

Council

MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams,
on Thursday, 1st December, 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, Bradley, Bower, Bunting, Canavan,
Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite,
M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Duffy, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett,
Gormley, Groogan, Hanvey, Heading, 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 Douglas.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Gormley, Groogan, Hutchinson and Thompson declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th November, under the heading "Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund", in that they worked for or were associated with organisations referred to within the report. The Members left the meeting when the item was being discussed.

Councillors Hutchinson, McCullough and Newton declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th November, under the heading "Update on Special Meetings of the Area Working Group – Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund Stage 1 Applications", in that they worked for or were associated with organisations that had applied for funding. They left the room whilst the item was being considered.

Councillor Newton declared an interest in the Motion - Translink - Night-time Provision of Services, as the Company for which he was employed worked with Translink. He left the room whilst the item was being considered.

Minutes of the Council

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 1st November, be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

Resignations

The Lord Mayor advised that Councillor Corr had resigned from the Council and she, along with several other Members from across the Chamber, paid tribute to the excellent work that he had undertaken during his time as a Councillor.

The Lord Mayor also advised that Councillor Pankhurst would be stepping down as a Councillor during December, therefore this would be his last meeting. Several Members from across the Chamber thanked Councillor Pankhurst for his contribution and dedication and wished him well for the future.

Welcome

The Lord Mayor welcomed Councillor Róis-Máire Donnelly to her first meeting of Council and wished her well in her new position as Councillor.

Condolences

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, offered condolences to the family of Ronan Kelly, Continuous Improvement Manager, particularly to his partner Paula Carville, on his recent passing.

The Lord Mayor also paid tribute to Paul Surgenor, HMO Technical Officer, who had recently passed away, and extended condolences to his family.

Councillor McCabe offered condolences to the family of Vicky Phelan, who had recently passed away following a long battle with Cervical Cancer, after receiving a misdiagnosis in 2001. She commended the work that Vicky had undertaken since her diagnosis, having tirelessly campaigned to raise awareness of cervical cancer and for better healthcare. She advised that she had written to the Lord Mayor's office seeking the Council to host an event on 23rd January to mark Cervical Cancer Prevention Week, 23rd January – 29th January 2023.

Several Members referred with sadness to the recent passing of Dr Eamon Phoenix and paid tribute to his excellent work as a historian and broadcaster, noting his contribution to the Council during its Decade of Centenaries Programme.

Councillor de Faoite extended condolences to the family of Robert Morrow, Director of International Leadership Centre at Boston College, he advised that he had been a great friend of Belfast and had been deeply interested in the future success of the city and asked that the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, write to extend condolences to his wife and family.

General/Congratulations

Councillor McCabe, as Chair of the Women's Steering Group, commended the work of the Council and its staff regarding a number of recent Council initiatives and awards that had been achieved which recognised the Council's commitment around the issue of violence against woman.

Councillor O'Hara highlighted that today was World Aids Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about HIV and how it was spread and to commemorate those who had died. He thanked the Lord Mayor and the Members for wearing a red ribbon which he had circulated earlier to help raise awareness. Councillors Murray and Long commended the work of Positive Life and the Rainbow project in supporting people with HIV.

Councillors Smyth and de Faoite congratulated East Belfast GAA in its recent victory achieving Co. Down Junior Camogie Champions.

Councillor McKeown congratulated St Brigid's on winning the County Antrim u20 men's football championship.

Councillor de Faoite commended the Council on Belfast having been listed as one of the world's leading climate action cities by the Carbon Disclosure Project and welcomed the recognition that the Council had been given for its work in relation to the One Million Trees initiative.

Councillor Gormley congratulated South Belfast man Mark Shanks on his recent inclusion on the Republic of Ireland Soccer Squad, he noted his successful debut against Malta, and wished him well in his future career.

Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from both the Alliance and Sinn Fein Parties, of the following changes in membership:

Alliance Party

- Councillor Murray to replace Councillor McMullan as Chairperson of the People and Communities Committee; and
- Councillor Murray to replace The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor M. Kelly, on the Northern Ireland Housing Council.

Sinn Fein

- Councillor Róis-Máire Donnelly to replace former Councillor Corr on the West Belfast Partnership Board;
- Councillor Carson to replace former Councillor Corr on the Northern Ireland Local Government Association;
- Councillor McCann to replace former Councillor Corr on the City Centre Management Board; and
- Councillor Magee to fill the vacancy on Groundwork NI

The Council noted the changes.

Request to Address the Council

The Council noted that this request had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th November, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023-24

At the request of Councillor McLaughlin, the Council agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would consider the structure of the Corporate Management Team.

Amendment

Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund

Moved by Councillor Flynn,
Seconded by Councillor Smyth,

That the Council agrees that the threshold for household income to apply for the fuel poverty fund be reduced to £43,400, as per the Joseph Rowntree guidance as the minimum household income to achieve a decent standard of living and that Option 4 be applied as the Hybrid

Working Model, that is, referral through Strategic Partners and verification through a Citywide Partner.

On a recorded vote, twenty-four Members voted for the amendment and thirty against and it was declared lost.

<u>For 24</u>	<u>Against 30</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); Aldermen Copeland and Rodgers; and Councillors Bower, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Ferguson, Flynn, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Maghie, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McMullan, Murray, Nelson, O'Hara, Smyth and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black); The High Sheriff (Councillor Hussey); Aldermen Dorrian, Haire, McCoubrey and Sandford. Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Duffy, Garrett, T. Kelly, Magee, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCullough, McLaughlin, Murphy, Newton, Pankhurst, Spratt, Verner and Walsh.

Amendment 2

Moved by Councillor Murphy
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the Council agrees, in terms of the delivery model, to adopt Option 2 within the report, to use the Local Strategic Partners, and agrees also that the Ashton Centre replace Intercomm as a Strategic Partner in North Belfast. That it agrees that it would be paid before Christmas, if the groups had the capacity to do so, and that the threshold for household income to apply for the fuel poverty fund be set at 60K. It also agrees that there should be sufficient flexibility in the scheme to include those using direct debits as a payment method.

For clarity, the Council agreed to call a recess to enable officers to circulate the amendment to all Members.

Upon the resumption of the meeting, the Council voted on the amendment.

On a recorded vote, thirty Members voted for the amendment and twenty-four against and it was declared carried.

<u>For 30</u>	<u>Against 24</u>
<p>The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black); The High Sheriff (Councillor Hussey); Aldermen Dorrian, Haire, McCoubrey and Sandford. Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Duffy, Garrett, T. Kelly, Magee, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCullough, McLaughlin, Murphy, Newton, Pankhurst, Spratt, Verner and Walsh.</p>	<p>The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); Aldermen Copeland and Rodgers; and Councillors Bower, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Ferguson, Flynn, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Maghie, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McMullan, Murray, Nelson, O’Hara, Smyth and White.</p>

The amendment was then put to the Council as the substantive motion and accordingly agreed as follows:

“In terms of the delivery model, to adopt Option 2 within the report, to use the Local Strategic Partners, and agrees also that the Ashton Centre replace Intercomm as a Strategic Partner in North Belfast and that the Greater Shankill Community Council replace the Greater Shankill Partnership as a Strategic Partner in West Belfast.

- i. to increase the Hardship fund to £1m, with this allocation to be met, in the first instance, from Departmental underspends and from the realignment of specified reserves, if required;
- ii. it would be paid before Christmas if the groups have the capacity to do so;
- iii. to endorse the Design Principles set out within paragraph 3.7 of the report;
- iv. to endorse the recommendation to establish a Cost-of-Living Task Group, with membership to be confirmed but to include, as a minimum, representatives from the Council, the Department for Communities, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Belfast Area Partnerships, to ensure that effective referral pathways are created to support the most vulnerable within the City;
- v. to endorse the eligibility criteria set out within paragraph 3.11 of the report, subject to an increase in the gross annual household income eligibility to £60k, to ensure that those most in need, including the working poor, were targeted;

- vi. that there be sufficient flexibility in the scheme to ensure that householders using forms of heating other than oil and payment methods other than vouchers are included to include those using direct debits as a payment method and that this be referred to the Cost-of-Living Task Group to work out the detail;
- vii. to note that correspondence had been forwarded to the Department of Communities requesting that consideration be given to potential match funding for the Fuel Hardship Scheme, as requested within the motion;
- viii. to note that the design and delivery of the scheme would have implications internally, particularly for those staff leading on community planning and on community capacity/neighbourhood integration and that assistance would also be required from the Finance and Audit Sections, in terms of ensuring that all necessary requirements and regulations were met;
- ix. to note that, in anticipation of any additional funding becoming available, including through Government departments, Council officers were currently developing a funding framework, details of which would be provided at the Committee meeting in December; and
- x. agreed that a report be submitted to the Committee within the next two months providing an update on the work being undertaken to review the strategic and thematic partners.”

Amendment

Update on Special Meetings of the Area Working Groups – Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund Stage 1 Applications Fund

Moved by Councillor Murray,
Seconded by Councillor O’Hara,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th November, under the heading “Update on Special Meetings of the Area Working Groups – Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund Stage 1 Applications” be rejected and accordingly, the Council agrees that the amendment to the South Belfast Area Working Group be reversed and the Council reverts to the original proposal and not include the additional group.

On a recorded vote, fifteen Members voted for the amendment, thirty-three against and with five no votes it was declared lost.

<u>For 15</u>	<u>Against 33</u>	<u>No Vote 5</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); Alderman Rodgers; Councillors Bower, Flynn, Hanvey, Howard, Kyle, Long, Maghie, McDonough-Brown, McMullan, Murray, Nelson, O'Hara and Smyth.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black); The High Sheriff Councillor Hussey; Aldermen Dorrian, Haire, McCoubrey and Sandford; Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Duffy, Ferguson, Garrett, Gormley, T. Kelly, Magee, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McLaughlin, Murphy, Pankhurst, Spratt, Thompson, Verner and Walsh.	Councillor de Faoite, Heading, Lyons, McKeown and Whyte.

Update on Research into the Lived Experiences of Minority Ethnic Communities in Belfast

At the request of Councillor Ferguson, the Chief Executive undertook to submit an update report in regard to the position and role of Diversity Champion within the Council.

Asset Management

At the request of Councillor McKeown, the Chief Executive undertook to investigate if the licence fee of £7,575 for the use of the contractor's compound at Ormeau Park for a further nine months could be increased.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition and amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th November, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Murray,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 8th and 22nd November be approved and adopted.

Tree Strategy

At the request of Councillor de Faoite, the Council agreed to engage with DFI seeking it to include the installation of tree pits as road chicanes in residential areas to increase overall tree coverage, slow the speed of traffic, promote road safety, and support the development of active travel.

Enforcement Action within Smoke Control Areas

At the request of Councillor Garrett, the Council agreed that the minute be amended to reflect that it had been agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would contain detail regarding the data within smokeless zones and include enforcement action detail that had been taken around bonfires, including information regarding the regulation and management of bonfires.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments and additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 8th and 22nd November, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 26th October and 9th November be approved and adopted.

Cultural Mapping for Culture, Arts and Heritage

At the request of Alderman Dorrian, it was agreed that the minute be referred back to Committee for further consideration as he had been liaising with the Director of Economic Development regarding the listing of an additional ten venues which he wished to ensure had been included prior to the minute being ratified.

Christmas Update

The Council agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would detail the health and safety advice that had been given and also give consideration to the running of a Tree Lighting event in future years.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments and additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 26th October and 9th November, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 16th November, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Review of Pavement Café Licence

At the request of Councillor Nelson, in the advance of any decision having been made in respect of the pavement café licences, the Council agreed to write to the Department for Infrastructure asking it to consider a partial road closure for Fountain Street.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 16th November, 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 Groogan,

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 15th and 17th November, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee

Moved by Councillor Maghie,
Seconded by Councillor Smyth,

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Shareholders' Committee of 14th November, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of the Climate and City Resilience Committee

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor McCabe,

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 10th November, 2022 be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Committee Schedule 2023

Moved by Councillor Thompson,
Seconded by Councillor Spratt,

That the Climate and Resilience Committee meet bi-monthly and that the Committee Members avail of the Climate Literacy Training when it becomes available.

On a recorded vote, eighteen Members voted for the amendment, thirty-nine against and with one no vote it was declared lost.

<u>For 18</u>	<u>Against 39</u>	<u>No Vote 1</u>
The High Sheriff Councillor Hussey; Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, Haire, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; Councillors Bunting, Cobain, Howard, T. Kelly, Kyle, McCullough, Newton, Pankhurst, Spratt, Thompson and Verner.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bower, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Duffy, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Harvey, Heading, Long, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Murphy, Murray, Nelson, O'Hara, Smyth, Walsh and Whyte.	Councillor Hutchinson

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 10th November, 2022 be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Standards and Business Committee

Moved by Councillor Harvey
Seconded by Councillor Duffy,

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 24th November, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Motions

Translink - Night-time Provision of Services

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Lyons proposed:

“This Council calls on Translink to extend the night-time provision of its Metro and Glider bus services.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor de Faoite.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Lyons and seconded by Councillor de Faoite be amended to also include:

“This Council will further engage with Translink about setting up a free public transport initiative on certain days and evenings in the run up to Christmas 2023.”

The proposer agreed to accept the amendment.

The motion was put to the meeting and passed.

Parental Alienation

The Council noted that the Motion had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson