenda to be an accessible city for all by 2035. It called for a focus on consultation with disabled people, older people and carers; creation of a reference group for older people and creation of an access and inclusion senior staff role. The draft Age Friendly Belfast Plan 2022–2026 is currently out for consultation and emerging priorities include infrastructure and social inclusion. Work continues with the Council's Internal Reference Group on Older People and council have secured funding for an Age-Friendly Co-ordinator with recruitment commencing in Autumn 22. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.

- **Opening our Streets for Everyone (Ref no 80) –**
This motion called for the Council, as part of its recovery programme post Covid 19, to identify opportunities to enhance the city by looking at ways to encourage less car presence, affording businesses extra space and supporting the move towards reduced car use to help create a cleaner, greener, healthier city for all. The Council has subsequently taken a number of measures as part of Covid recovery to support businesses and communities in relation to this motion, including delivery of the DfC Covid Recovery Revitalisation Programme, one- off capital grants to various community groups and business clusters and the implementation of a temporary process for pavement café licensing with no associated fee. Further elements of proposals put forward within this motion will be incorporated as part of the BV Strategy and will be brought back to the Committee. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion be now closed.

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.”

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. approved the closure of those motions outlined in paragraph 3.4 of the report, with the exception of number 74 – Disabled People and Older People which, at the request of the proposer, Councillor McMullan, was to remain open;
- ii. noted that officers would continue to work to ensure that motions were allocated to the appropriate area/s of responsibility;
- iii. agreed that, in future, the proposer of a motion being recommended for closure would be informed in advance of the quarterly report being presented to the Committee; and
- iv. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on how the Summer Youth Employment Programme referred to within paragraph 3.4 of the report, could be enhanced in 2023.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st October, 2022**

Governance

Scheme of Delegation

The Committee was reminded that the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finances and Resources was due to retire from the Council on 31st October.

The Interim City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services explained that there were a number of references within the Scheme of Delegation to the Director and to functions which had been specifically delegated to that role. In order to ensure the smooth operation of Council business until such time as a review of the Scheme, which had been initiated following the recent changes to the Corporate Management Tier, had been completed, it was necessary to make a number of revisions in the short term.

Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee approve the following changes to the Scheme of Delegation:

- i. that the Director of Finance be added to those Chief Officers listed in Appendix A;
- ii. that those functions in Section 3.5 specifically delegated to the Strategic Director of Finance be now assigned to the Director of Finance; and
- iii. that, where reference is made to the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, this now refers to the Director of Finance.

The Committee adopted the recommendation and noted that the changes only referred to those functions delegated to the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources and not to the role of Deputy Chief Executive.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

Smart City Expo World Congress 2022

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 Following an invitation from the Trade and Investment organisation of the Catalonia government, this report seeks the Committee’s approval for the City Innovation Manager to attend the Smart Cities Expo World Congress which is taking place from 15th until 17th November 2022.**
- 1.2 This invitation also includes a specific invitation for the City Innovation Manager to attend a closed meeting of the Chief**

innovation Officers of world cities to share practice and develop opportunities for smart cities collaboration.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1** The Committee is asked to approve the attendance of the City Innovation Manager at the Barcelona Smart Cities Expo World Congress between 15th and 17th November, representing the Council, and to identify potential Smart City Co-investment.

3.0 Main Report

The Smart Belfast urban innovation programme encourages collaboration between our universities, digital SMEs, industry, the public sector and communities, with the aim of developing novel solutions to complex urban challenges.

- 3.1** ‘Smart Belfast’ also represents an attractive inward investment proposition and complements other activities such as the Renewed Ambition programme. For example, the existence of Smart Belfast directly led to the collaboration between Belfast and the Korean City of Sejong; and our membership of such international networks such as the G20 Smart Cities Alliance and Mastercard City Possible. The value of a ‘smart city’ strand is increasingly recognised by Invest NI – who, with encouragement from the Council, are now proactive in harnessing ‘Smart Belfast’ as part of the city’s value proposition.
- 3.2** The annual international gathering of the world’s smart cities is the Barcelona [Smart Cities Expo World Congress](#) which this year takes place between 15 and 17 November 2022. The event brings together over 20,000 delegates from 700 cities and over 1,000 digital and technology companies. Some 574 media outlets from across the world are in attendance. 56% of attendees hold senior management positions/ C Level executive roles in cities and companies, whilst over 400 experts and industry practitioners are part of the programme. (Other smart cities such as Dublin, Leeds, Manchester and London have an annual significant presence at the event bringing a large number of officers to promote their city’s innovation activities and opportunities.)
- 3.3** This year’s event will focus on key themes including Enabling Urban Technologies, the Climate Emergency, Urban Mobility, Inclusive Economy, Infrastructure and Buildings, and Security. The event provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the challenges of cities across the globe, which can inform Belfast’s own efforts to integrate digital innovation

into its wider urban agenda. Gaining insight into how other cities are tackling these challenges, whilst discussing directly with the innovators who are overcoming them is invaluable.

- 3.4 At the same time, Belfast has an opportunity to showcase its new Smart Belfast urban innovation framework to the world's most exciting and influential technology companies to highlight we are an innovative, open and forward-thinking city that is ideal for collaborative investment. Offers have been received from a range of global industry players to meet at the conference to explore potential areas of co investment in the City's Smart Belfast programme.

The Event

- 3.5 The City Innovation Manager has identified a number of opportunities for Belfast to present, showcase and promote the city's new urban innovation framework at the event:
- For the first time (following encouragement from the Council), Invest NI has a physical presence at this year's Congress – and is supporting a number of the region's innovative SMEs to showcase their offerings to industry and other cities. Invest NI has offered to host the Council at its showcase;
 - Fira Barcelona has invited Belfast to an exclusive meeting of the world's Chief Innovation Officers during the Congress to discuss collaboration between cities and with industry;
 - A number of industry partners have offered to broker discussions with their European and global executive teams focusing on collaboration and co-investment;
 - As a member of its international 'City Possible' program, Belfast has been invited by Mastercard to participate in its work to support innovative SME to share practice and opportunities;
 - Belfast has also been invited to present its urban innovation framework to the G20 Smart Cities Alliance. The Alliance has recently established a global Urban Transformation Hub which aims to support cities in large scale public/private infrastructure co-investments. The Alliance is keen to discuss the opportunities in relation to the Belfast Smart District, the Innovation for Societal Impact fund, and the Belfast Advanced Wireless programme.

- 3.6 Following the event, a full industry opportunity report will be presented to the Council to inform the delivery of the Smart Belfast framework. This will also be presented to Innovation City Belfast partners to inform the delivery of the partnership's own priorities.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.7 The full congress pass is normally €1,250. However, a free invitation has been extended by the Catalonia Trade organisation, Fira, to Belfast's City Innovation Manager. Travel and accommodation costs will be required and can be covered from the existing agreed Smart Belfast budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.8 None."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Sustain Exchange Climate Business
Conference Funding Agreement**

The Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an update on the Net Zero Faster event hosted by the Management and Leadership Network (MLN) who host a prominent climate business conference 'Sustain Exchange' in Belfast with up to 300 business leaders on Thursday 27th October 2022.
- 1.2 To request approval for a funding agreement to be put in place between the Council and the event organiser with the value of £10,000.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee approve a funding contribution of £10,000 towards the Net Zero Faster event. This will be allocated from the Climate Unit budget.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1** The Committee will recall that, at its meeting on 23rd September, it had agreed to defer consideration of a report seeking approval for the Council to enter into a funding agreement, to the value of £10,000, with the organisers of the above-mentioned climate business conference being planned for Belfast, to enable further information to be provided on other potential funders.

3.2 Purpose and Format of Event

The event will be planned to deliver on the objectives above and will connect local business leaders with international thought leaders with those at the forefront of the transition locally. The event will put the challenges, opportunities and absolute need for positive action associated with climate change, on the agenda for local organisations and leaders.

The event is expected to attract some 300 local leaders (primarily business leaders but also those from the public, NDPB and third sectors) and will either be delivered as an in-person-only event or a hybrid event which would see 120 leaders gather in-person with some additional 200 leaders attending the event via a live stream. Both delivery models will ensure the messages, around the importance of positive climate action, have reach and that partners get a level of profile, amongst the NI business / leadership community, to justify their investment. Planning for the event is currently in its final stages.

3.3 Opening Address and Format

The opening keynote address will be delivered by three world-renowned authorities on how to achieve 'net zero faster'. They will focus on the business threat of the climate crisis, the legacy of the imperative for businesses and leaders to act fast and meaningfully. The keynote speakers will be followed by a carefully selected line-up of local leaders who will be challenged to share their story (exemplar), insights (expert) or support offering (stakeholder).

As exemplars these businesses will share their story and associated lessons in an engaging, informative, and entertaining manner. The speakers will encourage and empower other sectoral representative bodies (insurance, banking, hospitality transport and logistics etc) to consider

their own climate impact and take the first steps on their pursuit of net zero faster.

The keynote speakers are:

Norman Crowley – Mr. Crowley founded and sold 3 businesses for over three-quarters of a billion dollars before the age of 40. He began his first business, a welding company at age 16, employing a team of 8 within a year, and sold that business when he was 20. He then started an internet business called Trinity Commerce, growing the company to 170 employees by the time he was 28. He went on to cofound Inspired Gaming Group (the world's largest server-based gaming company), which was sold for \$500 million; and Europe's largest Wi-Fi hotspot provider, The Cloud, which was bought by BSkyB for \$77 million. Feeling his next venture should make a real difference in addressing the global climate change issue, Norman founded CoolPlanet which helps firms reduce consumption, optimise systems, lower emissions and achieve net zero. Aiming to cool the planet as fast as possible, the business has already saved some 2,597,963 tonnes of CO₂. In 2021, he founded AVA, a company which transforms some of the world's most desirable classic cars to electric. It brings together a team of F1-grade engineers to create cars that not only have the lowest carbon footprint on the road, but that are built in a way that has the least impact on the planet.

Eric Lonergan – Mr. Lonergan is described by The Irish Times as 'probably the finest, and certainly the most thoughtful, Irish economist of his generation'. An internationally renowned thinker, he is best known as a policy economist, macro hedge fund manager, and writer. His most recent book is entitled Supercharge Me: Net Zero Faster and he is also the author of the international bestseller, 'Angrynomics', and 'Money' (2nd ed) published by Routledge. He has written for Foreign Affairs, The Financial Times, and The Economist. Invited to speak around the globe, he also advises governments and policymakers.

Corinne Sawers – Ms. Sawers has spent the last decade advising global business and governments on climate, sustainability and food systems. She has previously worked with McKinsey, KKR and SystemIQ (a boutique sustainability advisory firm and fund). She co-founded More United (with the late Lord Paddy Ashdown) and also co-founded a social enterprise focused on improving diversity in the technology sector. Corrine holds an MBA from INSEAD, an MSc from the London School of Economics and a BA from the University of

Oxford. She is the co-author of Supercharge Me: Net Zero Faster.

3.4 Management and Leadership Network Experience

Management and Leadership Network (MLN) provide managers and leaders in Northern Ireland with access to the thinking, insights and experiences of high-achievers and thought-leaders with the aim of supporting and developing individual managers, companies and our economy. MLN is funded by a small number of forward-thinking champion organisations (Amet, Mills Selig law firm, Danske Bank, Electric Ireland, FPM, Ulster University, CPL and Xperience) which means the network it is free to join and use.

MLN has previous experience in hosting several large events with 500 + attendees.

Virtual summits organised by Management and Leadership Network include:

- Galvanise NI May 2020 - 1400 Business leaders
- Re- launch July 2020- 900 business leaders
- Unlearn 2021 December 2020- 700 business leaders
- WELL – February 2021 – 1000 business leaders

Leadership Summit - February 2020 Prior to first lockdown MLN hosted 500 paying business leaders at Titanic Belfast. BCC was a partner on this event which featured world class speakers including Lord David Puttnam at Titanic Belfast. Podium and MLN's virtual events have been created and delivered in a 3-to-4-week lead time (and have consistently attracted business leader audiences of 500+).

As host, MLN will facilitate the event and invite all speakers to provide their slides in advance so that the idea-sharing session is delivered in a concise, visually impactful and professional manner. Belfast City Council would once again be invited to participate and profile its extensive climate work i.e Mini – Stern Report, and associated Housing and Transport Readiness Assessments, Climate Ambitions Report, Reset Agenda, internal climate mitigation and adaptation plans and /or the work of the Belfast Climate Commission, Resilience and Sustainability Board etc.

3.5 Legacy Platform and Annual Event

The conference is an opportunity to highlight and celebrate the activity that is already underway in Belfast. As the host city it

positions Belfast as a centre of excellence and activity when it comes to businesses and getting to net zero faster. The climate challenge will inevitably move further up the political and business agenda as we move through the decade and the pace of change on this issue is fast, so there is a need for annual event for the NI business/leadership community to share knowledge, experience and progress and supporting platforms available all year round to share resources.

3.6 Net Zero Faster Branding

The conference will be branded with the theme of 'Net Zero Faster'. It is designed to speak to and encourage participation from those businesses well on their way and those just starting their zero-carbon pathway. It acknowledges the challenges involved in committing to take meaningful action and will offer examples, insights and inspiration for individuals, businesses and policy makers. Podiem will complete a comprehensive evaluation report on the conference.

3.7 Date, Venue and Contingence

The total cost of the conference will be in excess of £60,000. Podiem has already secured some corporate sponsorship for the event from Danske bank and are in advanced conversations with Belfast Harbour along with other corporate partners of MLN. The event will be hosted at Titanic Belfast to encourage use of public transport and cycle networks and to accommodate both in-person and virtual attendees.

3.8 Partner Contribution and Profile Benefits

Should the Council choose to support the conference it would be profiled as an 'Event Partner' alongside several other lead event partners. The Council brand will be prominent on all event marketing collateral as well as 'at-event'. A Council representative would be invited to participate in the event press launch and MLN would like the Council to deliver a presentation. The Council would also promote the conference through its social media and other relevant communication channels.

3.9 Sponsors

Confirmed sponsors for the event are Danske Bank and Mills Selig (Belfast based law firm). There will be no formal role for energy companies at the event - they will neither be sponsors nor speakers.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 There is provision for £10,000 contribution towards the event via the Climate Unit budget.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications

- 3.11 There are no direct equality and good relations implications. Any good relations or equality implications will be identified as part of the Council's screening process."

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the Committee agrees, in light of the significant cost involved and the limited level of participation/recognition to be afforded to the Council, not to sponsor the Sustain Exchange Climate Business Conference.

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

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that a funding agreement be put in place between the Council and the event organiser to the value of £10,000.

**Community Wealth Building Summit
and Inclusive Growth Conference**

The Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To make the Committee aware of two up-coming events being planned by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and the Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP) / Inclusive Growth Network (IGN) focusing on community wealth building and inclusive growth which are scheduled for mid-late November, 2022.
- 1.2 The detailed programmes for each event have not yet been made available, however, given the subject matter for both events, with a focus on cost-of-living and the importance of focusing on creating inclusive and sustainable economic models, it is suggested that the Chair and Deputy Chair (or their nominees) of this Committee may wish to attend the event(s).

- 1.3 The Committee should note that reports and information emerging from both events, such as recordings of sessions and presentations will be made available to Members through circulation to the Committee and the Social Policy Working Group.

2.0 **Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (i) agree that its Chair and Deputy Chair (or their nominees) be authorised to attend the Inclusive Growth Conference and the Community Wealth Building Summit; and
- (ii) note that a number of the sessions during both events will be available online with options to join remotely (free of charge) and officers will circulate details of programme when becomes available.

3.0 **Main Report**

Key Issues

- 3.1 Two key networking and information-sharing events looking at new economic growth models with a focus on place are being planned for November 2022 by the (i) Centre for Local Economic Strategies and (ii) Centre for Progressive Policy/Inclusive Growth Network.
- 3.2 The Committee will be aware that the Inclusive Growth Network (IGN) was established in 2020 and hosted by the Centre for Progressive Policy. It is funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and supported by Metro Dynamics and the Royal Society of Arts. As members, Belfast is one of 12 councils and combined authorities leading the drive for inclusive local economies across the UK.
- 3.3 IGN membership provides Belfast with access to a facilitated peer network to draw on practical evidence, knowledge and expertise, as well as a package of support designed to inform and advance our local activity to create more inclusive and sustainable economies. This year the IGN's programme of support for Belfast includes providing expertise to develop an Inclusive Growth scorecard and reporting framework to assist measure and assess our progress in delivering the inclusive growth ambitions for the city and as a council.

- 3.4 The Council also has an established bespoke membership of Centre for Local Economic Strategies which acts as a critical friend to local economies with a focus on practice-based research and a peer network of practitioners to create change as well as promoting and supporting organisations to build community wealth. Members will be aware that CLES are currently supporting the Belfast Anchors Procurement and Commissioning Working Group on the completion of the procurement spend analysis for the additional cohort of organisations.

Community Wealth Building Summit

- 3.5 CLES organise an annual one-day Community Wealth Building Summit to expand and explore community wealth building which will take place on Friday 18th November in Birmingham. With a focus on the cost-of-living pressures, this year's event aims to examine the future of local economic development and the role that community wealth building can play in unlocking solutions to the pressing challenges being experienced in places.

Whilst the event is being scheduled to take place in-person, it is understood that a number of the key discussion sessions will be streamed virtually/online and can be accessed free of charge. The detailed programme for the event has yet to be made available and will be circulated to Members.

Inclusive Growth Conference

- 3.6 The CPP/IGN hold an annual Inclusive Growth Conference and networking event, which has been scheduled for Thursday 22nd November, 2022. This is a one-day event which will be held in-person in central London, with the aim of exploring how inclusive economic growth can meet the long-standing economic challenges of increasing inequalities, low productivity and wages in the context of the growing cost-of-living crisis. The detailed programme for the event has yet to be made available.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.7 The costs to attend each of the two one-day events is estimated to be in the region of £400, with the main costs associated with travel and accommodation. The costs will be met from Departmental budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.8 There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications relating to this report.”**

After discussion, the Committee agreed, in view of the costs involved, that the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson (or their nominees) be authorised to attend the Inclusive Growth Conference and the Community Wealth Building Summit on an online basis only.

Update on the Implementation of the Dual Language Street Sign Policy

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 the Committee on the implementation of the Dual Language Street Sign Policy.**

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the update.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 Since 15th July, the Building Control Service has received over 500 requests for street signs in a second language.**

- 3.2 Most of these requests received by email required further information to be sought from the applicant. All have been responded to with a request to provide the missing information to allow for validation to be carried out. Where this information is not provided within four weeks, a further reminder allowing seven days is issued to the applicant. If there is no response these are being closed and the applicant informed. An online application form is now available on the Council’s website to capture all required information for new applications.**

- 3.3 Where multiple applications are received for the same street from different applicants, these will be processed in the order in which they were received.**

- 3.4 The Service has visited the Electoral Office to obtain the details of residents in the first batch of 15 streets in order to validate these applications.**

- 3.5 The first list of Members' notifications in respect of these applications will be emailed to Members no later than w/c 24th October 2022.
- 3.6 This Member notification process will replicate the process for notifying members in relation to planning applications that relate to their DEA or within the City Centre. The purpose of the notification is to allow members to raise any potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations or rural needs in relation to the proposed street sign. That representation must be sent to the Director of Planning and Building Control within 21 days of the notification. If either the Elected Member notification or the initial assessment identifies a potential adverse impact on equality, good relations or rural needs the application will be referred to Committee for approval to proceed to survey.
- 3.7 The process for the initial assessment has been finalised and assessments have been carried out for the first list of streets. This process will initially include officers from Building Control, Good Relations, Equality and Diversity Unit and Legal Services.
- 3.8 Part of this initial assessment will be to determine if the street falls within the city centre business core, for which additional consultation may be required.
- 3.9 The next stage is to survey streets, and this will be done in the order the applications were received. There are currently two streets out for survey.
- 3.10 Timeframes for a final decision in respect of applications will be dependent on a number of factors including the size of any street surveyed, whether the application has to be referred to Committee and current resources as officers prioritise the tasks.
- 3.11 Approval has been granted for three additional staff to be recruited on a temporary basis who will be focussed on dealing with the applications once recruited and trained. It is hoped these officers will be in post by in December 2022.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.12 None – additional staff previously approved.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications

- 3.13 Equality and good relations issues arising from this report are addressed in the established processes for dealing with applications.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

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 for Cathedral Gardens Redevelopment project and notes a satisfactory tender return for IT Programme - Server and Storage Technology Refresh project.

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to consider the following items on the Capital Programme:

- Cathedral Gardens Project - agree that the project is moved to *Stage 3 – Committed* and agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated with contract to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.
- IT Programme – Server and Storage Technology Refresh project - Note that a satisfactory tender return has been received and that the Director of Finance and Resources has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agreed that a maximum of £513,000 be allocated.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 The Committee 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 that 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, the Physical Programmes Department is happy to arrange site visits to any projects that 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 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 movements on the Capital Programme:

Project	Overview	Stage movement
Cathedral Gardens	Redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens	Move to Stage 3 - Committed

Cathedral Gardens

- 3.3 The Committee will recall that, in January 2016, this project was moved to *Stage 2 – Uncommitted* on the Capital Programme. The Council endorsed their commitment to the redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens as part of Phase 3 of the Streets Ahead project and agreed in principle to ring-fence an allocation (up to a maximum of £5m) as part of this subject to final confirmation of the costs and a commitment from Department for Communities for the delivery of Streets Ahead 3. In November 2019, in light of Department for Communities correspondence that the Belfast Streets Ahead scheme would not proceed, Belfast City Council agreed to de-couple it from the BSA project to include the Belfast Blitz memorial. This memorial involves the design, commissioning and installation of a permanent memorial to mark the Belfast Blitz.

The redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens provides a significant opportunity to inject critical and much needed quality public urban space into the city centre. The area

adjacent to and surrounding Cathedral Gardens is home to a rich history of fabrication and cultural identity. It is a precinct in the process of evolution through a mixture of commercial, education and housing related developments that are transforming this part of Belfast into a new and vibrant mixed-use neighbourhood for the city.

- 3.4 The Outline Business Case has now been prepared following public consultation. It is recommended that the project now progresses to Stage 3 – Committed and that it is held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk pending further development of the project and a satisfactory tender return. An update will be brought back to the Committee at this stage, along with the final budget allocation and confirmation that this is within the affordability limits of the Council. Members are asked to agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated with contract to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

IT Programme – Server and Storage Technology Refresh

- 3.5 Under the Council’s IT Programme, this project has been identified as being business critical and required to ensure continuity of service provision. Many of the Council’s ICT systems and information reside on Council owned servers and data storage units in two datacentres. The hardware is now six years old and must be replaced to ensure continuity of service and support, reduce risk of failure, and to avoid escalating support costs. Members will recall in June 2021 the project was moved to *Stage 3 – Committed* on the Capital Programme but held at *Tier 0 – Scheme at risk* pending a satisfactory tender return. The Committee is now advised that a satisfactory tender return has now been received. The Committee is further advised that the Director of Finance and Resources has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agreed that a maximum of £513,000 be allocated.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.6 *Financial* – IT Programme – Server and Storage Technology Refresh project: £513,000 under the Capital Programme.

Resources – Officer time to deliver as required.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Asset Management

The Committee:

Balmoral Estate – Plot 83

- granted approval to enter into a new licence agreement with J C Decaux Limited for a term of three years, from 1st October, 2022, with the Council to receive an annual licence fee of £22,000;

Site 10, 118-122 Royal Avenue

- granted approval to enter into a further agreement with Extern Northern Ireland for the short-term use of the office building, with the Council to receive a monthly fee of £1,875 (plus VAT);

Sugarhouse Entry

- granted approval to enter into agreements with property owners in Sugarhouse Entry, to allow the Council to erect lighting and supply power to the lighting and interpretative panels, as part of the Entries Phase 2 Environmental Improvement Project, with any financial implications to be covered from within approved external funding Letters of Offer;

Dundela Crescent Car Park

- approved a licence extension, with crane oversailing rights, with Kelly Brothers Building Contractors, to facilitate a residential apartment development, with the Council to receive a monthly licence fee of £500 (plus VAT) for the use of its land and £1,250 (plus VAT) for the siting of the tower crane/base and oversailing; and

Cathedral Gardens

- approved the grant of a Licence to Sustrans for the use of two shipping containers to provide programming, training and active travel promotion services at the temporary Active Travel Hub, prior

to redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens, with the operator to be charged a fee to cover utilities costs and rates.

Update on Area Working Groups

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the South Belfast Area Working Group of 10th October.

Community Asset Management Framework Pilot Community Benefit Sites - Update on Clarendon and Ulidia Playing Fields

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the progress to date and seek approvals for the next stage of the pilot initiative.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to support the recommendations made by DTNI in relation to the future management of Clarendon and Ulidia Playing fields by the community and agree:**

- to seek the consent of DFC to the grant of a lease for a term of 25 years, at a nominal rent at each site; and**
- that, if DFC approval is received, an award of £20,000 per annum be made to each lessee, subject to periodic review against the projections of the business case, with the review period to be negotiated as part of the lease.**

3.0 Main Report

Background

- 3.1 The People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on 9th November 2021, received the attached report from the Directors of Neighbourhood Services and Physical Programmes and approved the commencement of a pilot scheme to identify future management models for a number of Council assets. The pilot is testing the decision-making value of a draft Community Management Assessment Framework and toolkit previously developed for Council by Development Trusts NI (DTNI). Sites chosen reflect the existing variety of management models, functions and end user demographics**

found among council assets. The key output from each pilot will be a recommendation as to the future management model. The preferred management option will be that which delivers the greatest community benefit and supports the council in delivering the outcomes of the Belfast Agenda.

3.2 DTNI was appointed to take forward the pilot and work directly with community-based organisations identified at the following sites:

- Clarendon Playing Fields;
- Ulidia Playing Fields;
- Hammer Pitch, changing rooms and community space;
- Willowbank Multi Sports Facility;
- Tullycarnet Park Boxing Club;
- Former Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre;

3.3 The sites at Ulidia and Clarendon Playing Fields have now been assessed by DTNI and its recommendations form the body of this report. Assessment of other sites is ongoing and reports will be presented to the Committee as DTNI makes its returns.

3.4 Ulidia Playing fields has been under community management by Rosario FC since 2016. Through means of a partner agreement, the club deliver community development outcomes through sports programming. Quarterly reporting ensures the outcomes are monitored and a grant is assessed and paid accordingly. The agreement is due to terminate in 2023 and the process of developing the business case has included consideration of the significant outcomes delivered through community management of the site in the last 6 years.

3.5 Clarendon Playing Fields has been managed by Clarendon Development Association under a number of Facilities Management Agreements since 2005. In 2016 council moved away from entering into such agreements which had been focused largely on site management, and moved towards the partnership model with a social, community outcomes focus. The community benefit delivered by CDA at Clarendon playing fields was acknowledged by committee in 2017 with agreement for the club to have preferential use of the site and to locate a portacabin there for the delivery of homework clubs and youth activity. The legal agreement at Clarendon has been overholding since 2016.

3.6 Under the current legal agreements, facilities at these sites have been used to deliver community development outcomes at a local level through and alongside sports outcomes.

The council is in receipt of requests from both communities for the continuation of community management of the sites rather than a reversion to council management. The requests from Rosario FC and Clarendon Development Agency have been the subject of ongoing engagement between officers, elected members and the organisations for some time.

- 3.7 In both cases the applicants were proposing that their long-term management of the site would have greater community benefit than a reversion to Council management at the termination point of the current legal agreement. They also identified opportunities for capital development at both sites using external investment but neither have the security of tenure required to be successful in a funding application.
- 3.8 DTNI was asked to work with the two community organisations to assess their capacity to undertake the future management of the site and to determine the benefit to the community in their doing so. This was to be achieved through development of a community benefits realisation plan and a business case to demonstrate the organisations long term sustainability. These documents would support identification of a recommended mechanism for the transfer of the asset to community management assessed against the draft framework.

Key Issues

- 3.9 Given the similarity in scale and functionality of the sites at Clarendon and Ulidia and the similar aspirations of the community organisations currently delivering services at the sites, the same recommendation has come forward for both sites, ie. that the existing Clarendon Development Association and a newly formed Rosario Development Company each enter into a long-term lease with the Council. Both organisations are requesting that the lease is rent free in order to support a sustainable financial model focused on the delivery of sporting programmes and community provision at the sites. DFC approval will have to be sought for this on the grounds of an evidence base of ongoing community benefit.
- 3.10 It should be noted that the current model of management is not by lease and so no rent is currently applied.
- 3.11 The exact lease terms will be subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to the grant of a lease and to the approval that detailed terms can be agreed by estates and legal services officers.

The business cases provided by DTNI have been based on a term of 25 years and assume the following roles and responsibilities:

Responsibility	Owner
Premises insurance	BCC
Buildings Maintenance	Lessee
Pitch Maintenance	Lessee
Perimeter Maintenance (fencing and trees)	BCC
Synthetic pitch surface replacement	Potentially shared

Financial and Resource Implications

3.12 Clarendon Playing Fields

In the case of the current agreement at Clarendon PF, the Council insures the facility and pays premises costs including utilities for the changing pavilion. Council pays the development association a fee for their day-to-day management of the facility and the association manages the bookings and retains the income. The fee paid (assessed against RPI annually) was £18,888 last year.

- 3.13 DTNI is recommending that, under the new legal agreement, the Council pay the development association £20,000 per year in order to ensure the sustainability for their business model. Financial modelling contained within the business case suggests that by year 5 of operation the association may have in the region of £50,000 to reinvest in the site. Based on the association's aspirations for capital development of the site it is not possible at this time to identify if and when the current 3G synthetic pitch surface may need replacing so there may be a need for council to contribute capital to the pitch surface replacement if the site has not been developed by the end of its useful lifespan which is potentially 2028.

- 3.14 Based on current costs to the Council, a long term lease including a payment of £20,000 to Clarendon Development Association would largely reflect the current cost for the site and represent no major financial change.

Ulidia Playing Fields

- 3.15 This site is currently operated by Rosario FC under a partner agreement the terms of which give responsibility for the management and maintenance of the site to the Council, which retains all income from the bookings to offset costs. The annual average income from the site is £42,808.
- 3.16 In line with all other partner agreements, the Council pays Rosario FC £20,000 for the delivery of sporting programmes at the site from a budget held for this purpose by the Sports Development Unit. When the original grass pitch, on which the partner agreement was based, was upgraded to a synthetic floodlit surface Council agreed to pay up to an additional £2,000 per month to support the club to staff the extended opening hours. The current maximum payment in any year to Rosario FC is therefore £44,000 paid through the Sports Development Unit assessed against the sporting outcomes delivered by the club.
- 3.17 DTNI is recommending, as with the Clarendon site, that under the new legal agreement the Council pay Rosario Development Association £20,000 per year in order to ensure the sustainability for their business model and generate a small reserve annually for reinvestment in the site. The 3G pitch surface is likely to reach the end of its useful life by 2029 and, dependant on the value of reserves achieved by that time, the Council may be required to contribute Capital towards replacement.
- 3.18 Based on current costs, a long-term lease to Rosario Development Association including a payment of £20,000 annually would represent an annual saving to the budget of the Sports Development Unit of up to £24,000 but an average loss of income from the site of £42,808. This can be managed from within existing revenue budgets.
- 3.19 Based on the assessment carried out by DTNI and the business cases put forward as part of that work, officers are recommending that not only can greater social outcomes be achieved through long term community management of these sites but that the potential for further capital development of the sites increases under community management.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

3.20 The final Community Asset Management Policy will be screened in line with Council Policy.

Both groups have existing agreements with the Council.”

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, as detailed in Table 1 below;
- approved the award of Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 2 below;
- approved the modification of the contract, as per Standing Order 37a, as detailed in Table 3 below;
- noted the award of retrospective Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 4 below; and
- approved the estimated expenditure of permitted excluded contracts, as detailed in Financial Regulations K11 and set out in Table 5 below.

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Design Contest to support the delivery of Belfast Imagining 2024 *Previously approved Sept 2022 for £2.5m but revised total now £1.85m	Up to 22 months	£1,850,000	J Greer	A Design Contest process to seek out project proposals for the year of culture through a competitive and 3 staged process that will lead to a series of civic and culturally led programmes, events and projects for 2024 totalling £1.85million which has been allocated from the cultural reserve for 2024.

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Dynamic Purchasing System for the supply and delivery of goods for resale at Belfast Zoo (Generates income at Belfast Zoo shop)	Up to 5 years	£640,000	J Greer	Lot 1 - Animal themed plush/soft toys Lot 2 - Animal themed toys and games Lot 3 - Animal themed gifts/souvenirs/keyrings and magnets, to include branded stationery, clothing and accessories
Callouts, repairs and planned maintenance of metal work and small engineering	Up to 5 years	£750,000	S. Grimes	To have a specialist contractor to support the in-house team deliver repairs and maintenance works relating to metalwork and small engineering.
Meeting room booking system (Artifax)	Up to 4 years	£70,000	R. Cregan	An event booking system used by facilities for City Hall and self-service booking for meeting rooms. The current GCloud contract with Artifax expires on 31/12/22.
Appointment of a contractor to develop and deliver a number of sector specific projects supported by the Council under the Output Belfast brand	Up to 6 months	£48,000	J Greer	The Output Belfast brand has developed considerably over the past three years. It has become synonymous with the City's interactive, convergence and music sectors
Provision of Temporary Agency Resources	Up to 12 months	£2,600,000	J Tully	The current contract is due to expire 31 March 2023. The Council is developing an agency strategy to reduce spend and tighten controls on use of agency resources and to explore the feasibility of establishing a Council agency.
Contract to provide reusable period products and distribute them to individual household who apply for the scheme living	Up to 3 years	£150,000	D Sales	The company will provide quality reusable period products – cups and pads and/or pants, a page on their website for people to apply for the product designed in conjunction with the Council. Contract period subject to continued funding.

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within the BCC boundary				
Independent evaluation of the PCSP programme of work from 2022 – 2025	Up to 3 years and 6 months	£70,000	S Toland	Independent evaluations are required by the funding body.

Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Provision of a Case Management solution across City and Neighbourhood Services Department 'C&NS'	Up to 2 years	£164,216	R Cregan	<p>A two-year STA is required for continued maintenance and support of the current system whilst it is determined how the replacement of the system will be best carried out in alignment with the Customer Focus programme priorities and service design within C&NS. The 2 years will allow time to complete market research, the procurement process, map out processes, data migration, configuration and implementation of the new system.</p> <p>Civica have proprietary rights for the continued use of their system and are therefore the only available supplier.</p>	Civica

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T2150 - Masternaut – fleet GPS tracking/telematics	Up to 1 year	£60,000	R Cregan	Fleet GPS tracking system installed in council vehicles. The GPS system improves utilisation, planning and efficiency of fleet assets, such as improved fuel economy by discouraging speeding and engine idling. A one-year STA is required for continued maintenance and support of the current system whilst the 'in cab technology project' is progressed. This requirement is being incorporated into the new in cab system which is currently being procured. Masternaut have proprietary rights for the continued use of their system and are therefore the only available supplier.	Masternaut Ltd
Use of eyebolts/lamp posts 'Wayleaves' for erection of festive lighting	Up to 3 months	£45,000	J Greer	Belfast City Centre Management own the infrastructure required to erect Christmas illuminations across City Centre	Belfast City Centre Management

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Table 3: Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Duration	Modification	SRO	Description	Supplier
T2111 - PEACE IV Programme – Project to support Roma Community - BPR5 Project *Please not this request is retrospective	Up to 22 months	Additional 3 months	S Toland	To allow completion of training and capacity building elements. It is acknowledged that the Roma Hub element of the project is closed and that the extension is for the outstanding deliverables not yet achieved.	Forward South Partnership

Table 4: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Annual service and inspection of all Council leisure facilities that have disabled pool hoists	Up to 3 years	£35,000	S Grimes	The servicing of the pool pods can only be carried out by the installation contractor, Poolpod Products Ltd.	Poolpod Products Ltd

Table 5: Excluded Service Contracts/ Non-Procurement Spend

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier/ Provider
Use of eyebolts/lamp posts 'Wayleaves' for erection of festive lighting	Up to 3 months	£45,000	J Greer	Belfast City Centre Management own the infrastructure required to erect Christmas illuminations across City Centre	Belfast City Centre Management

Equality and Good Relations

Minutes of Meeting of Shared City Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 10th October, including the recommendations:

PEACE IV

Secretariat

- to delegate authority to the BPR Chair and Peace IV Programme Manager to consider mitigations for the Roma project.

CYP1

- to extend the Tech Connects, Belfast Metropolitan College (Digital Insights Programme) until 31st January; 2023.

BPR 1 and CYP 5 NIHE

- to approve the extension and revised approach for delivery to December, 2022.

BPR 5 - Lincs NI Alternatives

- to approve a further extension to the project until the end of November 2022 to allow completion of all deliverables.

BPR 5 - Roma Forward South Partnership

- to extend the project until end of December, 2022 to ensure the completion of all remaining elements.

BPR Cinematography – Morrow

- to further extend the project until the end of December, 2022 to ensure the completion of all remaining filming.

Good Relations

- to note the presentation by Dr. Lucy Michael on research into the lived experiences of minority ethnic communities in Belfast and approved the draft findings for launch on 1st December, 2022;
- to note the Quarter 2 update on the delivery of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan;

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- to award funding to the following projects, as part of the Interfaces element of the Good Relations Action Plan:

BCC7: Christmas Interface Events

- Colin Neighbourhood Partnership - £1,500
 - Dunmurry Community Association - £1,225
 - Suffolk Community Forum - £1,500
 - Holy Family Community Centre - £1,495
 - Finaghy Resident Group - £1,500;
- to note that, under BCC9 - Strategic Intervention Programme, £2,000 had been allocated, under delegated authority, to New Lodge Arts for its annual Lantern Parade;
- to note that, under BCC9 - Strategic Intervention Programme, £7,000 had been allocated, under delegated authority, to the Mornington Community Project to support its 'Learning through Engagement Project', bringing together women from diverse backgrounds in South Belfast; and
- to approve the allocation of £5,000 to the WAVE Trauma Centre to deliver a project of engagement with young people from a number of interface areas who had been impacted by the conflict.

PEACE PLUS

- to note that the Partnership had agreed unanimously to sign-off on the proposed stakeholder engagement plan; and
- to note that the Partnership had agreed i). to share the stakeholder engagement workshops with key contacts and attend public information sessions, if available, and ii). to provide feedback on the draft vision for Belfast PEACEPLUS and the participatory role of the Partnership as discussed at the recent workshop.

Operational Issues

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

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 13th October.

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Human Rights Day 2022

The Committee granted approval for the Human Rights campaign flag and the United Nations flag to be flown on the City Hall on 10th December to mark Human Rights Day 2022.

Ulster-Scots Language Week Exhibition

The Committee granted approval for an exhibition, consisting of framed photographs depicting Ulster-Scots placenames in different parts of Belfast, to be placed in the reception area of the City Hall to mark Ulster-Scots Language Week from 21st till 28th November.

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 7th October, as set out below:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2022 EVENTS						
Department of International Trade	17th November 2022	Northern Ireland Export Champion launch to showcase Northern Ireland Export Champion's contribution to exporting to the Northern Ireland business community. Numbers attending – 100	B	Charge £115	No hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality
NI Housing Executive	22nd November 2022	Peace IV Building Positive Relations programme is in partnership with Belfast City Council – Launch of	B	Charge £115	No hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality

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		Project presentations for participants in the programme Numbers attending – 120				
Chartered Institute of Marketing Ireland	30th November 2022	Celebration of 50 Years of CIM Ireland - drinks and networking reception to acknowledge work of CIM. Numbers attending – 50	B and C	Charge £300	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve Charge £300 Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
2023 EVENTS						
An Droichead	4th March 2023	An Droichead 30th Anniversary Gala dinner – a leading Irish language organisation in Ireland. Numbers attending – 200	B & C	No charge - Complimentary as Charity	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
International Association of Gaming Advisors (IAGA)	20th June 2023	Conference Welcome Reception for guests attending their 3-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending – 200	A & B	No (waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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2024 EVENTS						
British Hip Society	28th February 2024	Conference Welcome Reception and Dinner for guests attending their 3-day conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending – 40	A & B	No (Waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

Minutes of the Meeting of the All-Party Working Group on the City Centre

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the All-Party Working Group on the City Centre of 7th October.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Social Policy Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Social Policy Working Group of 18th October.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Language Strategy Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Language Strategy Working Group of 30th September.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Flynn requested the Committee to consider the following motion:

“This Council recognises the enormous hardship facing households across Belfast caused by rising fuel, food and energy bills and notes the devastating report from the University of York, which suggests that 72% of Northern Ireland households will be in fuel poverty by January, 2023.

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In order to address these challenges, the Council will:

- i. allocate £500k from Council reserves to set up an Emergency Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund, to be used to administer one-off vouchers to households in most need in Belfast and authorises officers to engage with partners and provide Members with options on the administration of a scheme;
- ii. write to the Department for Communities requesting match funding for this scheme; and
- iii. commit to a long-term strategy around leveraging community-owned energy projects to reduce energy bills and create sustainable communities, with officers to report to Committee when capacity allows.”

The motion was proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor Ferguson.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources reminded the Committee that he had, earlier in the meeting, within the report on the Medium-Term Financial Plan and Efficiency Programme, provided details of uncontrollable costs which the Council would be required to fund. He pointed out that the half-year finance report, which was due to be presented in November, would provide a more realistic reflection of the current financial position and, accordingly, recommended that the Committee consider the funding request in the context of that report, rather than committing to using the Council's reserves at this stage.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt the motion and:

- i. endorsed the recommendation that the allocation of funding of £500k be considered as part of the half-yearly finance report to be submitted to its meeting in November; and
- ii. agreed that a report be submitted to its meeting in November around the administration of the scheme and potential recipients and identifying how this motion could be aligned to others which had been passed by the Council previously.

Christmas Tree Charity Collection

At the request of Councillor McKeown, the Committee agreed that a collection box be placed beside the Christmas tree in the Rotunda area of the City Hall to enable visitors to make donations when viewing the tree, taking photographs etc. The funds raised would be channelled through the Lord Mayor's office for distribution to appropriate charities in the City.

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Mr. Ronan Cregan

The Chairperson pointed out that this would be the last meeting which would be attended by Mr. Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources, as he was due to retire from the Council at the end of October. He thanked the Director for the significant contribution which he had made to the work of the Council and wished him well in his retirement.

Chairperson

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 11th October, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Bunting (Deputy Chairperson) (in the Chair);
Alderman McCoubrey;
Councillors Bower, Canavan, Cobain,
Michael Collins, Corr, Donnelly, de Faoite,
Flynn, Garrett, Magee, Maghie, Murray, McAteer,
McMullan, Newton, O'Hara and Verner.

In attendance: Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 6th and 22nd September were taken as read and signed as correct.

It was reported that the minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd October, subject to the following amendments:

Cherryvale Gate Anti-Social Behaviour Measures Consultation

Local residents would also be invited to attend the meeting of Elected Members from the Lisnasharragh DEA to be held to agree the final remedial measures to mitigate against any anti-social behaviour arising from the reopening of the gate at Cherryvale and that this meeting be convened as a matter of urgency.

Request for the Renaming of Moltke Street Playground

The decision to name the playground the Ruby Murray Park be amended to name it the Ruby Murray Village Green instead.

**Update on Cemeteries and Crematorium
Working Group**

The Chief Executive to raise the delay in obtaining planning permission for the new crematorium with the Chief Executive of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council.

Declarations of Interest

The Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Bunting, and Councillors Corr, Donnelly, O'Hara and Verner declared an interest in item 4 (a) Community Provision Funding – Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2023 – 2026 Update, in that they either worked for or were associated with an organisation that had in the past applied for funding. The Deputy Chairperson, who was chairing the meeting, along with the other Members, left the meeting whilst the matter was being considered.

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 Committee meeting during discussion on the following 2 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.

**Pitch Partner Agreement –
Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park**

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

**Community Asset Management Framework –
Pilot Community Benefit Sites**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided the Members with an update regarding the pilot scheme currently being progressed to help to identify the future management models at the following sites:

- Clarendon Playing Fields;
- Ulidia Playing Fields;
- Hammer Pitch, changing rooms & community space;
- Willowbank Multi Sports Facility;
- Tullycarnet Park Boxing Club; and
- Former Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre.

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The Director reminded the Members that the pilot was testing the decision-making value of a draft Community Management Assessment Framework and toolkit previously developed for Council by Development Trusts NI (DTNI).

He advised that the sites at Ulidia and Clarendon had both been assessed by DTNI and he proceeded to take the Members through the recommendations for these sites. The Members noted that assessment of the other sites was ongoing and that reports would be submitted to Committee in due course.

He reported that DTNI had been asked to work with the two community organisations to assess their capacity to undertake the future management of the site and to determine the benefit to the community in doing so. In both cases the applicants had proposed that their long-term management of the site would have a greater community benefit than a reversion to council management at the termination point of the current legal agreement. They had also identified opportunities for capital development at both sites using external investment but neither had the security of tenure required to be successful in a funding application.

The Director reported that, given the similarity in scale and functionality of the sites and the shared aspirations of the applications, the same recommendation was being made for both, in that the existing Clarendon Development Association and a newly formed Rosario Development Company would each enter a long-term lease with the Council. Both organisations had requested the lease rent free to support a sustainable financial model focused on the delivery of sporting programmes and community provision at the sites. He reported that DfC approval would have to be sought for this on the grounds of an evidence base of ongoing community benefit.

The Director provided the Members with a detailed breakdown of the current financial arrangements at both sites, along with the proposed new arrangements and noted that the proposed new lease terms would be subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Committee agreed to support the recommendations made by DTNI in relation to the future management of Clarendon and Ulidia Playing Fields by the community and further agreed:

- to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that approval be sought to seek the consent of the Department for Communities (DfC) to the grant of a lease for a term of 25 years at a nominal rent at each site; and
- that should DfC approval be received, an award of £20,000 per annum be made to each lessee, subject to periodic review against the projections of the business case, with the review period to be negotiated as part of the lease.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Notice of Motion: Support for Parents

The Committee was advised that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 27th September, had referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Smyth, to the People and Communities Committee for consideration:

“To support parents, the Council commits to providing a list of existing initiatives which it delivers, with a view to working with the voluntary and community sector, as well as other partners, to explore if such initiatives may be improved, as well as seeking to bring forward new programmes during the cost-of-living crisis. The Council also commits to seeking parents’ views on any further support it will provide to families to ensure that parent voice is a significant factor in the design and implementation of new initiatives that will help tackle the cost-of-living crisis for parents.”

Councillor Bower, on behalf of the proposer and seconder who were both unable to attend the meeting, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the motion.

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be submitted to a future meeting.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Community Provision Funding- Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2023-2026 Update

(Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager, attended in connection with this agenda item.)

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to:

- **Provide members with an update on the Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings,**
- **Advise members of timescale and available budgets for micro/medium small grants in 23/24.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is asked to:

- **note the number of applications received and the total funding requested for the Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings as opposed to total budget available.**
- **note the limited budget available for micro/medium small grants in 23/24 and the impact this might have in relation to what can be funded next financial year.**

3.0 Main report

Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings

- 3.1** Members will recall that at April Committee they approved the implementation of the large grant funding provided through Community Provision for activity from April 2023 – March 2026. The two funding streams are:

Capacity Building Grant

- 3.2** Designed to support community development organisations, that:

- support other lower capacity or smaller organisations to ensure good practice in governance, application of appropriate policies and financial management,
- advocate the interests of the communities they serve, and
- ensure communities can be engaged to influence or take decisions/ action about issues that matter to them and affect their lives.

Revenue Grants for Community Buildings

- 3.3** Designed to support organisations which address the needs of their community by delivering a broad-base programme from their building. The building may be used by a geographic based community, or the community may be a community of interest with members from across the whole city.

These grants contribute to the running costs of community buildings in recognition that the community development activity inside allows communities to be engaged to:

- Influence or take decisions about issues that matter to them and affect their lives,
- Define needs, issues and solutions for their community, and
- Take action to help themselves and make a difference.

- 3.4** The application process for these grants opened on the 30 June 2022 for ten weeks and closed on 9 September 2022. A series of information sessions were held – three on-line via Teams, and two in person at City Hall. A total of 94 organisations attended the sessions.

- 3.5** There has been a good spread of applications from across the different areas of the city and applications have also been received from organisations representing communities of interest. At the

close of the process Council has received the following level of applications:

- 43 applications for the Capacity Building Grant, with total funding requests of:
 - £1,852,912.29 in year 1- 2023/24
 - £1,850,103.46 in year 2- 2024/25
 - £1,871,638.39 in year 3- 2025/26
- 89 applications for the Revenue Grant for Community Buildings, with total funding requests of:
 - £1,701,309.74 in year 1- 2023/24
 - £1,737,147.73 in year 2- 2024/25
 - £1,775,446.36 in year 3- 2025/26

- 3.6 These requests are in excess of the available budget for both funding programmes. Officers will score applications and provide a further report on the outcome of that process in December 22. In order to support quality applications a quality threshold will be applied in line with other funding programmes and options on allocations will be included in the P&C Committee December paper.

Micro/Medium small grants 23/24

- 3.7 Applications for a range of council small grants, including micro/medium small grants, will be advertised in Autumn 22 for delivery from April – September 23, through the online funding platform. Members may recall that in 22/23 a significant allocation of £631,360 was taken from the Covid reserve to create a larger budget for micro/medium grants.
- 3.8 In 23/24 the budget will return to normal levels. This funding budget was previously used to support summer scheme programmes which are a priority for council. Guidance for applicants to the micro/medium grant programme will advise that given budget challenges summer scheme programmes may be prioritized over other activity. In the interim, officers are seeking additional funds in order to be able to enhance the micro/medium grant budget through both internal and external mechanisms.

Financial Implications

- 3.9 Micro/Medium

Currently the projected 23/24 funding available for the micro/medium grants scheme equates to £201,000. Historically, there was an allocation of £170,000 for summer scheme delivery

which therefore only leaves £31,000 available for groups to apply for under the broader micro/medium criteria options (NB micro grants are up to £1,500 and medium up to £5,000). The level ringfenced for summer schemes will depend on the number of applications received but members should note the impact on available budgets for broader programmes.

3.10 Capacity and Revenue

Members will be aware that in addition to Council funding a portion of the Department for Communities (DfC) Community Support Programme budget is allocated to provide funding for the Capacity and Revenue grant streams. For 23/24, this allocation is as below:

Grant	CSP funding (DfC)	BCC	Total
Capacity	£436,028	£399,796	£835,824
Revenue	£298,329	£757,967	£1,056,296

- 3.11 These funding programmes are both awarded on a 3-year basis. Council is in receipt of a Letter of Offer for 22/23 and 23/24 but officers do not have confirmation that DfC funding will remain as is for 24/25 and 25/26. Awards will be made based on the notional available budget for the 3-year time period, however, members should note that any reduction in the level of Community Support Programme funding in 24/25 or 25/26 could require an increased allocation from council.

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

- 3.12 No issues have been identified at present. Any implications will be considered throughout and highlighted to Members.”

The Members discussed with concern the lack of budget available for the grants and the potential gaps in what could be funded next year, highlighting that this was even more concerning during the current cost of living crisis when small voluntary community groups would rely heavily on such funding streams to provide vital services.

A further Member raised the ongoing issue of those groups who lacked the capacity to successfully avail of funding and discussion ensued as to how they could be assisted. During discussion it was agreed that a report would be submitted to the November meeting looking at potential solutions and that it would also include a breakdown in relation to communities of interest/targeting of section 75 groups.

Another Member raised the issue of the delay in the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Pilots. The Neighbourhood Services Manager confirmed the reason for the delay and advised that the November update report would contain more information in this regard.

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The Committee:

- noted the number of applications received, and the total funding requested for the Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings as opposed to total budget available;
- noted the limited budget available for micro/medium small grants in 2023/24 and the impact that this might have in relation to what could be funded next financial year;
- highlighted the previous request for a report to be submitted to the Committee providing an analysis of how capacity and revenue grants had been allocated on a geographic basis previously and identifying capacity issues and potential solutions to this in terms of enhancing/increasing capacity to apply for and be successful in availing of funding. It was agreed that this report would be submitted to the November meeting and that it would also include a further breakdown in relation to communities of interest/targeting of section 75 groups; and
- noted that there had been a delay in the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Pilots meaning that the 2-year funding allocation would need to be reaffirmed and that a more detailed report would be submitted to the November meeting. It was requested that the report should articulate the reason for the delay and detail a plan for implementation at pace, given the issues with capacity.

**Update on operational review and refresh of
the 'Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign'**

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 an operational review and refresh of the 'Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign'. This report provides details of the work already undertaken and of activities that have been programmed for the future.**

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

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

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 In February 2022 it was moved by Councillor Garrett, seconded by Councillor Verner and unanimously agreed that an operational review and refresh of the 'Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign' be undertaken by officers that, along with other areas that might**

be identified, should include Education, Enforcement and Cleansing, with the findings to be submitted in due course to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration.

Marketing and Communications Update

- 3.2 There are 3 key strands within responsible dog ownership that are the focus of our new Marketing & Communications Campaign for Responsible Dog Ownership for 2022/2023: Education, Enforcement and Cleansing.

- 3.3 Education – Our messaging has been reviewed and the new imagery is more visual and impactful.

Enforcement – We have reviewed our reporting mechanisms and messaging and are encouraging reporting. We are working closely with Elected Members, colleagues in Parks, colleagues who monitor social media and the public to target fouling hotspot areas.

Cleansing – We are working more closely with colleagues in OSS to ensure Dog Wardens are aware of hotspot areas and that they are cleaned promptly.

- 3.4 We want to encourage reporting of dog fouling, ensuring that our message is clear and mechanisms are in place both online and offline. Operationally we need to stand over what we are communicating to ensure the user journey is seamless.

- 3.5 Whilst we recognise that the enforcement message is an important one the message needs to be more than the fine. We want the message and the advertising creative to appeal to their 'better self'.

- 3.6 The overarching campaign message is #YourdogYourJob. This message allows us to support communication across the key areas of education, enforcement and cleansing in all our marketing and communication channels in a consistent way.

- 3.7 We benchmarked by looking at what other councils in NI, ROI and further afield do in relation to dog fouling.

- 3.8 The activity will include -

- A fully integrated advertising activity that will run for 3 weeks from 10 October 2022 to coincide with the darker evenings.
- Tactical outdoor advertising on buses and adshells that will target known hotspot areas and main arterial routes. (See examples of artwork in 4.0)
- Radio and online activity.

- Paid for social media.

3.9 There will be supporting communications to coincide with the advertising (outdoor/radio/digital) and to support all year round communications around the campaign #YourdogYourjob for example:

- Press release and PR pictures
- Social media – This will also give us the opportunity to capture live feedback
- Website – We will ensure our website content is up to date and the ‘back office’ side of the operation is in place to support the campaigns call to action
- City Matters – We plan placement of editorials around the campaign

Evaluation of the Campaign

3.10 We will evaluate the campaign by obtaining statistics of the number of clicks, plays etc.; determining how many people have viewed the posters; assessment of public awareness of the campaign messages and assessing the cleanliness of hotspot area streets before and after the campaign.

Outreach Update

3.11 Engagement with Schools

Our Environmental Education and Outreach Team (formerly CAT) will be running a Billboard Challenge for Schools in January 2023. We will visit schools to educate pupils and then invite them to take part in a competition to design a billboard. In each school, the winning design will appear on a billboard close to the school.

3.12 Stenciling in our Parks

Our Environmental Education and Outreach Team have provided stencils to OSS colleagues in several parks.

Operational Update

3.13 Proactive Fouling Patrols

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the Council was only operating critical services and our pro-active dog fouling patrols were therefore temporarily suspended. These were reintroduced as the pandemic restrictions eased and regular programmed proactive patrols are taking place across the city. Our Dog Wardens interact with dog owners and the general public and

continue to receive positive feedback. Patrol locations are adapted to take account of current hotspot areas.

- 3.14 At the meeting on 8 February 2022 Members asked for consideration of a Dog Warden**

Team in each quarter of the city. We have 12 Dog Wardens and 2 Supervisors. They work 12 hours shifts (8 am to 8 pm) 7 days a week. There are four teams with 3 Dog Wardens in each and on any shift there are always two teams working. We have the city split into 2 areas North / South and East / West. Two of the teams always work in N/S and the other two teams always work in E/W. From an operational point of view this allows the Dog Wardens to get to know the areas but gives us more flexibility to cover leave and absence than we could achieve with individual teams in separate areas.

- 3.15 Finance and Resource Implications**

The advertising campaign costs have been absorbed within the marketing and communications business as usual budget.

- 3.16 Asset and Other Implications**

None

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

None.”

The Committee thanked the Director for the update report and discussed the ongoing issues with dog fouling throughout the City. During discussion the following issues were highlighted:

- Liaison with Corporate Communications to discuss the possibility of localising and enhancing the dog foul media campaign in terms of relevance to each District Electoral Area, including liaison with the Elected Members of these areas;
- developing further a stencilling campaign throughout the city (to include liaison with the DfI in this regard);
- increasing the use of no dog foul signage throughout the city but particularly at ‘hotspot areas’;
- consideration of the use of the Customer Hub in identifying ‘hotspots’ and directly linking directly with the Elected Members for these areas;

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- the provision of free dog foul bags in problem areas (like had been done on the Comber Greenway by local children) and ensuring adequate bins for disposal were available; and
- the development of responsible dog ownership campaigns in the Council's parks and playing field locations.

The Committee agreed that a follow up report would be submitted to a future meeting which would consider the issues/potential opportunities as discussed.

Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on development of a Belfast City Council Sports Development and Physical Activity Strategy (The Strategy).**

To provide a revised timeline for development and completion of the Strategy.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Note progress to date and to agree to the new proposed timetable for the development of the Strategy.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1 It was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 5th January 2018 that a Belfast City Council Sports Development Strategy and associated work plan would be developed. This Strategy was to provide a framework for future decision making. At that time the committee agreed this would, among other things, steer future decisions on directly supporting National Governing Bodies of Sport to deliver programmes in Belfast which enhance sporting opportunities for Belfast's sporting organisations and individuals.**
- 3.2 People and Communities Committee of 5th June 2018 agreed a proposed Terms of Reference and proposed timeline. Since that date the Departmental Change Programme has prompted consideration of wider opportunities to clarify and align the links between sports development and Council's strategic funding and**

programming decisions in the areas of asset development, health improvement and community development.

- 3.3** At the People and Communities meeting of 10 November 2020, it was further agreed that the Terms of Reference be extended to include the following:
- In line with the Belfast Agenda the outcomes are extended to 2035
 - Physical activity programming is considered as part of the pathway into organised sport
 - Considered and aligned with our Leisure Transformation Programme.
 - Identification of alternative sources of financing/partner opportunities.
 - Facility/asset utilisation and management is maximised through collaborative partnership approaches
 - Facility/asset planning and development is considered taking account of local, citywide and regional need.
 - Sport's contribution to improvement of whole health is considered in the context of partnership working through the work of the Belfast Community Planning Partnership and associated Boards – particularly the Living Here Board
 - Sport's contribution to community development is considered in the context of City & Neighbourhood's Departmental approach to area working and neighbourhood regeneration
 - The strategy 'working title' to be 'Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy'
- 3.4** The aim of the Strategy is to review Council's current physical activity and sports development systems and operations, and subsequently develop a Strategy that identifies, nurtures and develops opportunities for improving health through participation in physical activity and sport.
- 3.5** The purpose of the development of the strategy is to provide a clear statement of the Council's Physical Activity and Sports Development aims, objectives and priorities for the future. It will demonstrate how Council plans to enable and deliver a range of physical activity and sports development activities to specific groups, to meet the overall objectives outlined in the Belfast Agenda.
- 3.6** The Strategy will have two primary themes plus two associated themes and will support two existing themes.

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THEME	POTENTIAL INCLUSIONS
Sport Development Primary 1	Traditional SD continuum
	Sustainability and support exit strategy
	Priority sports?
	Programme support grant funding
	Athlete support grant funding
	Support programme delivery (Capacity development).
Physical Activity Primary 2	Health related activity promotion
	Community programme support (non-financial)
	Community programme grant funding
	Coach/leader provision
	PARS including HealthWise, Cardiac, Cancer, etc.
	Pathways to citywide programmes, clubs and NGBs.
	Sustainability and support exit strategy
	Linking to broader utilisation (pathways) to maximise the impact of existing leisure centre and community centre programmes
Facility/Asset Planning Associated 1	Mapping existing facility provision
	Future sports facility development planning
	Footprint and facility mix
	Location and community coverage
	Citywide analysis to avoid duplication (Area Planning)
	Demand analysis, business case and sustainability
	Ownership and management
	Cross agency collaboration
	Cross agency collaboration

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Facility/Asset Access and Utilisation Associated 2	Programming priorities and booking systems
	BCC/GLL facility programming allocations and funding
	Community asset transfers and associated possibilities
	Citywide analysis to avoid duplication (Area Planning)
	Facilities Management Agreements
	Partner Agreements and other contracts which are in existence and which could be implemented to support the direction of the strategy eg. leases
Health Promotion (Supported existing theme rather than included in strategic document)	Physical activity promotions
	Obesity and nutritional health
	Alcohol and substance abuse interventions
	PHA and BHDU programme support
	Mental health intervention support
	Sustainability and support exit strategy
	Access to expert advisory group support
Community Engagement and Neighbourhood Development (Supported existing theme rather than included in strategic document)	Developing capacity
	Developing local ownership and autonomy
	Sport and physical activity programme support
	Theme/pathway alignment
	Programme grant funding
	Capital grant funding
	Citywide programme and capital development analysis to avoid duplication
	Sustainability and support exit strategies

- 3.7 As part of the process, it is anticipated that a mapping exercise will be carried out across the Council area. This exercise will be identifying current provision, instances of duplication and**

opportunities for partnership investment and partnership delivery in physical activity and sport.

- 3.8 Due to Covid the development of this strategy was delayed. However, in July 2022, following a quotation exercise, Strategic Leisure Limited was appointed to support council in the production of the Strategy.
- 3.9 Since the appointment of Strategic Leisure Council officers have been working directly with them providing relevant background and stakeholder mapping. On the 27 September 2022 a delivery board meeting was held followed by a series of meetings involving a range of specialist Council Officers, key delivery partners and stakeholders.

Proposed Draft Timeline Subject to committee's approval

- 3.10 While ambitious, officers are working to the following timeline for presentation of the draft strategy to committee. Consultation will be a key element of the development of the Strategy including consultation and engagement with elected members.

Background review of documentation policies and strategies	September 2022 - (Completed)
Establish Board and structures for developing strategy	September 2022 - October 2022
Initial face to face consultation with key stakeholders and schools	September 2022 - October 2022
Review and Mapping	September 2022 - October 2022
Focus groups established and face to face meetings to take place	October 2022 - December 2022
Wider public consultation to take place online using 'Your Say Belfast'	October 2022 - December 2022
Analysis of key issues identified with a focus on internal consultation and external feedback	November 2022 - December 2022

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Draft Strategy produced and presented to elected members	December 2022 - January 2023
Review of draft strategy with focus groups and through both internal and external consultation	January 2023 - March 2023
Final Document to be completed and presented to elected members	April 2023 - May 2023
Strategy Launch	June 2023

Financial Implications

- 3.11 Cost associated with the development of the new strategy and engagement of external partners will be met within existing departmental resources. Members are advised that no capital finance is in place to support the sports development strategy at this stage. This will need to be considered as the strategy is developed and related needs become clearer.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.12 The draft strategy will be equality screened in line with the Council's agreed process."**

At the request of a Member, the Director of Neighbourhood Services undertook to ensure that the final strategy was inclusive to both disabled and older people.

The Committee noted the progress and agreed to the new proposed timetable for the development of the Strategy.

Correspondence from Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Mr Edwin Poots, MLA, re Clean Air Strategy

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it had agreed to write to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to seek an update on the overall position regarding the development of Northern Ireland's first Clean Air Strategy.

The Director of City Services advised that a response had been received. This detailed that the work continued to progress well with the development of the Strategy, advising that the Department had published the synopsis of consultation responses to the Clean Air Strategy Discussion Document in June 2022 and copy of which was available to view [here](#)

The Minister had reported that a Clean Air Strategy Inter Departmental Steering Group had been established, comprising of officials from DAERA, the Department for Infrastructure, the Department for the Economy and the Department for Health. He detailed that he

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recognised that other Departments and stakeholders might need to be involved depending on the final agreed scope of the strategy, however, the group would, in the interim, continue to meet regularly over the coming months to agree input to the overall Clean Air Strategy.

In addition, a public consultation on the draft Northern Ireland Clean Air Strategy was planned for the end of December 2022, with the results and progression to be ratified by the Northern Ireland Executive.

A Member expressed disappointment at the slow progress being made with the development of the Strategy and stated that he would welcome an update report on the detailed assessment in the Autumn.

Following an issue raised by a Member in relation to an increase in air pollution complaints in the BT17 area, the Director of City Services advised that DAERA was responsible for complaints but undertook to ask a Council officer to liaise with the Member directly to discuss his concerns.

A further Member highlighted the need for additional air quality monitoring stations around schools.

The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Agriculture and expressed disappointment at the slow progress being made in the development of Northern Ireland's first Clean Air Strategy.

**Correspondence from Minister of Finance,
Mr Conor Murphy MLA, re Shared Prosperity Fund**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it had agreed to write to the Communities, Economy and Finance Ministers seeking them to engage with the British Government as a matter of urgency to release details around the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), how it would work and to establish whether the available funding would be an adequate substitute for the European Social Fund.

The Committee was asked to note that, as the Minister of Finance led on this area of work on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive, he had replied directly on behalf of all the Ministers.

In the correspondence he noted that the SPF was a regular topic for discussion in his engagement with British and Devolved Government Ministers. He stated that he continued to raise his concerns regarding SPF and to seek clarity and information on this fund directly with British Ministers.

The Minister outlined that the North's allocation from the Shared Prosperity Fund was just under £127m over three years - £19m in year one, £33m in year two and £74m in year three. Under the 2014-2020 EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework, an average of £64m per year had been received from equivalent EU funds, generating a minimum loss of close to £65m over the three-year period before factoring in inflation.

He continued that this significantly lower level of funding lacked any flexibility and was not being provided to the Assembly or Executive to support those activities previously funded

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through the European Social Fund (ESF) but would be delivered directly by Whitehall risking a significantly reduced impact.

He advised that the DLUHC had established a Partnership Group, which included a representative from Belfast City Council, for the development of a local investment plan for the SPF. He stated that the Executive Departments had been unable to participate in these structures as no decision-making role had been provided for the Executive and Assembly.

He concluded by advising that he would not stand in the way of funding flowing and undertook to continue to seek information on the SPF and to represent the concerns of those who had previously benefited from EU Funding to British Ministers. He stated that he had also instructed his officials to continue to engage with the DLUHC to seek detail on this fund and to try to find a path that would maximise the benefit for citizens here.

The Committee noted the correspondence and agreed that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting which would identify the organisations that currently benefited from the match funding relationships with Belfast City Council and the European Social Fund.

**Correspondence from Lisburn and Castlereagh
City Council re Blaris Cemetery Fees and Response
from DfC re review of burial ground regulations in
relation to fees**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it had agreed to write to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council re Blaris Cemetery Fees and the Department for Communities re review of burial ground regulations in relation to fees.

The Committee was referred to responses that had been received from LCCC's Head of Service and from the Director, Local Government and Housing Regulation Division.

In the response from LCCC, the officer detailed that as a result of Local Government Reform, the Council boundary had changed which had resulted in certain areas of the former Lisburn City Council (and former Castlereagh Borough Council) transferring to the Belfast City Council area, which included the Collin Area. In recognising the potential financial impact of this on former ratepayers, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (L&CCC) had agreed to offer a time bound 3-year subsidy to those former ratepayers making use of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council cemeteries. This subsidy had been supported from April 2015 until March 2018 and matched the overall regional rates convergence scheme which had been implemented by Central Government for household rates. Both schemes had ended on 31st March 2018 and at the conclusion of this subsidy the council had been consistent in its approach.

He reported that from April 2015 there had been several requests around the same subject. Officers had maintained a consistent approach and complied with the policy and any previous queries/complaints of this nature had not been upheld. Furthermore, the Council had also been reviewed by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) on a similar challenge and had been supported in the decision making and consistency of approach concerning this matter.

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He also drew reference to the position of former Castlereagh ratepayers who had existing graves within Knockbreda Cemetery, highlighting that many of the former Castlereagh Borough Council ratepayers within the newly formed L&CCC had graves within Knockbreda.

He concluded by advising that the Council reviewed its charging scheme annually and this included charges associated with cemetery provision.

In the DfC response regarding fees for burials, the Director had advised that the Burial Grounds Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 were made under section 181 of the Public Health Ireland Act 1878 Act (the 1878 Act). Explaining that this section did not provide the Department with the power to make regulations regarding burial fees. He advised that the Department had no role in the settling of burial fees which was the sole responsibility of Councils.

The Members discussed both responses and, to try and progress the matter, it was agreed that Council officers from both Councils should meet to discuss the issue further. It was also suggested that the Chief Executive be asked to raise the matter through SOLACE.

The Committee noted the correspondence and agreed:

- that officers from BCC would arrange to discuss the cemetery fees further with their counterparts in LCCC and that the Committee would be further briefed in due course on these discussions;
- to write to the DfC seeking it to undertake a broader strategic review of the Burial Grounds Regulations, regarding the power to make regulations concerning burial fees; and
- to ask the Chief Executive to raise the differential in burial fees across Council boundaries at the next meeting of SOLACE.

**Belfast Healthy Cities - BCC representation
at annual conference (Copenhagen) and BHC/BCC
engagement proposal**

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:

- **Advise members of an invite from Belfast Healthy Cities for either the Chair or Vice Chair of People and Communities committee to attend the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference 22–24 November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark.**

- Seek feedback on a proposed engagement mechanism between elected members and Belfast Healthy Cities.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the invitation and advise whether Council will be represented at the conference, and in what capacity, and by whom. Committee is also asked to provide feedback in relation to the proposed mechanism for more regular engagement between elected members and Belfast Healthy Cities.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1** Belfast's membership to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network is facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC), an independent partnership organisation. In May 2021 the City of Belfast was successful in its application to re-designate as a WHO Healthy City and participate in Phase VII of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network until April 2026.

WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Conference

- 3.2** Belfast Healthy Cities has extended an invitation to Council for the Chair or Vice Chair of People and Communities committee (or their nominee) to attend the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference 22–24 November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The theme is Healthy Cities Leading by Example: One Planet, One People, One Health.
- 3.3** This will be the first hybrid meeting in Phase VII (2019–2025) of the WHO European Network, and the organisers look forward to many participants from member cities attending in person. These meetings bring together both political representatives and technical focal points from the WHO flagship cities and the national networks. The WHO European Healthy Cities Network comprises more than 1300 cities and municipalities as members in total. Belfast City Council last sent a political representative to a WHO Healthy Cities conference in 2015.
- 3.4** Public sector organisations cover the costs of a member attending. Only one political representative from Belfast is asked to attend, three BHC staff and a BHC board member will also attend. Costs for attending the meeting in person are £1,200/£1,500 – this includes return flight to Copenhagen; 4 nights'

accommodation and an allowance for each day. Members should advise if they want council represented in person or virtually.

- 3.5 The Conference website is now online and can be accessed at: [2022 WHO Healthy Cities Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference](#). As the conference approaches the website will be updated with more detailed information on the programme, site visits and side events.

Engagement mechanism between elected members and Belfast Healthy Cities

- 3.6 Issues of health and wellbeing are a key consideration for the citizens of Belfast and the reduction of health inequalities is identified as a continuing priority in the emerging Belfast Agenda refresh.
- 3.7 Belfast Healthy Cities has approached council to consider how their engagement with elected members could be enhanced and more formalised going forward so that there is an agreed process and structure for clear communication on local priorities as well as the WHO initiatives and what best practice can be shared across the Network. Belfast Healthy Cities is a key partner in addressing health inequalities and in June of this year council agreed to further 3 year funding for Belfast Healthy Cities.
- 3.8 In addition, the Living Here Board of the Belfast Community Planning Partnership has recommended for approval the establishment of a Health Inequalities Strategic Reference Group (HISRG) which will act as the oversight body for allocating resources to, and agreeing and reviewing action(s) undertaken in support of, health inequalities work in the city under community planning (to be considered/ratified at the next BCPP meeting). Belfast Healthy Cities will have representation on this group.
- 3.9 One potential model to support increased communication and co-operation between councillors, officers and Belfast Healthy Cities would be for nominated 'Health Champions' to be brought together 2-3 times a year and to act as a contact point for BHC on key issues of consideration. Each political party within council would nominate one representative who would take a leadership role in working and engaging with Belfast Healthy Cities – and potentially also with the Health Inequalities Strategic Reference Group or broader Living Here Board under BCPP (as appropriate) – on issues and/or motions which relate to relevant issues.

3.10 A similar approach has recently been approved for engagement with Belfast Youth Council through the nomination of Youth Champions by each of the political parties.

3.11 Members are asked to consider this proposed engagement mechanism and if content, officers from Community Provision will contact each party to nominate a health champion and to agree Terms of Reference etc.

3.12 **Financial and Resource Implications**

Council are one of four core funders to Belfast Healthy Cities, along with the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) and Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Annual funding amounts to over 300k of which BCC contributes £81,294 per annum, which has been committed for a further 3-year period to align with the Phase VII and Community Plan timeframes – to 31 March 2026.

3.13 Reference the conference invitation, as public sector organisations cover the cost of political members attendance, this cost will have to be taken from departmental budgets. There is no cost for a political representative to attend online.

All other activity outlined in the paper can be covered from existing resources.

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

3.14 None identified at this stage but kept under continuous review. It should be noted that much of the work undertaken by BHC is to address, or promote awareness of, health inequalities and best practice whole population or targeted approaches to mitigate or prevent these.”

The Committee agreed:

- that the Chairperson would represent the Council remotely at the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference scheduled to be held from 22nd – 24th November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark; and
- the proposed mechanism, as outlined in the report, for more regular engagement between Elected Members and Belfast Healthy Cities and noted that officers from Community Provision would contact each Political Party to seek its nominee for a Health Champion and to agree the Terms of Reference

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Operational Issues

Proposal for naming new streets

The Committee approved the application for naming a new street in the City as set out below:

Proposed Name	Location	Applicant
Kings Hall Road	Off Lisburn Road, BT9	Todd Architects, Ltd

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund - Councillor Flynn to raise

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Bins not being removed from Street – Councillor Maghie

Councillor Maghie, on behalf of Councillor Murray, raised the issue of residents not bringing their bins back into their properties after they had been emptied which was causing accessibility issues for wheelchair and pram users.

The Committee agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would consider a targeted educational campaign aimed at encouraging residents to return their bins to their property after waste had been collected.

Chairperson

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 12th October, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);
Alderman Dorrian;
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Duffy, Ferguson,
Hanvey, Heading, Hussey, T. Kelly, Lyons,
Maskey, McCabe, McLaughlin, Murray, Nelson,
O'Hara, Spratt and Whyte.

In attendance: Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mr. A. Cairns, Zoo Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 28th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd October.

Declarations of Interest

In relation to item 5.a) Improving Employability Outcomes: focus on young people at risk, Councillor Duffy declared an interest, in that he was a co-ordinator for the GCSE Support Programme for the West Belfast Partnership Board.

Councillor Whyte declared an interest regarding item 3.a) Request to present - Artemis Technologies, as he worked for Queen's University and left the meeting whilst this item was under discussion.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the report associated with the following three items was 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 3 items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of

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

Financial Reporting - Quarter 1 2022/2023

The Committee considered the Quarter 1 financial position and a forecast of the year end outturn, which included a summary of the financial indicators and an executive summary.

The Committee noted the report and the associated financial reporting pack.

Belfast Zoo - Q1 Performance Update Report

The Committee was provided with an update on the Zoo performance during Q1 (April to June) of the 2022-23 financial year, together with an overview of the following areas:

- Visitor Services;
- Education Services;
- Animal Collection;
- Marketing & Events; and
- Financial performance.

The Zoo Manager highlighted that the zoo had won the following awards during Quarter one:

- ***Belfast Telegraph Business Awards***
 - Highly Commended for Best Use of Digital or Social Media for Off-Peak Promotions.
- ***British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) Awards***
 - Gold for Diversity and Inclusivity for Accessibility Improvement Plan;
 - Silver for PR, Marketing and Digital Events for Off-Peak Promotions; and
 - Bronze for Sustainability for Christmas 'treecycle' campaign.

During discussion, one Member highlighted that a wider range of low value gifts to purchase in the Zoo gift shop would be beneficial.

After discussion, the Committee noted the Zoo performance update report for the period April to June 2022 and the Chairperson agreed to write a letter of congratulations to the staff on their recent awards on behalf of the Committee.

Housing Led Regeneration Programme Update

The minute for this item has been restricted due to commercial sensitivity. The restriction will be lifted in due course.

Request to Present

Artemis Technologies

It was reported that a request had been received from Artemis Technologies to present an update to a future Committee on the Strength in Places-funded Belfast Maritime Consortium programme and development of Artemis eFoiler™.

The Committee noted the progress update and agreed to receive a presentation from Artemis Technologies on the Artemis eFoiler™ project at its Special Meeting in October.

The Committee also agreed that representatives of Queen's University be invited to attend, in conjunction with this presentation, to discuss the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on both its staff and students, the possible reduction in student numbers, and to provide an update on the work of the City Deal.

Business Improvement Districts

The Committee agreed to receive an annual presentation from representatives of the three Business Improvement Districts at future meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

Regenerating Places & Improving Infrastructure

Blue and Green Infrastructure Funding

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 elements of the Council's Connectivity Programme, Grey to Green Programme and the Great Victoria St tactical regeneration scheme and the proposed funding proposals for these schemes via the DfI Green & Blue Infrastructure Fund and DfC Revitalisation Scheme.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note receipt of the Letter of Intent from DfI to provide in year capital funding for the delivery of projects associated with Council priorities aligned with the Belfast Agenda and A Bolder Vision in terms of connectivity, greenways, active travel and place-making.**

- Subject to receipt of funding approve the delivery of projects outlined within this report, including any 3rd party funding agreements, consultancy and procurement as appropriate. Noting that funding and the Letter of Offer will be subject to SP&R Committee approval, via the Capital Programme process in conjunction with Physical Programmes or in conjunction with 3rd party delivery partners as outlined within this report with regular updates to be brought back to this Committee.
- Note the opportunity for DfC funding to deliver a Revitalisation Programme in the Gt Victoria Street / Southwest Quarter area, and subject to award of funding approve the delivery of the revitalisation programme, noting that this will be subject to SP&R Committee approval via the Capital Programme process in conjunction with Physical Programmes.
- Note and agree the PHA funding to deliver branding on the Cathedral Gardens Active Travel Hub.
- Note the potential of return of funding of the Spokesafe proposal approved under the 21/22 B&G Infrastructure Fund and approve the inclusion of this funding allocation with this phase of secure parking delivery.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 In June 2022, DfI sought proposals from Council for greenway and active travel projects that could potentially receive capital grant funding this financial year under the DfI Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund 2022/23 and Active Travel Projects. Given the tight timeframe for delivery, in September, the Council submitted proposals with a focus on enhancements to live projects that have the best chance for delivery within this financial year. This fund aligns with Council's commitments as articulated in the Corporate Plan, the CG&R Committee Plan and the Community Planning Partnership City Development Board priorities to bring forward a city-wide connectivity programme, of which A Bolder Vision forms a key part. The proposals brought forward within this paper also presents an opportunity to bring forward projects / programmes previously agreed by this Committee, including 'Grey to Green' and 'Great Victoria St/Shafsbury Sq' in April 2022, as well as Active Travel Enabler projects as previously agreed and delivered through previous Blue and Green Infrastructure Funding streams.
- 3.2 DfI have provided to the Council a Letter of Intent under the Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund to provide 100% of in-year capital funding for Active Travel Enablers, Grey to Green and

South-West Quarter/Great Victoria Street projects. As an existing live greenway project, the Lagan Gateway has also received an intention to provide 50% funding of capital, profiled over three years.

- 3.3 The proposals within this paper for Active Travel Enablers, South-West Quarter Streetscape Improvements & Grey to Green projects are all subject to DfI Blue and Green Infrastructure funding, and approval of any Letter of Offer via the Capital Programme and the SP&R Committee. Whilst funding has not been secured or approved given funding conditions are that this will be required to be spent in year, Officers have continued to work closely with DfI to strengthen the deliverability. This includes identifying delivery partners who can assist in the delivery of the capital projects, and critically undertake to manage and deliver the longer-term maintenance of the interventions.
- 3.4 The funding proposals as well as planned and existing projects / interventions are summarised below:

3.5 Great Victoria St / Shaftesbury Square

As previously agreed by Committee in April 2022, officers have progressed the feasibility of a tactical regeneration programme for the Great Victoria Street / Shaftesbury Square area. There are a number of prominent vacant and derelict properties alongside a poor quality and decaying public realm. There are several development proposals progressing through the planning process in the wider area, and major public sector placemaking and infrastructure projects like Belfast Streets Ahead 5, Belfast Grand Central Station and BRT 2 also have the potential to have a transformative impact here, although these are longer term projects in terms of delivery.

- 3.6 Recently a focused approach to the regeneration of the area has been led through the South-West Quarter Stakeholders Group, a combination of private and public sector stakeholders including BCC DfI, DfC, and private sector landowners, developers and tenants to identify short / medium and long term interventions for the area to improve connectivity, increase safety, address dereliction and increase occupancy. This will include a number of approaches as outlined below which will focus on making streetscape improvements through the DfI Blue & Green funding (subject to funding award and approval via SP&R) and via Council's existing grant programming to encourage and attract further public and private sector investment and curation:

- Streetscape Improvement Works; Subject to DfI Blue and Green Funding delivering streetscape improvement works including resurfacing with resin bond gravel and providing planters and improvements to problematic areas along the street to improve the pedestrian experience aligned to the provision of a Civic Spine as envisaged under A Bolder Vision.
- Revitalisation Programme; Applying for and delivering of funding from DfC to deliver a Revitalisation Programme to provide property boundary treatments to help to address urban decay and dilapidation through innovative artwork, minor capital works and physical enhancements along this connectivity corridor.

3.7 The combination of the proposed funding to come forward under the DfI Blue and Green Infrastructure fund 22/23 in conjunction with existing funding programmes (Vacant to Vibrant, Business Cluster and Community Grant) and working with the private sector within the area represents an opportunity to act as a catalyst for investment and seek to provide confidence in the area that may assist in bringing forward footfall, investment and increased activity. Work is underway to engage with property owners in the area to encourage them to undertake improvement work to vacant and derelict buildings and sites. This approach also aligns to A Bolder Vision and Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), by delivering shorter term improvements that enhance and better connect spaces, while also testing temporary interventions that can shape and inform delivery of permanent public realm or infrastructure projects.

3.8 Grey to Green Programme

As previously agreed by this Committee in April 2022 a number of opportunities have been identified to improve or create of new, green spaces, with a particular focus on key routes, or linkages, between adjoining communities within the city centre.

3.9 The focus of this project will be to provide the support and resource for city stakeholders, business/property owners and resident groups to deliver worthwhile projects within their own area while ensuring commitment from these partners to undertake to maintain and preserve these interventions. It is proposed to progress this by way of Environmental Greening Grants. There would be an emphasis on biodiversity and

sustainability including pollinators and pollution-combating plants as well as bug/insect houses.

3.10 It is proposed that this element of the DfI Blue and Green Infrastructure funding will be delivered through a number of mechanisms as outlined below;

- Small capital grants up to £1000 to business (SME's), charities or community groups to deliver small scale greening projects within their ownership boundary with a total allocation of £40k. (grants to be administrated through an external body proficient in the delivery of greening grant schemes.)
- Larger capital funding agreements up to £10k to bring forward larger greening interventions including green walls, green infrastructure to boundary fencing/hoarding, community gardens with a total allocation of £50k.
- Funding agreements to the three BID areas (Linen Quarter BID, Destination CQ and BIDOne) to deliver and maintain green infrastructure within their respective districts up to £260k
- Up to £50k for a Demonstrator Project that would be delivered alongside Belfast Healthy Cities, PHA and other key partners as part of Belfast Healthy Cities' "Greening the City" action plan. Officers are working with stakeholders to define the project scope and possible locations.

3.11 Pending Committee approval to bring forward this Grey to Green project it is proposed to engage the city stakeholders & partners through an Expression of Interest to establish demand, potential locations and project proposals to support prior to proceeding with the delivery phase.

3.12 **Active Travel Enablers**

City-wide active travel and connectivity are strategic priorities for Belfast, as identified within the draft Programme for Government 2016-2021, the Belfast Agenda, and A Bolder Vision for Belfast as well as forming a part of the agreed Corporate and Committee Plans. There is a need to address connectivity and active travel right across the city in order to provide safer and more convenient access for communities to key destinations and facilities. While DfI are continuing to develop up the delivery of the Belfast Cycle Network Council and DfI officials have been working collaboratively to bring forward measures aimed at increasing and improving active and sustainable travel provision through A Bolder Vision, the

Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme and the second phase of Active Travel Projects which are being delivered via DfI Blue Green Infrastructure Funding (2021-2022) and via the Councils Capital Investment in Greenways.

3.13 These active travel enablers will continue to support modal change by helping to reassure cyclists that their bikes are safe and secure. This will build on a recent programme of investment by Council in cycling infrastructure across the city that included the replacement of the ‘Belfast Bikes’ fleet, and the installation of several covered cycle stands across Belfast, two new Active Travel Hubs and a secured cycle parking facility in the city centre. An increase in high-quality safe storage for cycling should help to increase the number of people choosing to cycle and encourage more people to consider cycling as a genuine alternative to their private car. In the 2021/22 Blue and Green Infrastructure Funding allocation we planned to deliver two secured units. The first of these new facilities called The Bike Yard was launched on 4 October in CastleCourt and is free and open to the public and holds up to 24 bikes. The original intention was for a second unit to open in the Q-Park at Victoria Sq, but due to a number of deliverability issues this was not achievable and the operator, SpokeSafe is currently working to identify alternative locations in the city centre for the next round of funding. Should the previously approved funding for the SpokeSafe proposal be returned to Council it is proposed that this funding is recycled into the 22/23 phase of funding for secure cycle infrastructure. A key challenge is securing land or buildings in suitable locations that are feasible and viable and Officers are seeking to address this demand and will continue to work with prospective operators in anticipation and readiness for this pending tranche of the Blue and Green Infrastructure Funding. The project proposals for the 22/23 B&G fund will include;

- Deliver 10 covered cycle stands at previously agreed (CG&R June 2022) city wide locations and to work with businesses and landowners to expand this list to provide covered cycle stands across the city;**
- Deliver up to 8 more publicly accessible secure cycle facilities across the city in conjunction with partners who will be confirmed through an Expression of Interest process;**
- Deliver additional cycle repair stations.**

3.14 Council officers will continue to develop the emerging proposals in conjunction with stakeholder engagement to ensure support for these, and to make sure that the proposals

are tailored to meet local needs and requirements. It is envisaged that the Dfl will write to councils in late October or early November with a formal Letter of Offer confirming the funding allocations at which point it is expected that the funding amount will be released immediately.

- 3.15 Dfl has stipulated a requirement for the funding to be spent within the 2022/23 financial year and this will place significant pressures on Council to adequately resource and manage project delivery within such a constrained timeframe. As such, approval is being sought for a pragmatic approach that would see procurement activity proceed 'at risk' pending a Letter of Offer which is expected in late October or early November. In addition, while it is intended that some projects will be directly delivered, a lack of resource and time pressures mean that a number of projects have been earmarked for coordination and delivery by other agencies due to delivery pressures. To this end approval is sought to enable Officers to proceed with the delivery of the projects outlined within this report with regular update reports to be brought into the CG&R Committee.

3.16 Financial & Resource Implications

Dfl Blue and Green Infrastructure funding 21/22

- Potential of £20,000 from 21/22 Dfl Blue and Green Infrastructure funding to be returned to Council, it is proposed that this funding is recycled into the 22/23 phase of funding for secure cycle infrastructure.

Dfl Blue and Green Infrastructure funding 22/23

A formal Letter of Offer from Dfl has not yet been received or approved by Council. Subject to funding award the Letter of Offer will be reported through the SP&R Committee as part of the Capital Programme for the following amounts:

- £402,500 for Active Travel Enablers
- £300,000 Great Victoria Street / Shaftesbury Square Streetscape Improvement Works
- £400,000 Grey to Green
- £633,600 (profiled over 3 years) Lagan Gateway Greenway

The Dfl funding for 2022/23 is based on management costs of the fund being covered by the Council. This is due to the in-year funding constraints, however, we need to give consideration to future delivery mechanisms, including

seeking a project management fee for Council and other outsourcing requirements.

DfC Revitalisation funding

- **£250,000 Great Victoria Street / Shaftesbury Square Revitalisation Programme.**

Public Health Agency

- **£2,500 additional revenue funding to deliver branding to the Cathedral Gardens Active Travel Hub.**

3.17 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

Officers are currently developing the Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Screening and will incorporate within the emerging proposals.”

During discussion, the Director of City Regeneration and Development explained further the delivery timeframe and the need to focus on the projects that would be completed by the end of the financial year. One Member proposed that the Committee write to the Department for Infrastructure to outline its concerns in relation to the short timeframe and suggest the potential for multi-year funding in the future.

In relation to the Great Victoria Street Scheme, she clarified that improvements to the streetscape were intended via environmental improvement type interventions, for example, soft planting. She also advised that engagement was ongoing with the Department for Infrastructure in terms of the Streets Ahead project regarding the provision of a cycle path in the area.

After discussion, the Committee:

- Noted receipt of the Letter of Intent from the Department for Infrastructure to provide in year capital funding for the delivery of projects associated with Council priorities aligned with the Belfast Agenda and A Bolder Vision in terms of connectivity, greenways, active travel and place-making;
- Approved, subject to receipt of funding, the delivery of projects outlined within the report, including any third-party funding agreements, consultancy and procurement as appropriate. The Committee noted that funding and the Letter of Offer would be subject to approval from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, via the Capital Programme process in conjunction with Physical Programmes or in conjunction with third party delivery partners as outlined within the report and regular updates would be submitted to the Committee;

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- Agreed to write to the Department for Infrastructure to outline concerns in relation to the short timeframe for the delivery of the greenway and active travel projects under the DfI Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund 2022/23 and suggest the potential for multi - year funding in the future, so that opportunities for strategic alignment of such projects could be achieved;
- Noted the opportunity for the Department for Communities funding to deliver a Revitalisation Programme in the Gt Victoria Street / Southwest Quarter area, and subject to award of funding, approved the delivery of the revitalisation programme. The Committee noted that this would also be subject to SP&R Committee approval via the Capital Programme process in conjunction with Physical Programmes;
- Agreed to the PHA funding to deliver branding on the Cathedral Gardens Active Travel Hub; and
- Noted the potential of return of funding of the Spokesafe proposal approved under the 21/22 Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund and approved the inclusion of this funding allocation with this phase of secure parking delivery.

City Centre Revitalisation and Connectivity

The Committee considered the undernoted report and associated appendix:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on current infrastructure projects within the city centre, the pending reopening of Primark - Bank Buildings, its impact on the city centre and specifically how it impacts the Castle Street area, and to provide an update in relation to interim road measures to the Fredrick St Junction adjacent to Ulster University, and to further advise on proposals for a Waterfront Task Group.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to:**

- **Note the DfI plans relating to the opening of the Ulster University City Centre Campus;**
- **Agree the comments provided by Officers to the DfI Consultation to the York St Controlled zone and provide any additional comments as required to this Committee Meeting**

- Note the interim measures to the Fredrick St Junction planned to commence in October 2022 and note that DfI will be presenting to the Committee in November 2022 where Members will have an opportunity to raise queries directly with DfI Officials
- Note the pending Consultation on Amendments to the Footway (Prohibition of Waiting) Order and to provide initial comments to this Committee meeting
- Note that the Bank Buildings refurbishment is almost complete, and that Primark have advised they plan to open the store ahead of schedule in November 2022.
- Note the DfI proposals not to reopen the area encapsulated by the Bank Buildings hoarding to traffic in advance of the finalisation of the Bolder Vision Strategy
- Note the DfI request for an environmental improvement scheme in the area and the proposed actions put forward by Officers
- Agree that officers apply for DfI/DfC funding to deliver the interventions outlined within this paper, and to procure and deliver the interventions in conjunction with local businesses and stakeholders with regular updates to be brought back to this Committee (and SP&R as appropriate).
- Note the emerging Waterfront Task Group and agree to contribute funding to the development of a framework for a fully connected waterfront - building on existing and proposed plans and schemes and aligned to local and central government objectives including A Bolder Vision, private sector development and community group proposals.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Ulster University Campus opened to its full cohort of staff and students in September 2022. As a significant regeneration project and catalyst for change within the City Centre Members of this Committee have received regular updates on the progress of the campus, the wider work of the Community Campus Regeneration Forum and have been invited to attend a session with the University of Ulster on the 11th of October 2022. The visit to the Campus will include a tour of the campus and a discussion on how best to maximise the impact of the new Campus for the city and its neighbouring communities to ensure its successful integration within the city.
- 3.2 This Committee has also raised several items with the DfI Minister relating to the opening of the Ulster University and the safety of the surrounding road infrastructure

and provision of active and sustainable travel measures to enable the modal shift that the University was seeking to instil from day one of the opening. Council at their meeting on the 1st September agreed to request a meeting with the DfI Permanent Secretary and the University. This meeting has been requested and further details will be brought to this Committee. Included within this report is an update on some of the measures currently proposed by DfI in relation to the opening of the University.

- 3.3 In addition to this works have continued in relation to the completion of the refurbishment works at Bank Buildings, and Primark recently announced they would be opening the store ahead of schedule with a target date of early November. This is welcomed news for the city centre and particularly the businesses and organisations within its immediate vicinity including Castle Street given the positive impacts that this will have for the city centre in general, both in terms of footfall, attraction, vibrancy and reopening of key connectivity links that have been closed or restricted now since August 2018.
- 3.4 The removal of the Bank Buildings hoarding has a close alignment with the Bolder Vision Strategy, which remains subject to final Ministerial sign-off from DfI in relation to the Civic Spine and the level of public transport penetration of Royal Avenue and Donegall Place, and subsequently Castle St and Castle Place. The Strategy was developed at risk based on a one-way South Bound Public Transport Movement on Donegall Place and Royal Ave, west bound movement only on Castle Place, and Castle St pedestrianised between Queen St & Castle Place.
- 3.5 Stakeholders within the area have been coming together via a Castle Street Multi – Agency Stakeholder Group, which was established to address issues within the immediate area including issues emanating from the closure of Bank Buildings and the bottom of Castle Street, and to discuss the development opportunities within the area to help to inform the longer-term approach to the regeneration of the area.

4.0 Main Report

4.1 Ulster University Belfast Campus Opening

The Ulster University Campus opened in full in September 2022 and at the time of writing this report early anecdotal indications are that the opening has seen a significant rise in footfall within the area, and in particular through the Royal Avenue and Donegall Place elements of the Civic Spine.

There have not been any significant issues reported through the UU Transport and Readiness Operational Group, and through the Community Campus Regeneration Forum (consisting of BCC, UU, DfI, DfC, CQ BID and local Communities) commitments were made by the relevant stakeholders to undertaking enhanced cleansing and monitoring of the area, including enhanced patrols by PSNI and traffic enforcement officers to minimise the potential disruption within the area that could have arisen from the University opening. In addition to this DfI have, or plan to undertake some mitigation works as outlined below;

4.2 York Street Traffic Control Scheme

On the 14th September 2022 DfI opened the consultation process to bring forward a Traffic Control Zone, i.e. blue badge and public transport access only between 11am and 6pm, between Donegall St and the Fredrick St Junction which relates to the direct frontage of the university buildings. The department will also close off access to on-street parking bays, with the exception of blue badge parking, within the zone using planters in the short-term prior to the delivery of a bicycle lane at some stage in the future. The Consultation closed on the 6th October and officers provided the following comments back to the Department;

- Due to the short-time frame in bringing forward this Order an opportunity has been missed to link this controlled zone up with the Control Zone between Donegall Place/Donegall Square North and Royal Avenue/North Street. It is requested that the implementation of a full control zone between Donegal Sq North and Fredrick St should be considered and brought forward
- This order will not have the desired impact without the implementation of adequate enforcement and recommend that enforcement cameras are introduced to implement the Controlled zone
- BCC request that DfI provide timelines and delivery mechanisms for the delivery of the cycle infrastructure or any other measures to be delivered as a part of this scheme
- DfI were informed that this response was subject to Committee approval and that Members may provide further comment. To this end Members are asked to consider and provide any additional comment to this consultation.

4.3 Fredrick St Junction

Members have provided several requests to the DfI Minister for the immediate implementation of sustainable and active travel measures to the Fredrick St Junction, citing safety concerns aligned to the current configuration that prioritises and caters for road travel. In particular Members have cited the dangers associated with the Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation units on the northern side of the Fredrick St junction as a significant contributor to footfall across this junction without adequate provision for safe pedestrian movement. DfI are currently proposing that the Fredrick St Junction is delivered as a part of Belfast Streets Ahead, although at this stage there is no firm timelines or budget to deliver the BSA3 scheme. In the interim DfI are proposing to undertake interim alignment works to the junction, with works proposed to begin in October 2022. These measures include:

- Closure of the left turn slip from Fredrick St to York St and widening of the northwest Footpath at the junction location & widening of the Fredrick St central reservation

This will reduce Fredrick St from four lanes east bound and two lanes west bound to three lanes east bound and two lanes westbound

- Widening the north-east footpath, realigning some lines on Great Patrick Street and installing new kerbing, tactile paving central reservation barrier, introduction of cycle stop areas at the traffic lights etc to the junction. There will be net change to lanes on Great Patrick St, however the overall crossing distance is reduced by approximately 1.5m-2m through the realignment of lanes.

DfI are coming to present to Committee in November and have been asked to provide an update on this junction.

4.4 Amendment to the Footway (Prohibition of Waiting) Order

DfI wrote to BCC on the 13th September 2022 (as Appendix 1) to inform the Council of proposed amendments to the Footpath (Prohibition of Waiting) Order. This will include restrictions to prohibit vehicles from waiting on a footpath adjacent to a bus stand, a cycle lane or school keep clear. While this is a positive move it does not meet some of the issues previously raised by this Council including banning on footpaths. While further opportunity will be provided to

provide response to these amendments when the Department bring the order out Consultation Members are asked to provide any comment on the proposals at this stage for input back to DfI.

4.5 Bank Buildings Reopening

Primark are working to pace to complete the restoration works to the Bank Buildings following the fire in August 2018. The containers stabilising the façade are now removed, and the restoration works are visible again for the first time in four years. Works proceed to fit out the shop and to reinstall the public realm damaging during the stabilisation and restoration works and Primark are working with DfI to hand the area back to the same standard of public realm area that existed prior to the fire. In September 2022 Primark confirmed that they were ahead of programme and proceeding at pace to open the store and adjacent streets & footpaths in early November 2022.

4.6 This is a significant milestone for the city and will provide a key source of footfall & vibrancy coming into the Christmas period, and critically will reopen the heart of the city centre that has been substantially constricted over the previous four-year period.

4.7 Subsequent to the announcement by Primark DfI have confirmed that they do not intend to revert the city's infrastructure back to the pre-fire situation in advance of the Bolder Vision decision on the level of public transport penetration through the Civic Spine. At a street level this means that;

- Castle St will remain closed to through traffic from Fountain St to Castle Junction
- The temporary Castle Place cycle lane will remain in place
- Royal Avenue will remain open for southbound traffic only
- DfI are working with Translink to ensure effective provision of public transport into and out of the city centre, in particular in the run up to the Christmas period.

4.8 In advance of the Bolder Vision decision on Public Transport penetration of the Civic Spine it is unknown how long this scenario will be in place however DfI & DfC have requested that BCC apply to DfI & DfC for funding for Council to deliver an environmental improvement scheme in Castle in the

interim. Given the timeframes it is unlikely that a scheme could be delivered in advance of the Christmas period and the Christmas Embargo however Officers are working on building up the following proposals to put to DfI for consideration;

- Enhanced Christmas animation including utilising the lower section of Castle St for larger animation, and potentially further up Castle St for street buskers etc.
- Engage DfI to extend the Castle St closure to Queen St.
- Engage DfC to consider Castle St for a public realm scheme pending the outcome of the finalisation of the Bolder Vision strategy.
- Designing, pricing and delivering an environmental improvement scheme that could be in place between Castle Junction and Fountain Street until the delivery of BSA Phase 3.

4.9 Given the timeframes involved Officers are still developing these proposals, however, will have to deliver at pace when funding has been secured. Members are asked to approve this approach for Christmas animation and environment improvement scheme for Castle St and its environs. Members are also asked to approve Officers applying for funding and delivering the environment improvement scheme with regular updates to be brought back to this Committee.

4.10 Previous Council investment in the Castle St area has included three capital grants awarded through the Business Cluster and Community Grant scheme to provide shop frontage improvements and outdoor facilities for hospitality outlets in the area, innovative lighting interventions and the acquisition of 2 Royal Avenue with work ongoing to further develop both the meanwhile and longer-term proposals for this location. Officers are also investigating further opportunities for investment within the Castle St area and in line with the aspirations as set out in the Inner North West Masterplan and action plan as previously agreed by this Committee. This includes promotion and ongoing engagement in relation to the Vacant to Vibrant Capital Grant scheme, and monitoring other strategic acquisitions and development plans to bring forward activation and animation in the area, and to increase footfall and dwell time in the area.

4.11 Waterfront Task Group

Under the Bolder Vision, the 'Embracing the River' theme forms one of the key moves and focuses on reanimating and activating the River Lagan corridor, improving the active travel connections and connecting local communities along

the waterside to this key connectivity and leisure corridor. Officers are working alongside other stakeholders to further develop this Key Move, to include undertaking co-design work with local communities and consideration of funding opportunities with the aim of bringing forward capital investment and delivery along the Lagan Corridor.

4.12 One strand of this, and in conjunction with the Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, DfC, DfI & Titanic Quarter Limited, a Waterfront Task Group is being established that will also involve local communities and stakeholders with the intention of bringing forward a focused action and delivery plan with one of its key objectives being to bring forward the 'Embracing the River' proposals.

4.13 To further progress the main Waterfront Task Group partners are to co fund a focused scope of works that considers the overall development and integration of the waterfront that maximises the economic, social and environmental impact for the city and all adjoining residential and business communities as well as institutions. This will include the development of co-design workshops to bring forward communities along the waterfront, maximising the pedestrian connectivity to and from the water, activation on the water and to develop a prioritised pipeline of projects to further enhance future joint funding bids or private sector investment and development aligned to the Bolder Vision. Further information on the development and integration of this work will be brought back to future meetings of this Committee. It is proposed that Council contribute £10,000 from existing approved budgets to this joint study.

5.0 Finance & Resource Implications

5.1 Any capital costs for the Castle St area Environmental Improvement Scheme to be secured from DfI/DfC.

£10,000 contribution to the development of the Waterfront Task Group Framework to be met from existing approved department budgets.

6.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

6.1 None associated with this report."

During discussion, Members raised queries regarding the mapping of cycle lanes to promote access across the city, the problem of footpath parking, and the timeframe of the Bolder Vision. The Director of City Regeneration and Development advised that there

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was an opportunity to raise these issues with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) when they attended the Committee in November.

In relation to the Waterfront Task Group and its development of a framework, one Member highlighted the need to incorporate the river corridor itself in this work.

During further discussion, one Member raised concerns regarding the lack of investment within the City centre and the potential for the Council to acquire two vacant sites in the area.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Beattie,
Seconded by Councillor Duffy,

Resolved - That the Council undertakes a scoping exercise in relation to the potential acquisition or transfer of two derelict sites within the City centre area.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- Noted the Department for Infrastructure plans relating to the opening of the Ulster University City Centre Campus;
- Agreed the comments provided by Officers to the Department for Infrastructure Consultation to the York St Controlled zone;
- Noted the interim measures to the Fredrick St Junction planned to commence in October 2022;
- Noted that the Department for Infrastructure would be presenting to the Committee in November 2022 where Members would have the opportunity to raise queries directly with DfI Officials;
- Noted the pending Consultation on Amendments to the Footway (Prohibition of Waiting) Order;
- Noted that the Bank Buildings refurbishment was almost complete, and that Primark had advised that they planned to open the store ahead of schedule in November 2022;
- Agreed that the Council undertakes a scoping exercise in relation to the potential acquisition or transfer of 2 derelict sites within the City centre area, and noted that a report be submitted to a future meeting on how the proposal could be progressed, resourced and managed;
- Noted the Department for Infrastructure proposals not to reopen the area encapsulated by the Bank Buildings hoarding to traffic in advance of the finalisation of the Bolder Vision Strategy;
- Noted the Department for Infrastructure request for an environmental improvement scheme in the area and the proposed actions put forward by officers;
- Agreed that the Council would apply for Department for Infrastructure /Department for Communities funding to deliver the interventions outlined within this report, and to procure and deliver

the interventions in conjunction with local businesses and stakeholders with regular updates to be submitted to the Committee (and Strategic Policy and Resources as appropriate); and

- Noted the emerging Waterfront Task Group and agreed to contribute funding to the development of a framework for a fully connected waterfront - building on existing and proposed plans and schemes which would be aligned to local and central government objectives including A Bolder Vision, private sector development and community group proposals.

Growing Business & the Economy

Improving Employability Outcomes: Focus on young people at risk

The Director of Economic Development provided an update on the development work in improving the employability outcomes of young people at risk and the review of delivery which was currently underway.

He provided an overview of the proposed new intervention – “Bridges to Progression” – intended to be developed through the Belfast Labour Market Partnership.

He advised that the Council's employability and skills support in this area had focused on developing a continuum of support and testing potential solutions for those young people, who were not in education, employment or training, and who would not generally participate in existing provision. These interventions included:

- **GCSE Support Programme** - In total, 517 young people across the city had benefitted from access to support to help with their GCSE English and GCSE Maths over the last year. This support had taken the form of both schools-based and community-based classes, revision and exam preparation;
- **Youth Support Programme** – supported 170 young people (14-24 years old) who were disengaged and aimed to create a progression pathway in Belfast for young people at risk, thereby reducing the number that were disengaging at an early age. Scheduled to run until September 2023, the Council was likely to engage a further 160 young people;
- **Summer Work Experience Programme** - Piloted in summer 2022, this intervention was aligned with the Youth Support Programme and targeted young people aged 14-16 years at highest risk or who had already disengaged from the formal education system. The programme offered six weeks paid work experience at £40 per week (equivalent to EMA) and was designed to expose participants to a range of employment opportunities and pathways into various sectors.

The Director of Economic Development advised that work was currently underway to evaluate and review all of the activity within this space. When this was completed, the Committee would be asked to consider recommendations, which would focus on a

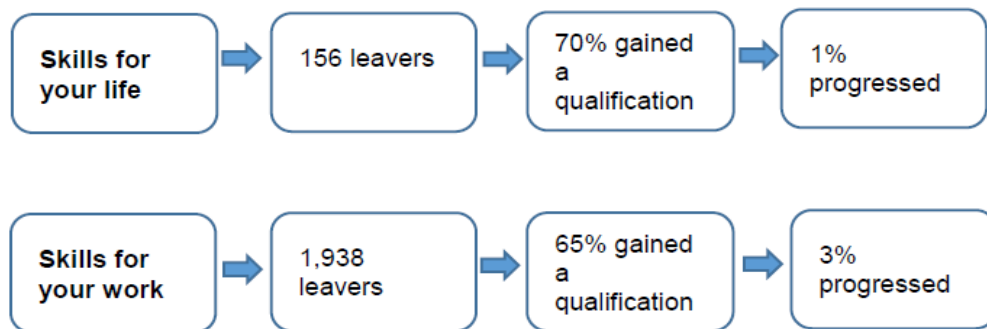
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continuum of supports at critical stages for young people and/or where there was no existing provision or barriers to entry and engagement.

The Committee was reminded that the Labour Market Partnerships (LMPs) represented a cross-governmental approach to co-designing a sustainable future strategic employment offer. The Belfast LMP was focused on four main strategic and cross-cutting themes: Quickly Back to Work; Increasing opportunities; No-one left Behind; and Catching-up.

Under the theme No-one Left Behind, the Belfast LMPs had agreed that the action plan included a proposed intervention to 'turn the curve' on the poor outcomes for young people on Training for Success/Skills for Life and Work programme (TfS/SfL&W) programmes in Belfast which The Department for Education had reported in the illustration below:

Funding and Outcomes of Training for Success, DfE, December 2020



The research indicated that less than 1 in 30 of the young people engaging on those interventions were entering a positive destination (employment/further training) at the end of the programme. In order to understand the reasons behind this performance, officers had been engaging with providers across the city and had co-designed a bridging intervention that aimed to increase the positive outcomes for young people and maximise the impact of the mainstream programme.

The Director of Economic Development provided an overview of the Skills for Life and Work training programme for young people who wanted to develop their skills and get ready for work. He explained that the Bridges to Progression had been developed to work alongside the existing provision by providing extra support for those participants at risk of early exit from the programme, in order to retain their engagement and enhance their prospects of a positive outcome. He described the barriers young people on the programme experienced, together with the contributory factors to the high attrition levels.

He advised that, having explored a range of potential approaches, it was proposed that the most expedient methodology for managing this intervention was to set aside an allocation of up to £90,000 from the Labour Market Partnership budget that would be ringfenced for the Belfast-based Training for Success/Skills for Life and Work providers. Should the providers identify that a participant was facing a specific area of challenge that

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was not related to the core programme content but that risked them falling out of provision, they could make the case to access funding to pull in the relevant support services or refer the individual towards the support. He reported that this pilot programme would target at least 120 young people at risk, and it was likely that the investment would be used for referrals to a range of support services including:

- Mental health support and counselling;
- One-to-one coaching;
- Housing support and advice;
- Self-esteem and confidence building;
- Childcare and parenting support;
- Travel and living costs where appropriate;
- Learning support to complete (for example, where a participant had 'run out of time' and could not complete the accreditation);and
- Addiction support services – gambling, alcohol, drug use etc.

He highlighted the providers that hold Training for Success/Skills for Life and Work contracts with DfE within Belfast and that this support would specifically work with: Workforce Training; Springvale Training; Dairyfarm/People 1st; Impact Training; Academy Hair and Beauty Training School; Belfast Metropolitan College; Belfast Central Training; Bryson FutureSkills; Rutledge Training; and Springboard Opportunities.

The Director of Economic Development explained further how the Bridges to Progression fund would be used and pointed out that officers would ensure that delivery did not duplicate, but rather add value to, this provision in order to improve employability outcomes for participants of Training for Success/Skills for Life & Work.

He advised that, subject to the Council's endorsement, officers would undertake assessment of the applications from Training for Success/Skills for Life and Work providers for funding for participants in line with the approach detailed in the report. He confirmed that a report would be presented at a future meeting of the Committee outlining the outcomes and learning from this approach, and going forward, Bridges to Progression would be factored into the recommendations of the review of all youth-focused employability and skills interventions.

During discussion, in answer to a Member's question on the potential to offend participants by using the term 'NEET' (young people who were not in education, employment or training) in the report, the Director of Economic Development advised that he would address this terminology in future reports. He also explained further details of the employment outcomes and the support given to the participants of the programme.

During further discussion, the Committee praised the work of the Youth Programmes, in particular the GCSE Support Programme.

The Committee:

- Noted the development work and activity to date in improving the employability outcomes of young people at risk and the review of delivery currently underway; and
- Noted the proposal to manage the Bridges to Progression funding distribution in partnership with Training for Success/Skills for Life and Work providers through an agreed application process on behalf of those young people identified.

**Supporting Business Start Up and
Growth in Belfast – 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 provide members with a progress update on activity in 2022/2023 to support the development of new and existing businesses across the city through the Enterprise and Business Growth team. The report sets out key priority areas of work for the remainder of the 2022/23 financial year.**
- 1.2 The report also provides an update to members setting out a proposed interim approach to delivering business start up activity, pending confirmation of funding from a range of external sources to deliver a new model of support. In addition, it details a proposed intervention to encourage more growth-focused and scaling businesses, building on a successful partnership model.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:**
- **Note the Council's performance and contribution to delivering against Belfast Agenda ambitions to grow the Belfast economy, focusing on the current support for Business Start-up and Growth**
 - **Note and endorse the proposal to invest in the Way to Scale programme up to a maximum of £43,000**
 - **Note and agree attendance of party group leaders, Chief Executive and Director of Economic Development and senior officers to attend the best practice visit for sustainability and circular economy in Dublin on the 4 November.**

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Members will be aware that within the 2022/23 period the Enterprise and Business Growth team have been working to develop and deliver a range of activity to support the growth and development of new and existing businesses across the city, aligned with the Growing the Economy pillar of the Belfast Agenda and Inclusive Growth Strategy. It also aims to align and add value to work underway through the Belfast Region City Deal, Innovation City Belfast and the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission. This range of activity was approved at the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on the 6 April 2022.
- 3.2 The 2022/23 financial year sees the conclusion of some of our most significant business support interventions funded through the European Regional Development Fund and Invest Northern Ireland. There is also a considerable programme of work underway to identify future resources to address future funding gaps to support the delivery of a new, more ambitious programme of start-up and growth support which seeks to revamp the current offer and increase the number, survival and growth rates of new businesses across the city. In addition to the developmental work required to achieve this we continue to deliver a range of supports for new and existing businesses across the city. Over the last six months, some of our key achievements have included:
- 3.3 Enterprise and Start a Business - We have worked with 514 individuals to help them test and develop new business ideas through a range of events and workshops across the city. This included events targeted at individuals who are currently economically inactive, and those from a range of underrepresented groups which aimed to promote a culture of enterprise and build skills and confidence. We also ran the Belfast Business Idea Award which was designed to unearth, recognise, and help to fast track the best business ideas in Belfast. This year's competition was won by Insurin who received £2,500 and a business support package worth over £3,000. Four runners up also received a support package worth over £3,000.
- 3.4 Our business start-up activity has engaged 257 individuals, 223 of those developed a business plan through the Go For It programme, which supported the creation of 134 jobs. We provided additional support to 56 individuals through 1-1 mentoring and access to incentives of £1,500 to help kick start their business, and enabled test trading opportunities for 16 new businesses through our dedicated start up space at St George's Market.

- 3.5 **Support for Social Enterprise and Cooperatives** - 22 organisations have been supported this year to date through one-to-one mentoring advice and guidance to develop new social enterprises and cooperatives. To increase awareness of the sector we have facilitated 1 Outreach Event, 2 Ideas Generation/Refinement Workshops and 1 Stakeholder Meeting. To further raise awareness of the Co-operative sector and increase engagement we facilitated, 3 Training Webinars and a fortnightly cooperative event.
- 3.6 In September we launched a pitching competition for social enterprises and cooperatives, successful applicants to the competition with pitch on Friday 11 November. 1 winner will be able to access a potential award of £10,000 to help with getting started or to grow, runners up will also access a range of support to help grow their enterprise.
- 3.7 In October we also launched the new youth project which will engage a minimum of 42 participants across 8 groups and will include support for young people to explore the concept of social economy and develop the skills required to establish an organisation in the sector.
- 3.8 **Growing a Business-** Through our business growth support, we have delivered one to one mentoring to 188 businesses to help them to implement growth strategies and become more resilient. The type of support offered includes enhancing their digital and online presence, improving tendering skills and specialist support for businesses with high growth potential. We have also introduced environmental sustainability to test the demand after recent surveys suggested that this is a current priority for local businesses. 225 businesses attended 15 workshops and events.
- 3.9 74 companies across the region have been supported to implement new digital acceleration plans, 14 of whom are from Belfast. 17 Masterclasses and workshops have been delivered, covering key emerging technology areas including blockchain, immersive technology, robotics, and innovation strategy development.
- 3.10 **Innovation Factory** - Occupancy at the centre is now at 88%, the highest level to date. The centre has seen a high level of interest from new firms in sectors including TV/film, digital, engineering and green tech. Over the year 24 businesses have engaged in masterclasses and events at the centre. As part of IF's social and economic regeneration activity, 11 work placements have been facilitated by IF customers over the past 12 months, 117 FTE have been created this year and

76 Hours of business mentoring support has been provided. Plans are also underway to provide linkages between the centre and businesses on wider business support, we are also focusing on the social and regeneration aspect of the centre and how we can maximise the benefits of this.

- 3.11 City Vibrancy - In January 2022 we launched the Vibrant Business Destinations programme in partnership with DfC which aims to support local business associations to develop and deliver interventions that will drive footfall and create vibrancy in areas outside of the city centre. To date there have been 46 expressions of interest across the North, South, East and West of the city, this scheme is in place to October 2023.
- 3.12 Scaling and Growth - Officers have been working with the Council's innovation team to develop a programme of support for the creative digital sector that will help build capacity, networks and access to finance for creative digital companies working with new and emerging technologies such as immersive tech and virtual production. With new challenge funding and finance available through private sector partners for the development and prototyping of new products, services and experiences focused on immersive and virtual production, there is an opportunity to help local SMEs scale and innovate through building their capacity to bid and secure this new funding.
- 3.13 Investing in Belfast - Officers continue to work with our seven partner councils along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC) to identify business and new collaborative opportunities. Belfast City Council is leading on the development of the strategy and action plan for the partnership, which will conclude in October 2022. Work will then take place to identify funding and resources to support the delivery of the action plan such opportunities through Peace Plus and Shared Island. Over the period we have successfully secured funding through Shared Island to deliver a feasibility study to support the development of regional innovation hubs across the DBEC area.
- 3.14 In addition to this we have been further developing our partnership with Dublin City Council to enable shared learning and support the development of collaborative opportunities across a number of thematic areas including sustainability, circular economy, innovation and regeneration. Through this partnership we have successfully secured funding to assess feasibility of the development of a circular economy hub

through Shared Island. Work is now underway to bring this forward.

3.15 To further develop the partnership, support shared learning a number of best practice visits will now be programmed aligned with the thematic areas identified. The first of these visits will take place in Dublin on the 4 November focussing on sustainability and the circular economy, it is proposed that attendees will include party group leaders from Belfast, the Chief executive, and relevant senior officers. Attendees from the Dublin City Council area will also include party group leaders and senior officer. The draft agenda will include a meet and greet in Dublin Civic Headquarters, a visit and briefing on the Dublin Heat Network along with a visit to the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun and Community Mobility Charging Hub. An invitation for the visit will be issued to members along with the final version of the agenda. Costs associated with travel to the event will be covered through the existing Enterprise and Business Growth budget. It is expected that Belfast City Council will facilitate a return visit in December/January.

3.16 Taking account of the wider strategic activity we continue to deliver for the entrepreneurs and businesses across the city through our entrepreneurship, business start, social enterprise and cooperative supports and business growth activity. Some new areas of programme development and delivery are as follows:

3.17 Future Business Support

At the August 2022 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, members were provided with an update on the approach to deliver interim business start-up activity in 2023. The report noted that there was still a significant programme of work to do to seek the additional financial resources required to deliver new activity and to ensure that it can be operational once the current programme concludes in March 2023. Members were advised of ongoing engagement with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) regarding the prospect of accessing resources through the Shared Prosperity Fund. However, given the timeframes to put in place new funding streams councils have had to consider several options to put in place interim approaches until such resources are confirmed.

3.18 Following further engagement with DLUHC and the 10 other councils there has been agreement to extend the current

delivery of the Go for It programme for an initial period of six months, until there is greater clarity on the financial position to support a new programme and until the commissioning process for delivery of the enhanced programme is completed. We expect to be in a position to launch the new business support service in September 2023. This approach ensures that councils have a mechanism in place to deliver against our statutory requirements relating to business start-up activity.

- 3.19 In parallel, work will continue to progress the enhanced approach to business start-up and growth support set out to this Committee in April 2022, with the ambition of phasing the new interventions in as resources are firmed up. Building on the business case we will coordinate our partners to ensure mechanisms are in place to roll out the service in 2023. This will include the implementation of a procurement framework to support future delivery and ensure while there is regional consistency across the model there are opportunities for councils to adapt support to meet local needs and align with internal working arrangements. We will also work to ensure that financial resources are in place to support our ambitions and deliver our statutory obligations through SPF, Invest NI, DfE and DfC.

3.20 Innovation and scaling

We continue to work with partners across the city to develop interventions which encourage more businesses to scale and grow to turnover £3m+. This is a key challenge for us as highlighted through our Enterprise Framework, the 10X Economy vision, which identifies the need to drive up the rate of new business starts and create an environment that actively supports entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into viable businesses.

- 3.21 Following the success of the Way to Scale Initiative in partnership with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI, officers have been working to enhance this to complement Belfast City Council's core Enterprise and Business Growth Support Programmes. Way to Scale provides support across a number of areas including internationalisation, access to finance, business modelling and sales strategy support for those businesses with the ambition to scale.
- 3.22 Through last year's programme, 40 businesses accessed support through a series of workshops and events with leading entrepreneurs from MIT in Boston. A further 9 companies progressed on to the Entrepreneurship

Development Programme at MIT in Boston, and a one week residential in Boston to develop market strategies and build network support to realise the growth ambitions of their businesses.

- 3.23 Building on the feedback from last year, it is proposed to support the Way to Scale programme for 2023 to support a new cohort of companies participate. The programme will be delivered in partnership with Catalyst Inc. and Invest Northern Ireland. The overall cost of the programme will be £180,000. Given the alignment with the ambitions set out in the enterprise framework, it is recommended that this is supported with Council funding of £43,000 to maximise the take-up by Belfast-based businesses. Invest NI, Catalyst Inc and the participating companies will cover the remainder of the costs.

3.24 Supporting Business Growth

We will continue to engage with businesses across the city to better understand the challenges they face in the current climate and work to ensure that support is in place to overcome them. We are working to put in place a new procurement framework across our services to enable us to provide more agile supports that can adapt to the needs of the business community. Across the remainder of the financial year, we will look to enhance support for businesses to become more sustainable and resilient to ensure they can put mechanisms in place to overcome the implications associated with ongoing rising costs.

3.25 Investing in Belfast

Across the remainder of the financial year we will focus on refreshing our City Investment Service to ensure that it provides the right support to new and potential investors in the City. We will also work to build on our partnerships in London and Dublin to identify new opportunities to profile the city for investment. Using the recommendations from the draft economic strategy we will also look to identify new cities to build partnerships with in order to increase opportunities for businesses in key growth sectors and to support the development of clusters in core technologies such as Fintech, MedTech, Advanced Manufacturing and Creative and Digital Industries.

3.26 Social enterprise and Cooperatives

We have been working with internal and external partners to refresh our social economy action plan which aims to detail an integrated approach to supporting social enterprises and cooperatives, using multiple levers across the council to deliver cohesive support, with specific targets for engagement. Using the recommendations from the draft economic strategy we are also working to identify new support mechanisms for social enterprises and cooperatives to put in place more sustainable funding models, and access opportunities through council's new social value procurement policy.

3.27 Financial & Resource Implications

The enterprise and business growth activities outlined within this report will be resourced through the existing Enterprise and Business Growth budget for 2022/23.

The Way to Scale programme was included as part of the Enterprise and Business Growth budget for 2022/23, as presented to this Committee on 6 April 2022. This budget was included as part of the estimates that were approved by this Committee on 12 January 2022.

3.28 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

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

During discussion, in response to Member's request, the Director of Economic Development confirmed that a report be submitted to a future meeting to outline the location data of the organisations who had registered an interest in the 'Way to Scale' programme. He also explained the procurement and legal complexities regarding the possible engagement of the current 'Go for It' programme providers.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Beattie,
Seconded by Councillor Duffy and

Resolved – That, regarding the extension of the current delivery of the 'Go for It' programme, the Committee agrees that officers engage with its providers in relation to future business start-up activity and the new business support service.

After discussion, the Committee:

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- Noted the Council's performance and contribution to delivering against Belfast Agenda ambitions to grow the Belfast economy, focusing on the current support for Business Start-up and Growth;
- Regarding the extension of the current delivery of the 'Go for It' programme, agreed that officers engage with its providers in relation to future business start-up activity and the new business support service;
- Noted and endorsed the proposal to invest in the Way to Scale programme up to a maximum of £43,000 and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting to outline the location data of the organisations who had registered an interest in the programme for 2023; and
- Noted and agreed the attendance of Party Group Leaders, the Chief Executive, Director of Economic Development and senior officers to attend the best practice visit for sustainability and circular economy in Dublin on 4th November.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

**Co-Design Framework for Culture,
Arts and Heritage**

The Committee deferred consideration of the report to enable a wider range of cultural organisation to be consulted on the development of the co-design framework.

Performance Update on Belfast Bikes Scheme

The Director of Economic Development provided an update on the performance of the Just Eat Belfast Bikes scheme in the first quarter (1 April to 30 June 2022) of year 7 of operation, together with an update on the installation of covered cycle stands in the city – Phase 1 funded by COVID Revitalisation Fund and Phase 2 by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Green and Blue Infrastructure Fund.

The Committee was reminded that the Belfast Bikes scheme was launched in 2015 as part Belfast City Council's physical investment programme. The Department for Regional Development had provided initial capital funding for the scheme as part of its Active Travel Demonstration Projects budget. The scheme was launched with a network of 30 docking stations and 300 bikes. The scheme had been operated by NSL continually since inception using bikes and supporting infrastructure from "Nextbike GmbH". The scheme currently operated with over 430 bikes and 49 docking stations.

Regarding the expansion of the Scheme, the Director of Economic Development highlighted that, in May 2021, the Committee had agreed that an additional four Belfast Bikes docking stations would be deployed using DfI Active Travel funding. He confirmed installation had began in Quarter 1 and consisted of the following:

- Docking station at Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre was installed on 7 July 2022 and was operational;

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- Olympia Leisure Centre – works had commenced with an expected completion date of early September 2022;
- Kennedy Centre – works scheduled to commence in September 2022;
- Waterworks – the illegal van and structure that were located on the site had been removed and work would be scheduled following a completion of the other two sites, with an indicative date of late September/early October 2022; and
- An additional station at Titanic Quarter was completed in May 2022, funded by a developer contribution.

He reminded the Committee that, at its meeting in June 2021, it had agreed to proceed with 15 docking stations outlined in the expansion proposal (Appendix 1). An investment of approximately £525,000 was required, based on cost estimates from previous network expansions. At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June 2021, it had been agreed that £500,000 be invested in the expansion proposal.

He stated that a procurement exercise had commenced for the installation of eight stations in Phase 1:

- North: Yorkgate and Shore Road;
- West: St Mary's College and Shankill Road;
- South: Lisburn Road and Malone Road;
- East: Castlereagh Road, Upper Newtownards Road; and
- Seven stations would follow in Phase 2 the following year.

As previously agreed by the Committee, agreement through Area Working Groups was required to determine the exact locations and consider those against the Site Expansion Matrix as outlined in Appendix 2. These site options and discussions were scheduled to begin with relevant Area Working Groups in the coming months.

The Director of Economic Development provided an overview of the Operational Performance, which included the availability of bikes and the impact of replacement parts. He provided an update on Membership Levels, highlighting that there were 21,756 active Belfast Bike members at the end of Quarter 1, which was an increase of 67% compared to the same period in Year 6 (13,000). He advised that there had been 1,236,408 journeys since the scheme was launched and 38,907 journeys during Quarter 1 Year 7, pointing out that demand for bike rental had not returned to pre-pandemic levels, with the current cost-of-living crisis, reduced city centre footfall, remote working and competition from other means of travel all likely factors in the reduction in usage evidenced in Quarter 1. He advised, it should also be noted that there was an exceptionally high level of usage in 2021 that could have been due to a number of factors, not least COVID-19 restrictions.

He reported that vandalism of the Bikes was an ongoing problem, which cost £6,980 in Quarter 1, of which £4,077 was payable by the Council and community engagement initiatives with the PSNI continued to help decrease vandalism incidents.

In relation to Subscriptions and Usage Revenue, the Director of Economic Development highlighted that income from subscriptions and usage charges at the end

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of Quarter 1 was £52,091. This was significantly below Year 6 amount for the same period, however, it should be noted that Year 6 was an exceptional year with usage significantly higher than average.

He provided an overview of the marketing activity during Q1 which included advertising in City Matters magazine, social media posts and press releases.

He advised that NSL continued to operate the Belfast Bikes scheme, with a contract renewal available until 2024. Council staff were reviewing the scheme and would make future recommendations for the management, operation and potential expansion of the scheme as part of a new procurement package. Considerations include:

- Planned network improvement and expansion;
- Anti-vandalism measures;
- Inclusion of e-bikes;
- Potential inclusion of e-scooters (subject to legislation), cargo bikes and adapted bikes/tricycles;
- Application of discounts;
- Application of user rewards;
- Links with social enterprises and co-operatives;
- Integration of sponsorship into operator package;
- Marketing activity;
- Community and education engagement activity;
- Employability and skills training; and
- CoMoUK accreditation.

The Director of Economic Development updated Members on the Motion, in the name of Councillor O'Hara, which had been agreed by the Committee in March 2020 to investigate "*as part of the current strategic review of the Belfast Bikes Scheme, consideration be given to granting free access to young people 25 years of age and under to the scheme*". He stated that NSL did not currently collect age data of users, however, the operator had confirmed that 'Date of Birth' could be added as an essential registration criterion for new users. He explained the process and highlighted that this might be subject to a cost which was being sought via the operator. The Director went on to draw the Committee's attention to additional considerations of providing free access to Bike Users:

- With free access, there was no impetus to redock the bike after usage, which would likely lead to reduced bike availability for all users, including paying users. Additional bikes might have to be purchased, at a cost, to ensure all users could be serviced. Further costs would be payable by the Council to the operator to handle increased bike numbers;
- With free access, there was no impetus to redock the bike after usage, which would likely lead to theft and/or vandalism, which seemed to be primarily from the younger age market (as evidenced on social media). Repair costs payable by the Council to the operator would increase;

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- It should be noted that some other schemes, including Edinburgh, Derby and Cardiff, had previously closed due to high levels of vandalism, theft and associated costs; and
- It would be difficult to reduce fraudulent activity on a free offer for young people or example adults signing up as a young person, leading to further reduced income.

The Committee was informed that alternative proposals would be explored and proposed in a future report, including discounted rates for certain users, for example: 18-to-24-year age group, students; senior citizens and corporate discounts.

In relation to covered cycle stands across the city, the Director of Economic Development explained that, whilst the Covered Cycle Stands initiative was not part of the Belfast Bikes scheme, both initiatives were aligned to the Bolder Vision with a focus on improvements in the active travel provision and infrastructure across the city. Covered Cycle Stands were part of the Active Travel Enablers project.

He advised that under the DfI Sustainable and Active Travel elements of the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme, 10 covered cycle stands were funded city-wide. Phase 1 locations had previously been agreed by the Committee and after a procurement process a supplier was appointed and the design of the cycle stands as well as the agreements for the specific locations progressed over the following nine months. He confirmed that production had started during Quarter 1 on the following areas:

Gasworks	Inverary Community Centre
St. George's Market	Belfast Zoo
Grosvenor Community Centre	Waterworks
Shankill Leisure Centre	Belvoir Activity Centre
Belmont Park	Mary Peter's Track

He reminded the Committee that, regarding Phase 2 of the initiative, it had received an update on the DfI funding for the Active Travel Enabling Projects in March 2022 that outlined the projects, budget and timeframe for delivery. In terms of the covered cycle stands, officers had drawn upon the priority areas identified by Sustrans, and these locations were also assessed in terms of the deliverability within the timeframe as well as the key criteria aligned to cycle infrastructure provision. Following a procurement process a supplier and contractor were currently being appointed for the next 10 covered cycle stands being delivered in-year.

During discussion, one Member suggested the scope for free usage of Belfast Bikes for those on benefits and asylum seekers could also be investigated. The Director of Economic Development explained further the consultation process which took place with landowners before bike docking stations were put in place, together with the timeline phasing of the initiatives.

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After discussion, the Committee:

- Noted the update of the Just Eat Belfast Bikes performance for Year 7 Q1 (April to June 2022);
- Noted the update to the notice of motion regarding free access for young people;
- Noted the update of the installation of covered cycle stands in the city;
- Noted the progress with regard to phase one phase two expansion; and
- Noted that a report be submitted to a future meeting to provide further detail on the potential for discounted rates for certain users, to include those on benefits and asylum seekers.

Strategic and Operational Issues

Notices of Motion - Quarterly Update

The Committee was provided with an update on the Motions which had been assigned to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. It was highlighted that one Motion had been recommended for closure.

The Committee:

- Noted the updates to the Motions under its remit, as referenced in Appendix 1; and
- Agreed to the closure of 1 Motion, as referenced in Appendix 1 and noted in the report, under paragraph 3.5.

Community Planning / Belfast Agenda Refresh – Progress Update

The Committee was reminded that, in April 2022, it had received an update on the emerging findings and recommendations following the Phase 1 of the 'Belfast Agenda: Continuing the Conversation' engagement process which would inform the refresh and focus of the Belfast Agenda (BA) for the period 2022-2026.

It was reported that, since its launch in 2017, the Belfast Agenda had been a city leadership document, coalescing partners beyond the core legislative requirements of community planning with a focus on addressing key city challenges. The approach adopted had enhanced the relationship between the public, voluntary and community private sector to drive forward real change addressing inequalities and improve quality of life within and across the city.

The refreshed Belfast Agenda would maintain the same level of ambition and collective leadership commitment to deliver the long-term vision and outcomes previously agreed. It would be delivery and outcome focused and would be positioned as a City Strategy which would identify the major transformational programmes and investment opportunities for the city. Community Planning Priority Actions Work continued with

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community planning partners and wider stakeholders to unpack and understand the scope of the agreed priority areas for focus over the next four years, Underpinning and composite delivery action plans were being co-designed and agreed with partners. A core set of guiding principles had been applied in developing the action plans to test and identify the most appropriate interventions to delivery greatest impact. These included:

- **Adding clear value:** The Council could achieve significant gains by collaborating across its partnership and sectors in a way it could not through its existing single agency or thematic 'business as usual'.
- **Impact for Belfast's people, place, economy:** The work the Council delivered together would be felt in practical ways by individuals, families, communities, residents and businesses in Belfast, delivering tangible outcomes.
- **With Belfast's Communities:** The work the Council do would fully engage Belfast's residents, communities and businesses, building on their strengths and ensuring their voice was central to planning and delivery. The Council would work 'with and alongside' its communities, not 'To or For' them.
- **Intelligence led priorities and action:** The Council would focus its collaboration on the things that data, evidence and community insights tell them matter most to Belfast and it would deliver together in ways that evidence tells them would make a real difference.
- **Resourcing:** Delivery would require joint resourcing and effort, (i.e. staff time, services or investment). Should be a leadership commitment to jointly resource the initiative.

It was reported that the draft emerging action plans remained live documents and would be subject to further discussions and refinement with Members and wider stakeholders as set out in the report.

It was reported that Phase Two Engagement events that had been arranged for September, had now been rescheduled to take place throughout October and into November, with a greater focus, discussion and input around the strategic intent and scope of the priority areas, how success would be measured in terms of stretch goals and the high-level delivery action plans.

The following events were proposed and would be publicised online, via the VCSE panel network and via posters in local community-based assets and facilities:

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EVENT	DATE & TIME	VENUE
North Belfast Workshop	11 Oct. 10am-1pm	Girdwood
Online Workshop	12 Oct 7pm-9pm	Online
South Belfast Workshop	13 Oct. 10am-1pm	Crescent Arts Centre
East Belfast Workshop	18 Oct. 10am – 1pm	Skainos
Online Workshop	19 Oct. 2pm–4pm	Online
Communities of Interest	7 Nov. 5pm – 7pm	City Hall
City Centre Workshop	8 Nov. 10am – 1pm	City Hall
West Belfast Workshop	10 Nov. 10am – 1pm	St. Comgall's

In addition, two online and facilitated engagement sessions would be organised for those that were not able to make the above events or would feel more comfortable attending an online session. A business and development workshop had also been arranged to take place on 27th October at Queen's University, together with the continued use of a range of engagement tools, including Your Say Belfast platform, to extend the reach and enable people to input into the process.

An independent facilitator was also being procured to help host the engagement events and to prepare an independent report with an analysis of the main issues raised during the sessions and how this was reflected in the refreshed Belfast Agenda and action plans.

Feedback from the phase 2 engagement would be reflected in the draft strategy document and action plans. These would be brought through the Community Planning Partnership, established CPP Delivery Boards and relevant Council Committees for consideration and approval in advance of being published for a 12-week formal consultation period. It was highlighted that an easy read version would also be created to help make the document more accessible.

The Committee:

- Noted the progress of the development of the refreshed Belfast Agenda and supporting four-year Delivery Action Plans as set out in the report;
- Note the update around Phase 2 engagement, which had been endorsed by the Community Planning Partnership; and
- Noted the timeline for progressing the revised Belfast Agenda to public consultation.

Chairperson

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Planning Committee

Tuesday, 18th October, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Whyte (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff, Councillor Hussey;
Alderman Rodgers;
Councillors Bower, Carson, Matt Collins,
Douglas, Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey,
Hutchinson, Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.
- In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management);
Mr. K. Sutherland, Principal Planning Officer;
Ms. L. Walshe, Senior Planning Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 31st August and 20th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd October, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Extinguishments

Alloa Street

The Committee noted the Alloa Street Extinguishment Order.

Corrib Avenue

The Committee noted the Corrib Avenue Extinguishment Order.

Request for additional meeting of the Planning Committee to support roll-in of new Planning Portal

The Planning Manager informed the Committee that, due to the precise “go live date” of the new Regional Planning IT System not being known, it would be prudent to schedule an additional meeting of the Planning Committee to allow for any change in the timetable for implementation of the new IT system.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th October, 2022**

The Committee agreed that, if deemed necessary by the Director of Planning and Building Control and the City Solicitor, a meeting of the Committee would take place in week commencing 19th December.

Request to hold a Pre-emptive Committee Site Visit

The Committee agreed to hold a pre-emptive site visit in respect of the following application:

- **LA04/2022/1284/F** - Lands bounded by Library Street (to south); Stephen Street (to west); Little Donegall Street (to north); and Union Street (to east), Belfast BT1 2JE. Erection of Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) development comprising 862 units with additional use of accommodation by further or higher education institutions outside term time, communal facilities, internal amenity courtyard, cycle stores, active ground floor uses including cafe and retail, and associated bin stores and plant and public realm improvements to surrounding footpaths

Planning Decisions Issued

The Committee noted the Planning decisions issued between 8th September and 10th October 2022.

Appeals

Appeals Notified and Decisions

The Committee noted the Appeals Decisions.

LA04/2022/0810/F Change of Use from Shop Unit to Hot Food Take Away. Unit 2 142 Stewartstown Road opposite junction of Stewartstown Road and Suffolk Road, Belfast BT11 9NB.

The Planning Manager informed the Committee that the application had been submitted to the Council in April 2022 and that Section 60 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 enabled an applicant to lodge an appeal for non-determination to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) if a decision had not been taken by the Council within the prescribed time.

He reported that the applicant had submitted a non-determination appeal in July 2022 to the PAC and, as part of the appeal process, the PAC had requested an opinion from the Council as to its position at the appeal and whether planning permission should be granted.

He illustrated the impact of the proposal with site location maps, layout plans and aerial photographs, and he outlined the key issues which had been considered in the assessment of the proposal, that included an acoustic barrier that had been added to the location site.

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He stated that, due to the inclusion of the acoustic barrier and having received no objections from Environmental Health, it was considered that the proposal was acceptable and that officers had recommended that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted, subject to conditions.

The Committee agreed that the Council's position at the appeal would be that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted, subject to conditions.

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)**

**LA04/2022/0915/F AFBI building at Stormont.
Development of new, replacement Animal Health
Sciences Building with General Stores Building,
Post-Mortem Suite and Carcass Incineration Facility,
and associated works at 12 Stoney Road, Belfast.**

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the application to replace the current Animal Health Sciences Building (AHSB) with a new building, to include a general stores building, post-mortem suite and carcass incineration facility, on the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) estate at Stormont.

She illustrated the impact of the proposal with site location and layout plans, aerial photographs and visual impact imaging on adjacent premises, and she outlined the key issues which had been considered in the assessment of the proposed development, that included:

- The principle of the development at the location (including development beyond the settlement development limit);
- Impact on rural character visual amenity;
- Scale, Massing and Design;
- Impact on Built and Archaeological Heritage;
- Impact on Ecology and Natural Heritage;
- Provision of Landscaping and Screening;
- Traffic Movement and Parking;
- Human Health;
- Flooding and Drainage;
- Economic Considerations;
- Pre-application Community Consultation; and
- The consideration of developer contributions.

She explained that the function of the AFBI included management of potentially biohazardous animal disease outbreaks which was considered as an extenuating circumstance for the requirement of additional vehicular entrance and stores building beyond the Settlement Development Limit.

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She informed the Committee that no objections had been received from any statutory or non-statutory consultees and that a final response from the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the applicant, remained outstanding, however, it had not been anticipated that any fundamental issues would be raised.

She reported that, having regard to the Development Plan and other material considerations, that the proposed development had been considered, on balance, to be acceptable.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor Matt Collins,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the application until a response has been received from DAERA NIEA: NED and a detailed Air Quality Assessment is undertaken.

On a recorded vote, two Members voted for the proposal and twelve against and it was declared lost.

<u>For 2</u>	<u>Against 12</u>
Councillors Matt Collins and Groogan.	Councillor Whyte (Chairperson); The High Sheriff, Councillor Hussey; Alderman Rodgers; Councillors Bower, Carson, Douglas, Garrett, Hanvey, Hutchinson, Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Flemming, FM Planning, Dr. A. Carson, Chief Scientific Adviser, DAERA, Ms. J. Uhlemann, Project Sponsor, DAERA, and Mr. A. Shields, RPP Architects, to the meeting.

Mr. Flemming informed the Committee that he was the Agent for the planning application, acting on behalf of the applicant, DAERA. He explained that the application had followed a detailed and constructive pre-application discussion process with the Council and statutory consultees, and a pre-application community consultation process which had generated positive feedback on the high-quality design of the building and landscaping.

He stated that the planning application packaged contained a comprehensive range of drawing, visual material and technical reports and had involved consultations with six statutory consultees and five non-statutory consultees, and he reported that none of the consultees had raised any objections and no third-party representations had been received.

He informed the Committee that approval of the application would be a significant milestone in the creation of a high-quality facility would be an important showcase for Northern

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Ireland's Science infrastructure capacity and leading-edge capability in the animal health and food science sectors.

Dr. Carson outlined the three main functions of the AHSB – Statutory Testing and Analytical Services, Emergency Response Provision and Research. He stated that the proposal would replace the existing 1960s Veterinary Sciences Division main building which was no longer fit for purpose and that the new AHSB would be an industry leading science facility for Northern Ireland of high-quality design which would enhance Northern Ireland's scientific platform and research capabilities.

In response to a question from a Member with regard to the detail of the Air Quality Assessment and nitrogen emissions, the Senior Planning Officer reported that undertaking of the Air Quality Assessment would take place once the technical specification of the incinerator had been finalised and that Environmental Health had indicated that it was content with the information submitted but would require a final Air Quality Management Plan once the specification had been agreed and in advance of the incinerator being installed.

Mr. Shields confirmed that the acquisition of an incinerator would be undertaken during the construction process, having regard to the procurement process, and would be a bespoke piece of equipment that would be assessed in due course.

The Planning Manager added that the consultation with Shared Environmental Services would be extended to include consideration of potential impacts on Belfast Lough as well as nitrogen emissions, as appropriate. The City Solicitor added that Air Quality would be considered in advance of a decision notice having been issued.

The Chairperson put the officers' recommendation to the Committee, namely, to grant approval to the application, and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and to resolve any outstanding issues raised by DAERA NIEA: NED and additional consultation with Shared Environmental Services upon no objection to the application.

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

<u>For 12</u>	<u>Against 1</u>	<u>No Vote 1</u>
Councillor Whyte (Chairperson); The High Sheriff, Councillor Hussey; Alderman Rodgers; Councillors Bower, Carson, Douglas, Garrett, Hanvey, Hutchinson, Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.	Councillor Groogan.	Councillor Matt Collins.

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Planning Publication Policy Update

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an update on the Planning Publication Policy, which set out how authorities would manage personal information in the new Regional Planning IT System.

He explained that, as part of the preparation work for the new IT system, a revised Planning Publication Policy had been developed and agreed by all of the regional planning authorities, including Mid Ulster Council which was not part of the regional project.

The Committee noted the report.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following four 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 4 items 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 (Northern Ireland) 2014.

LDP Update

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an update on engagement with the Department for Infrastructure with regard to approval of the proposed wording of an additional policy for inclusion in the final adopted Local Development Plan Strategy, -SP1A Managing Growth and Supporting Infrastructure Delivery.

He advised the Committee of the current position of the Department for Infrastructure and potential next steps. He informed the Members of a request which had been received from the Department for access to the responses received in respect of a public consultation which had been undertaken by the Council for draft Policy SP1A.

The Committee:

- noted the engagement with the DfI and the iterations of Policy SP1A;
- noted the assessment of the wording for the versions of the draft Policy SP1A proposed with supporting narratives by both Council officers and the DfI;
- agreed that it was minded to endorse the proposed wording for Policy SP1A and the Justification and Amplification;
- deferred the endorsement of the proposed draft SP1A with the supporting Justification and Amplification, and that briefing

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sessions are undertaken with Members in advance of submission;

- agreed that correspondence to DfI would be circulated to Members of the Committee in advance of submission; and
- agreed not to accede to the request from DfI for copies of the detailed public consultation responses in respect of the draft Policy SP1A at this time.

Renewal of Scheme of Delegation for Planning

The Committee considered a report which outlined that, in accordance with legislation, the Council was required to review its current Scheme of Delegation every three years and that it was next due to be reviewed by January 2023.

The report proposed to renew the existing Scheme of Delegation, subject to two minor changes, with a view to a more in-depth review at some point in the future and explained that it would be considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and, in accordance with legislation, the Scheme of Delegation must be agreed by the Department for Infrastructure.

The Committee noted the report.

Update on Improvement of the Regional Planning System

The Director of Planning and Building Control provided the Committee with an update on the Regional Planning Improvement Work that had been progressed since the publication of the DfI Review of the Implementation of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (published in February 2022), the NI Audit Office Review of the Planning System (published in February 2022) and the Public Accounts Committee Report Planning In Northern Ireland (published in March 2022).

The Committee noted the report.

Update on the replacement Planning Portal

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an update on the project to replace the Planning Portal.

The Committee noted the update.

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Issue raised in advance by a Member

City Architect - Councillor Groogan

Councillor Groogan explained that she was proposing that a report would be brought back to the Committee which would explore the option of having a city architect for the Council and provided examples of other local authorities across Ireland and the United Kingdom which availed of a City Architect or Architect Division.

The Committee agreed that a report would be brought back which would explore the possibility of a City Architect, outlining the finance and resource implications.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 19th October, 2022

MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Matt Collins (Chairperson);
Alderman Sandford; and
Councillors Canavan, Gormley, Howard, M. Kelly,
T. Kelly, Magee, McAteer, McCann, McCoubrey,
McCullough, McKeown, Murray, Nelson, Thompson and
Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and
Civic Services;
Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;
Mr. K. Bloomfield, HMO Unit Manager;
Ms. C. Young, Marketing and Communication Coordinator;
Ms. L. Hillis, Principal Building Control Surveyor;
Ms. M. Gallagher, Senior Building Control Surveyor;
Mr. J. Cunningham, Senior Licensing Officer;
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were received.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd October, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal Civic Services declared a conflict of interest in item 2(d) Application for the Renewal of a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence – St. Malachy's College Old Boys' Association, 442 Antrim Road in that she knew one of the applicants and left the meeting whilst the matter was being discussed.

Delegated Matters

THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO IT UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(d)

HMO Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority

The Committee noted a list of licences for Houses in Multiple Occupation which had, since its last meeting, been issued under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority

The Committee noted a list of applications for licences which had, since its last meeting, been approved under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

**Application for the Grant of a Seven-Day Annual
Outdoor Entertainments Licence - The Central
Catholic Club, 43a Rosemary Street**

The Building Control Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To consider an application for the grant of a Seven-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for the following premises, based on the Council's standard conditions, to provide outdoor musical entertainment for:**

<u>Area and Location</u>	<u>Ref. No.</u>	<u>Applicant</u>
Central Catholic Club, 43a Rosemary Street Belfast, BT1 1QB	WK/2020/02063	Patrick McAviney Club Chairman

- 1.2 A location map is attached at Appendix 1.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Taking into account the information presented and any representations made in respect of the application you are required to make a decision to either:**

- a) Approve the application for the grant of the 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence, or**
- b) Approve the application for the grant with special conditions, or**
- c) Refuse the application for the grant of the 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence.**

- 2.2 If an application is refused, or special conditions are attached to the licence to which the applicant does not consent, then the applicant may appeal the Council's decision within 21 days of notification of that decision to the County Court. In the case that the applicant subsequently decides to appeal, outdoor**

entertainment may not be provided until any such appeal is determined.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 The applicant has applied to provide musical entertainment in the form of live music, within an outdoor area adjacent to the Club's main building. The club has an existing indoor Entertainments Licence.

3.2 A layout plan is attached at Appendix 2.

3.3 The standard days and hours for an Outdoor Entertainments Licence are:

- Monday to Sunday: 11.30 am to 11.00 pm.

Members are reminded that all applications for the grant of Outdoor Entertainments Licences must be brought before Committee for consideration.

Representations

3.4 No written representation has been received as a result of the public notice of the application.

PSNI

3.5 The Police Service of Northern Ireland has been consulted in relation to the application and has confirmed that it has no objection to the application.

NIFRS

3.6 The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has been consulted in relation to the outdoor application and has confirmed that it has no objection to the application.

Health, Safety and Welfare

3.7 The applicant is developing a management plan outlining how the area will be managed to ensure the health and safety of their patrons and staff.

Noise

- 3.8 The applicant has provided the Service with a noise impact assessment report from an acoustic consultant for the outdoor area, which has been forwarded to our Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) for evaluation.
- 3.9 The provision of only amplified background music and the performance of live small acoustic bands is proposed, and should Members be minded to grant the Outdoor Entertainments Licence the licensee is content for a special condition to this effect be placed on the licence.
- 3.10 Members are reminded that the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 gives the Council additional powers in relation to the control of entertainment noise after 11.00 pm.

Applicant

- 3.11 The applicant, and/or their representative will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to the application.
- 3.12 A supplementary letter from the applicant outlining their reasons for applying for an outdoor licence is attached at Appendix 3.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

None.

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

There are no issues associated with this report.”

The Committee approved the application for the grant of the 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence.

**Application for the Renewal of a Seven-Day Annual
Indoor Entertainments Licence - St. Malachy's College
Old Boys' Association, 442 Antrim Road**

The Committee agreed to defer the application for the renewal of a seven-day annual indoor entertainments licence due to the Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal Civic Services' declaration of interest, in that she knew one of the applicants.

There was also the matter of the footage received from the objector which showed the identity of individuals and would therefore contravene General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) if played to the Committee before identities were pixelated.

**Application for the Grant of an Amusement Permit –
Playland, 24-28 Bradbury Place**

The Building Control Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To consider an application for the grant of an Amusement Permit under the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (the Order).**

<u>Premises and Location</u>	<u>Ref. No.</u>	<u>Applicant</u>
Playland (formerly Mavericks) 24-28 Bradbury Place Belfast, BT7 1RS	WK/20200431	Spiros Poker Limited 22 Barrack Street Armagh, BT60 1AD

- 1.2 The Director of Spiros Poker Limited is Sonia Mullen.**

- 1.3 A location map is attached at Appendix 1.**

- 1.4 A layout plan of the premises is attached at Appendix 2.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 In considering the application for the grant of an Amusement Permit, the Committee shall have regard to the Order and to Belfast City Council's Amusement Permit Policy, as follows:**

- a) The fitness of the applicant to hold a Permit having regard to his character, reputation and financial standing, and**
- b) The fitness of any other person by whom the business is to be carried on under the Permit would be managed, or for whose benefit that business would be carried on,**
- c) In considering the fitness of a body corporate to hold an amusement permit, the Council shall also have regard to the character, reputation and financial standing of the directors of the body corporate and any other persons who have executive control of it and who have a financial interest in it, as if the permit were, or were proposed to be, held by them jointly,**
- d) Representation, if any, from the sub-divisional commander of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in whose sub-division the premises are situated, and**

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- e) Representation, if any, as a result of the public notices of advertisement.

You are then required to make a decision based on the following options set out under the Order.

You must refuse the application unless satisfied that:

- a) The applicant is a fit person to hold an Amusement Permit; and
- b) The applicant will not allow the business proposed to be carried on under the Amusement Permit to be managed by, or carried on for the benefit of, a person other than the applicant who would himself be refused the grant of an Amusement Permit.

Thereafter:-

- 1) You may refuse the application after hearing any representations from third parties, or
- 2) You may grant the application, subject to the mandatory condition that the premises are not to be used for an unlawful purpose or as a resort of persons of known bad character, and
- 3) You may also grant the application subject to discretionary conditions outlined in the Order relating to the illumination of the premises, advertising of, and window displays on the premises and the display of information notices.

2.2 Should you be minded to refuse the application for the grant of an Amusement Permit, or grant the Permit, subject to any discretionary conditions, you are required to advise the applicant of your intention to do so and you must afford the applicant the opportunity to make representations at a specified Licensing Committee meeting on the matter before making a final determination on the application.

2.3 If, upon hearing the applicant, you refuse the application for the grant of an Amusement Permit or decide to grant the application subject to discretionary conditions, the applicant may within 21 days from the date on which notice of the decision is served on him, appeal to the county court.

3.0 Background

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Licensing Committee is responsible for determining all applications relating to the grant of Amusement Permits.
- 3.2 Planning permission was granted on 23rd September 2013 for a change of use from a fast-food outlet to a coffee shop and amusement arcade on the ground floor.
- 3.3 Members are reminded that, at the Committee meeting on 11th March 2014, an amusement permit was granted for 28 Bradbury Place for a gaming area to the rear of the ground floor of the premises, the area to the front being used as a café.
- 3.4 An amusement permit has been in force for the ground floor since 2017.
- 3.5 The current applicant company, Spiros Poker Ltd., has now taken over the amusement arcade. As there is no mechanism within the Order to enable the transfer of a permit from one company to another, an application must therefore be made for the grant of an Amusement Permit.
- 3.6 The Committee is, therefore, in the first instance, asked to consider if it is content to grant the amusement permit to this new applicant, to operate the existing amusement arcade as it is.
- 3.7 Additionally, planning permission was obtained on 28th March, 2022 for the change of use from a coffee shop to extend the amusement arcade to encompass all the ground floor. This will increase the floor area of the existing arcade by approximately one third of its current size.
- 3.8 There is also no mechanism within the Order to enable consideration of the variation of a permit, hence an application must be made for grant of an Amusement Permit.
- 3.9 Should Members be minded to grant the amusement permit to the new applicant for the existing arcade you are then asked to consider the application to extend the floor area of the amusement permit.

Application Details

- 3.10 The application is for a total of 55 gaming machines, giving an increase of 10 machines over the existing arcade; all of which are to pay out a maximum all cash prize of £25.00. Admission to the arcade is restricted to persons aged 18 or over.

- 3.11 The proposed opening hours of the premises, as specified on the application, are:**

Monday to Saturday:	09.00 am to 02.00 am the following morning, and
Sunday:	10:00 am to 02:00 am the following morning.

NIFRS

- 3.13 The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has been consulted and we await its response. The Amusement Permit will not be issued until it has confirmed that it has no objection to the application.**

Complaints

- 3.14 The Building Control Service has received no complaints concerning the premises.**

Applicant

- 3.15 A representative from Spiros Poker Ltd. will be available at the meeting to discuss any matters relating to the grant of the permit.**

Planning Matters

- 3.16 The rear of the ground floor of the premises has operated as a gaming centre since 2017, planning permission having been granted on 23rd September 2013 for a change of use from a fast-food outlet to a coffee shop and amusement arcade on the ground floor.**
- 3.17 On 28th March 2022, planning permission was obtained for the proposed change of use from a coffee shop to the extension of an amusement arcade on the ground floor.**
- 3.18 In an important Court of Appeal decision in June 1999, it was confirmed that the Council, in determining applications for Amusement Permits, may take into account planning considerations but should be slow to differ from the views of the Planning Authority.**
- 3.19 The Court also confirmed that the Council can take into account matters such as location, structure, character and impact on neighbours and the surrounding area.**

- 3.20 A copy of the latest planning permission is attached at Appendix 3.

4.0 Key Issues

Amusement Permit Policy

- 4.1 The Belfast City Council Amusement Permit Policy, ratified by the Council on 1st May 2013, outlines those matters which may be taken into account in determining any amusement permit application and indicates that each application must be assessed on its own merits.
- 4.2 All applications for the grant of an amusement permit are assessed against the Amusement Permit Policy.

The key objectives of this policy are to:-

1. Promote the retail vibrancy and regeneration of Belfast;
2. Enhance the tourism and cultural appeal of Belfast by protecting its image and built heritage;
3. Support and safeguard residential communities in Belfast;
4. Protect children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling;
5. Respect the need to prevent gambling from being a source of crime and disorder.

- 4.3 The Policy consists of two components which are considered below:

1. Legal requirements under the 1985 Order

- 4.4 The Committee must have regard to the legal requirements under the 1985 Order relating to:

(a) The character, reputation and financial standing of the applicant:

- 4.5 References for those associated with the application are attached as Appendix 4 to the report for consideration.

(b) The nature of the premises and activity proposed:

- 4.6 To ensure that the nature of the premises proposed is suitable for this location Members may consider how the premises are illuminated, the form of advertising and window display, and how notices are displayed on the premises. Whilst the appearance of amusement arcades is considered a Planning matter, Members may still wish to be satisfied that the facade

integrates with adjacent frontages. Photographs of the frontage are attached at Appendix 5.

(c) Opinions of the Police:

- 4.7** The Police Service of Northern Ireland has been consulted and has confirmed that it has no objections to the application. A copy of its correspondence is attached at Appendix 6.

(d) Submissions from the general public:

- 4.8** No objections have been received as a result of the public notices placed in the three local newspapers.

2. Assessment criteria for suitability of a location

- 4.9** The premises in question have been operating as an amusement arcade since 2017. The suitability of the location for an amusement arcade was assessed previously in August 2013, at the time of the original planning application. Both planning permission and an amusement permit were granted for the premises at that time.
- 4.10** However, subsequently planning permission was obtained on 28 March 2022 permitting an increase to the ground floor area of the amusement arcade by approximately a third (64m²) involving the change of use of the café at the front of the premises.
- 4.11** Therefore, while the suitability of the location of the premises for an amusement arcade was assessed initially in 2013, this proposed extension to the amusement arcade space means that it must be re-assessed based on the criteria outlined in the Policy.
- 4.12** There are five criteria set out in the Policy which should typically be considered when assessing the suitability of a location for an amusement arcade. These are detailed below as they relate to this application.

Evaluation of the application site against criteria outlined in the Amusement Permit Policy

(a) Retail vibrancy and regeneration of Belfast:

- 4.13** The application premises are the ground floor of 28 Bradbury Place, a commercial frontage which, according to draft BMAP, is situated outside Belfast City Centre retail core and located in the city centre remainder and on an arterial route.

- 4.14 The premises are situated on a commercial frontage comprising a mix of uses including bars, restaurants, a convenience supermarket, hairdressers, etc. It is currently adjacent on one side to a bar (Laverys /the Woodworkers), and on the other side to a cleared site that formerly accommodated a hot food bar/restaurant (most recently Bishops fish and chips). This adjacent site is the subject of a proposal, now under construction, to provide student accommodation (56 studios and 100 cluster bedrooms) on the upper floors with a retail unit and student reception area on the ground floor. The retail unit is proposed for development next to the application site. This notwithstanding, the proposal does not break up a continuous shopping frontage as there is a bar on one side of it and the application site itself is currently in café use as opposed to retail use.

b) Cumulative build-up of amusement arcades in a particular location:

- 4.15 This criterion seeks to avoid clustering of these uses in the interest of promoting the retail vibrancy and regeneration of Belfast, which is the first key objective of the Amusement Permit Policy.
- 4.16 Whilst there are no other amusement arcades on this commercial frontage there are 3 others operating nearby within approximately 200m walking distance of the application premises. These are:
- Players, 22-23 Shaftesbury Square (27 machines)
 - Oasis gaming centre 1-7 Donegall Road/14 Shaftesbury Square (54 machines)
 - Onassis Amusements, Second floor, 25-41 Botanic Avenue (142 machines)
- 4.17 In addition to the assessment of cumulative build-up, Members may wish to more broadly consider the issue of the proliferation of permits and the effect of same on the character and amenity of an area.

c) Impact on the image and profile of Belfast:

- 4.18 The application premises is not a listed building, has no neighbouring property which is a tourism asset, nor is it located at a Gateway location. The proposal is not considered to adversely impact on the image and profile of Belfast.

(d) Proximity to residential use:

(i) - predominantly residential in character

- 4.19 The application premises are in the main ground floor commercial frontage of Bradbury Place, where there are a mix of uses including restaurants, public houses, and retail units. There are some residential buildings in the area, primarily blocks of flats in neighbouring streets. There is also newly constructed student accommodation building over the nearby railway line connecting to Botanic Station and, as noted in response to criterion (a) above, student accommodation is also currently under construction next to the application site. This proposed accommodation consists of a ground floor retail unit that will be developed adjacent to the application site. Overall, the area is primarily characterised by a mix of uses typically found in a City Centre location and is not one that is predominantly residential in character.

(ii) – non-residential property that is immediately adjacent to residential property

- 4.20 The nearest residential properties to the application premises are Flats 1-54, Tollgate House, Bradbury Place, which are approximately 20-30m from the application site on the opposite side of the road. These residential properties are not immediately adjacent to the application premises. Furthermore, the student accommodation under construction next to the application site is to have a ground floor retail unit adjacent to the premises.

(e) Proximity to schools, youth centres and residential institutions for vulnerable people

- 4.21 There are no schools, youth centres, or residential institutions for vulnerable people within 200m of the application premises.

Conclusion

- 4.22 The Council's Amusement Permit Policy seeks to avoid clustering of these uses in the interest of promoting the retail vibrancy and regeneration of Belfast, which is the first key objective of the Policy. This means that the cumulative build-up of amusement arcades in a particular location should be assessed.
- 4.23 The application premises currently have 45 machines, with the proposal increasing this figure by 11 to give a total of 56 machines (an increase of 24.4%). This would give a total provision of 279 machines in this area (an overall increase of 4.4%).

- 4.24 It is worth noting that, while the floorspace allocated to amusement arcade use is increasing by approximately 33%, the number of proposed machines is increasing by 24.4%.
- 4.25 Members will be aware that councils cannot impose a restriction on the number of machines under the amusement permit legislation.
- 4.26 Members are reminded that the Committee refused an application to extend the amusement permit for the premises at 22-23 Shaftesbury Square into the adjoining vacant building at its meeting on 21st September 2016. This was on the basis that the application failed to comply with two of the five criteria set out within the Council's Amusement Permit Policy in terms of (i) the cumulative build-up of amusement arcades in a particular location and (ii) the impact of the arcade upon the image and profile of Belfast.
- 4.27 Whilst the application premises may comply with criterion b) of the policy in that this application will not increase the number of amusement arcades along this commercial frontage, there may be an issue in relation to cumulative build-up of amusement arcades at this location which impacts upon the character and amenity of the area, which the Committee may wish to consider. A land-use map of area is attached at Appendix 7.
- 4.28 Members are reminded that, in addition to the above legal requirements and assessment criteria, the Committee may take into account any matter which is deemed relevant.
- 4.29 Members may depart from the Policy where it is appropriate to do so, although it is envisaged that this should only happen in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.30 The Council's Amusement Permit Policy is attached at Appendix 7.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 5.1 Administration of Amusement Permit applications is included in current budgetary estimates.

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

- 6.1 None.

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The Building Control Manager advised that confirmation had recently been received from the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service that they had no objection to the application for the grant of an Amusement Permit.

After consideration the Committee approved the application for the grant of an Amusement Permit by Spiros Poker Limited, including the extension of the amusement arcade on the ground floor into the former coffee shop area.

Non-Delegated Matters

**Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment)
Act (Northern Ireland) 2021**

The Building Control Manager provided an update on the trial period which the Committee, at its meeting on 13th April 2022, had agreed to extend for a further six months, with authority delegated to the Director of Planning and Building Control to deal with all Article 44A extension applications both for City centre and non-city centre locations in the manner which had been previously agreed by the Committee. He provided a summary position whereby following the April Committee Meeting the Committee agreed to offer no objection to Article 44A extension applications for Biddy Duffy's and Horatio Todd's up to 19th October 2022 and that each applicant be requested:

- i. to agree to withdraw all Article 44A extension applications beyond 19th October, to allow officers to provide at the Committee meeting in October an update on any issues which had arisen from the operation of the premises during the 9-month trial period, given that both premises were located in close proximity to residential accommodation; and
- ii. to agree not to provide entertainment after 2.00 a.m., unless an Entertainments Licence was in place which expressly permitted entertainment to take place beyond that time.

To date, Biddy Duffy's had only once availed of the additional hours of operation permitted by their Article 44A applications whilst Horatio Todd's had not used any of their additional hours applications.

The licensee of Biddy Duffy's had advised that they were not using their additional hours because customers were no longer interested in late nights, post-covid, whilst the licensee for Horatio Todd's would not be applying for any further additional hours claiming that they cost too much in legal fees and provide no return.

Given that the premises were close to residential properties, the intention of the extended trial period was to consider whether the premises operating to the later hours, or any period immediately following their termination, led to undue inconvenience to persons residing in the vicinity.

The Building Control Manager advised that despite a prolonged trial period of over 9 months, there was still no evidence to provide the Committee in relation to the impact, if any, of these bars selling alcohol to 2.00 am on their local neighbourhood. He added that Coronavirus had had a significant impact on the licensed trade and it would seem

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that the introduction of new legislation to permit longer opening hours had not had the widespread uptake that might have been expected. When reporting to the Committee in April, it was anticipated that trade in the industry and tourism generally would pick up, and that there would be greater interest from pubs and hotels in availing of the opportunity to serve alcohol until 2.00 am. No doubt the more recent pressures that businesses were enduring due to the cost of living and energy crisis had had a further impact on recovery and, in turn, their desire to avail of late licences.

After consideration the Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to deal with all such applications in the manner previously agreed on the proviso that such applications did not relate to premises where the provision of entertainment had been subject to significant objections or prosecutions in the past and that the situation would be kept under review and any emerging problems that may arise be reported to the Committee.

Chairperson

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Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 13th October, 2022

MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Walsh (Chairperson);
Councillors Bower, de Faoite, Donnelly, Ferguson,
Gormley, Haire, McCabe, McCann,
McKeown, McLaughlin, Murray, Newton, Sandford, Smyth,
Spratt and Thompson.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mrs. D. Caldwell, Climate Commissioner;
Mr. T. McDonald, Emergency Coordination Officer
Ms. C. Carleton, Belfast Emergency Preparedness Group
Mr. K. Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and anti poverty
Ms. A. Diver, Climate Programme Manager
Mr. J. McKearney, Project Support Assistant;
Mr. R. Treacy, Energy and CO2 Manager
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for an inability to attend were noted from Councillor Maghie.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th August were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st September.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Overview of multi-agency partnership approach to build community resilience in flooding hotspots by the Emergency Planning Team (Video)

The Chairperson welcomed the Emergency Coordination Officer and Claire Carleton Resilience Manager for the Belfast Emergency Preparedness Group. She explained that her role was to ensure that everyone worked in partnership and that she was also part of the Regional Community Resilience Group which was formed as a result of the Strong report in 2015/16 after flooding in the Northwest of Northern Ireland. Ms Carleton explained that the video was put together for COP 26 and that it gave an overview of multi-agency groups that

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worked together to look at how they could introduce community resilience in Northern Ireland. Since that time there was a methodology developed to look at what communities they should engage with, initially targeting flooding, but over the years it had grown wider with over 17 organisations working together with around 30 community groups throughout Northern Ireland. This provided a forum to facilitate coordination, communication, consistency, capacity building and partnership working. They focused on community resilience that affected Northern Ireland. One of the outcomes of this work was the co-development of household and community emergency plans which allowed communities to manage their own local arrangements. Local groups in Belfast were formed and lead people identified who could be contacted to manage their own arrangements in an emergency. There are around 7 community resilience groups in Belfast, most of which were established around 2012/2013 on the back of severe flooding. Community resilience provided the communities with a voice.

In terms of Belfast City Council, these groups have been invaluable in terms of emergency response or flash flooding or severe weather episodes, officers had a direct link to those communities which allowed them to be more prepared and get ready for the severe weather episode. They could access their community container, forewarn neighbours, protect their properties and hopefully protect their homes. The Emergency Planning coordinator referred the Committee to another document entitled 'Building Resilience Together' which gave guidance in relation to emergency preparedness.

The Chairperson thanked the officers for their presentation and, after discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the video.

Update on Electric Vehicles Infrastructure

The Climate Commissioner referred to the report that had been circulated in advance to the Committee and said that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the current status of the Belfast City Council Electric Vehicle (EV) programme of activity and to make recommendations on next steps. She said that decisions were required in relation to the use of Belfast City Council car parks and land for the purposes of supporting EV infrastructure (EVI) in the city, and the development of an EV strategy for Belfast.

The Climate commissioner reminded Members that the ban on fossil fuel vehicle manufacture from 2030 onwards in the UK had created an increasing demand for easily accessible EV charging infrastructure in most UK cities. She continued that a network of electric vehicle infrastructure was an essential part of a shift towards zero emissions transport and achieving Belfast's aims of an 80% reduction on emissions levels by 2030. However, she advised that Belfast was currently in the bottom 20% of UK local authorities for EV charge points per person. A stretch goal of installing at least 38 EV charging devices per year in Belfast (year over a baseline of 55 EV charging devices in 2022) had been included in the draft Belfast Agenda and draft Economic Strategy. This approach was consistent with the aims of the Department for Infrastructure, with the launch of the EV Infrastructure Task-Force in December 2021.

The capital costs of EV infrastructure were high so, to accelerate the transition, the UK government had set aside £400m through the Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund for Local Government to avail of capital and revenue costs to install EV charging in residential areas that lacked off-street parking. This funding was competitive and heavily

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promoted to Local Authorities, which were required to work with private sector charge point Operators (CPO) to deliver the service.

The Climate Commissioner went on to outline the various funding opportunities that were available to Belfast.

The Committee noted that officers had been approached by a number of third parties in relation to existing EVI infrastructure and potential upgrades, and supported Legal Service's suggestion that a call for expressions of interest was undertaken to test the market regarding the potential use of Council owned land to support EVI. It also noted that ESB had secured funding through the Levelling Up fund to upgrade existing EVI, and supported officers from Climate, Physical Programmes and Legal Services proceeding to negotiate terms with ESB for the continued use of the existing sites to enable continuity of service.

The Climate Commissioner outlined that an opportunity existed to bring forward three to four leisure centre sites for inclusion on an EVI reserve list within the INTERREG funded FASTER project funded by SEUPB, and supported officers progressing same. She referred Members to the recommendations in the report and asked that they support the recommendation that up to £30k be allocated from existing budget to support the development of a Belfast EV strategy.

Members agreed that given the growing size of need, the Council should be going beyond looking at installing charge points on its own land to include land owned by others, for example supermarkets and schools. While Council is a significant landowner this land is not located in residential areas where the EVI is needed.

A Member raised the need to future proof EVI so it is accessible to all and asked officers to pick this up in the EVI strategy.

A Member requested that Belfast City Council should write to the Department for Infrastructure Minister in relation to access to on street charging where off-street charging isn't an option; and to write to the Department for Communities Minister to ask for guidance for those on the mobility scheme and how they might access charging points without creating barriers on the footpaths.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to the recommendations as outlined.

Issues raised in advance by Members

Energy Efficiency Education Programme for citizens

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Smith proposed

"We call on Belfast City Council to develop an energy efficiency campaign to educate and inform the citizens of this city around how to conserve energy use and attempt to reduce the financial pressures households will face, during spiralling increases. We plan for this

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campaign to work alongside relevant partners in both government and the community sector, to maximise the strength of the messaging. To seek to go beyond our City Matters magazine and online outlets, for a targeted approach to reach the most vulnerable and to make this information as accessible as possible”

The proposal was seconded by Councillor de Faoite and agreed by the Committee

New Ireland Forum and Citizens Assemblies

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor de Faoite proposed:

“That the Council write again to the Taoiseach’s office regarding the establishment of a New Ireland Forum for the 21st Century, alongside a series of comprehensive Citizens’ Assemblies, to examine the practical, social and economic aspects of a New Ireland.”

This was seconded by Councillor McCabe.

The Members of the Committee asked for a vote on the proposal. On the recorded vote 10 members voted for the proposal and 7 voted against the proposal and it was declared carried.

For 10	Against 7
Councillors Walsh, McKeown, de Faoite, Donnelly, Ferguson, Gormley, McCabe, McCann, McLaughlin and Smyth.	Against 7 Aldermen Haire and Sandford and Councillors Bower, Murray, Newton, Spratt and Thompson.

Chairperson

Standards and Business Committee

Tuesday, 25th October, 2022

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Hanvey (Chairperson);
Councillors Canavan, Corr, Douglas, Duffy, Ferguson, Gormley,
Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Long, Lyons, McAteer, McCabe,
McCullough, McDonough-Brown, Pankhurst and Verner.

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal
and Civic Services
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors de Faoite and Flynn.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 27th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 3rd October.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Motions

Citizen's Forum for Belfast

Moved by Councillor Duffy,
Seconded by Councillor Corr,

That the motion in relation to a Citizen's Forum for Belfast be referred to the Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

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

Public Transport Network

The Committee agreed that the motion in relation to Public Transport Network be adopted:

**Moved by Alderman Dorrian,
Seconded by Councillor Spratt,**

“That this Council reaffirms its support for the further development of the public transport network in the Greater Belfast area and calls upon the Department for Infrastructure and Translink to undertake a feasibility and cost study into the project known as the ‘Belfast Circle Line’, as part of the city’s vision for its continued growth and development.”

Abortion Services

Moved by Councillor Corr,
Seconded by Councillor Duffy,

That the motion in relation to Abortion Services, be adopted.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor Lyons,

That the motion in relation to Abortion Services be referred to the Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

On a vote, five Members voted for the amendment and eleven against and it was declared lost.

The proposal standing in the name of Councillor Corr was put as the substantive motion and on a vote, eleven Members voted for the proposal and six against and it was declared carried.

A copy of the motion is set out hereunder:

**Moved by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor Matt Collins,**

“This Council notes the third anniversary of the decriminalisation of abortion which was marked by women and other activists in Belfast City Centre.

The Council also notes that services have yet to be officially commissioned despite the decriminalisation of abortion, and that the

information provided on the Northern Trust website is unacceptably lacking.

This Council considers this inaction to be an abject failure on behalf of the Health Minister Robin Swann and the wider Executive, and recognises the urgency with which action needs to be taken.

Given the failure to provide adequate reproductive healthcare, this Council acknowledges both the detrimental impact on women on this city and the incredible work done by activists in organisations like Alliance for Choice and Project Choice, and charities like BPAS and Informing Choices in raising awareness of limited abortion access and providing that access for women who need an abortion.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to write to the Northern Trust to encourage it to provide more information about early medical abortion on their website, and to include the section on abortion on its 'A-Z of services' page.

The Council also agrees to write to Minister Swann to express our disappointment and urge him to convene an emergency meeting of the Executive to officially commission abortion services.

In the event that a prolonged period without Stormont Ministers looks likely, the Council finally agrees to write to the Secretary of State to act where possible to ensure abortion services are commissioned."

Belfast should join C40

The Committee agreed that the motion in relation to Belfast should join C40 be adopted:

**Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson,**

"Belfast City Council notes that the C40 World Mayors Summit occurred between 19 – 21 October 2022 in Buenos Aires.

The Council notes that the C40 World Mayors Summit brings together the mayors of global and regional cities, alongside business leaders, philanthropists, campaigners, youth leaders, scientists and residents, to share bold ideas, showcase innovative solutions and stand together to create a sustainable, prosperous and equitable future.

This Council notes that it already supports the work of the Belfast Climate Commission and is part of the Place-based Climate Action Network ('PCAN').

The Council also notes that the C40 Leadership Standards are as follows:

Plan: City has adopted a resilient and inclusive climate action plan aligned with the 1.5°C ambition of the Paris Agreement, and updates it regularly;

Deliver: In 2024, city remains on track to deliver its climate action plan, contributing to increased resilience, equitable outcomes and halving C40's overall emissions by 2030;

Mainstream: City uses the necessary financial, regulatory and other tools at their disposal to address the climate crisis and mainstreams their equitable climate targets into the most impactful city decision-making processes;

Innovate: City innovates and starts taking inclusive and resilient action to address emissions beyond the direct control of the city government, such as associated with goods and services consumed in their city;

Lead: Mayor and the city demonstrate global climate leadership and inspire others to act in support of the Paris Agreement.

These Leadership Standards will guide C40's collective action until at least 2024.

The Council considers that this PCAN work would be enhanced by Belfast City Council applying to join C40 as an 'Innovator'. An 'Innovator' city is one that shows exceptional climate leadership at the global level, but do not meet the population/size criteria of a 'Megacity.'

Accordingly, the Council resolves to recommend to the Lord Mayor of Belfast that she apply on behalf of Belfast City Council and her office to join the C40 network and, in any event, adhering to the C40's leadership standards."

Rates Freeze

The Interim City Solicitor advised that those parts of the motion which relate to a Council rates freeze were not competent as setting the rate is a legal obligation and must go through a process.

The Committee agreed that those paragraphs of the motion, deemed competent, in relation to writing to Stormont Ministers, the Secretary of State, and the Treasury, urging them to support a financial package of additional funding to local Councils and writing to all

**Standards and Business Committee,
Tuesday, 25th October, 2022**

other councils asking them to adopt a similar position, be referred, in the first instance, to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Chairperson

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Citizen's Forum for Belfast

'Without prejudice to the constitutional position of the citizens of Belfast, this council will establish a citizens' forum to discuss the possibility of future constitutional change and the planning that will be necessary in advance of any referendum.

The Citizen's Forum should also examine the potential benefits for the City of Belfast that would arise from any new constitutional arrangement.

This forum will be reflective of the totality and diversity of our society.

Provision for a Unity referendum is contained within the Good Friday agreement, and prudent planning must take place in advance of any potential referendum to ensure that citizen's views are directly represented.

This Council will also write to the Taoiseach to inform him of this exercise in participative democracy by the citizens of Belfast and encourage the Irish Government to establish an All-Island Citizens Assembly which also includes the views of Belfast citizens."

Proposer: Councillor Beattie

Seconder: Councillor Murphy

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