

Public Document Pack

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 Thursday, 1st December, 2022 at 6.00 pm, for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Council (Pages 1 - 8)
5. Official Announcements
6. Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies
7. Request to Address the Council
8. Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 9 - 62)
9. Minutes of People and Communities Committee (Pages 63 - 96)
10. Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 97 - 150)
11. Minutes of Licensing Committee (Pages 151 - 188)
12. Minutes of Planning Committee (Pages 189 - 206)
13. Minutes of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee (Pages 207 - 212)
14. Minutes of the Climate and City Resilience Committee (Pages 213 - 214)
15. Minutes of Standards and Business Committee (Pages 215 - 218)
16. Motions
 - a) Translink - Night-time Provision of Services (Pages 219 - 220)
 - b) Parental Alienation (Pages 221 - 222)

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

Chief Executive

This page is intentionally left blank

Council

MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Tuesday, 1st November, 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, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Donnelly, Douglas, Duffy, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Hanvey, Heading, 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

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Bower and Howard.

Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared an interest in relation to the minute of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 11th October, under the heading "Community Provision Funding- Capacity Building Grant and Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2023-2026 Update", 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 Bunting - Belvoir Area Residents Group
- Councillor Canavan - Blackie River Community Group;
- Councillor Carson - Upper Springfield Development Trust;
- Councillor Corr - Falls Community Council;

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st November, 2022**

- Councillor Donnelly - Upper Springfield Development Trust;
- Councillor Duffy – West Belfast Partnership Board;
- Councillor Garrett - West Belfast Partnership Board
- Councillor Gormley - Lower Ormeau Residents' Action Group
- Councillor Hanvey – Rosario Football Club
- Councillor Hutchinson - Mount Vernon Community Development Forum
- Councillor Kyle – Lagan Valley Community Association
- Councillor McCabe - Féile an Phobail;
- Councillor McCullough – Greater Shankill Partnership;
- Councillor McLaughlin – West Belfast Partnership Board
- Councillor Verner – Greater Shankill Partnership.
- Councillor Walsh – Fáilte Feirste Thiar

The Members left the meeting when the item was being discussed.

Councillors McKeown and Smyth declared an interest in the minute of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 11th October, under the heading “Community Asset Management Framework – Pilot Community Benefit Sites” in that they were associated with Rosario Football Club who were based at Ulidia Playing Fields.

Councillors Pankhurst and Whyte declared an interest in the minute of the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 12th October, under the heading “Artemis Technologies”, in that they were employed by Queen’s University which was discussed under the item, and left the room while the discussion took place.

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 3rd October, be taken as read and signed as correct.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st November, 2022**

Official Announcements

Condolences

The Lord Mayor, together with a number of Members, paid tribute to Baroness May Blood and expressed their condolences to her family. The Council gave thanks for her community activism, advocacy for workers, and her valuable work towards building peace.

The Lord Mayor also expressed condolences to the family of Frankie Wilson, Irish League Manager and GAA player.

The Lord Mayor, together with a number of Members, paid tribute to Bobby Morrow, a dedicated staff Member within the Council's East Belfast Cleansing Unit with over 42 years' service, and extended condolences to his family.

Congratulations

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, extended her congratulations to Councillors Maghie, on the recent birth of her daughter, Annie, and Councillor McDonough Brown on the recent birth of his son, Oscar.

At the request of Alderman Rodgers, the Lord Mayor agreed to write a letter of best wishes to the Belfast Youth Orchestra who had been invited to play in the Royal Albert Hall.

At the request of Councillor Maghie, the Lord Mayor agreed to write a letter of congratulations to the CIYMS Rugby Club on its 100-year anniversary.

Councillor McKeown congratulated St. Brigid's Gaelic Football Team on winning the Antrim GAA Minor Championship in October.

Councillor Magee congratulated Pearse's GAC in its victory in the Antrim Junior Football Championship.

Alderman Sandford congratulated Alderman Rodgers on his Long Service Award from the National Association of Councillors.

Re-opening of the Primark Building

The Lord Mayor expressed thanks to the staff of Primark on the pride and hard work that had gone into the reopening of the Primark Buildings. She praised the restoration of the building and noted it was a destination for retail.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st November, 2022**

Homophobic Attack

The Lord Mayor, together with several Members, condemned the recent homophobic attack on Councillor Murray on Great Victoria Street and highlighted the importance of reporting hate crime.

Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor McDonough-Brown
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st October, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

**Sustain Exchange Climate Business
Conference Funding Agreement**

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st October, under the heading “ Sustain Exchange Climate Business Conference Funding Agreement”, to approve a funding agreement between the Council and the event organiser to the value of £10,000 be rejected and accordingly, the Council 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, twenty-nine Members voted for the proposal and twenty-seven against and it was declared carried.

Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund

At the request of Councillor Heading, the Council agreed in relation to the £400 fuel poverty payments by the Treasury to each household and the timeline of its payments, to write to the Department of Health and the Department for Communities to request it collects data on the impact of fuel poverty in relation to the volume of hospital related visits, in particular of children and older people.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st October, omitting matters in respect

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st November, 2022**

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 and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 11th October be 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 12th October be approved and adopted.

Blue and Green Infrastructure Funding

At the request of Councillor Spratt, the Council agreed to engage with DFI to investigate the replacement of Browns Bridge in Lagan Valley Regional Park, which was an unadopted asset, through the Blue/Green Infrastructure Funding.

At the request of Councillor Beattie, the Council agreed that, in relation to unadopted alleyways across the City and the impact on residents, an external legal opinion is sought on how the adoption of alleyways might be actioned.

Artemis Technologies

In relation to the presentation from Queen's University, at the meeting of the Special Committee, to discuss the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on both its staff and students, at the request of Councillor Heading, and with the Chairperson's agreement, the Council agreed to write to Queen's University to clarify if all staff would be in receipt of the Cost-of-living assistance payment outlined at the Committee, together with data on the number of international and local student admissions and the impact of funding cuts might have on future admissions.

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.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments and additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 12th October, were approved and adopted.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st November, 2022**

Minutes of Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Whyte,
Seconded by Councillor Carson,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 18th October, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Update on Improvement of the Regional Planning System

At the request of Councillor Garrett, the Council agreed that the Department for Infrastructure be invited to the Planning Committee to discuss the Regional Planning System and the delay in the approval of the Infrastructure Policy within the Council's Local Development Plan.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 18th October, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 19th October, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Climate and City Resilience Committee

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor Long

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 13th October, 2022 be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Standards and Business Committee

Moved by Councillor Hanvey,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 25th October, 2022, omitting matters in respect of

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st November, 2022**

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

Motions

Citizen's Forum for Belfast

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

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 18th November, 2022

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

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

Also attended: Councillor Michael Collins.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and
Civic Services;
Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st October 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 November, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in respect of agenda items 2d – Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund and 8a – Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership, in that she had recently accepted an offer of employment from an organisation referred to within each report and left the meeting whilst they were under consideration.

Restricted Items

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

Financial Reporting – Quarter 2 2022/23

The Director of Finance submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided information on the financial position for Quarter 2 2022/23, based upon the five step Finance Strategy which had been formulated to protect the financial sustainability of the Council, in what was a difficult period of unbudgeted pressures.

He reported that, at the end of Quarter 2, the financial position for the Council had shown an underspend of £4.4m (5.6%), which included absorbing Covid-19 expenditure and income losses of £2.1m. The underspend could be attributed to the under occupancy of office buildings, underspends in employee budgets and the additional expenditure controls which continued to offset income losses. The Quarter 2 Departmental forecast was an underspend of £3.3m (2.1%) and there was also a forecast underspend of £1.2m in the Covid-19 reserve fund and an unallocated balance of £2.3m from the 2021/22 underspend.

He stressed that the Quarter 2 forecast did not include the significant pressures caused by the current rate of inflation and made specific reference to the 2022/23 pay award, cost of living support and a community centre utility overspend.

The Director went on to provide an update on the forecast reserves position, rates finalisation and the overall Investment Programme.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023-24

The Director of Finance drew the Committee's attention to a report which provided an update on the development of the Revenue Estimates and the setting of the District Rate for 2023/24.

The report outlined the six key elements involved in the annual setting of the District Rate and provided an update on uncontrollable cost pressures and on ongoing considerations, such as inflation and the Estimated Penny Product.

He went on to confirm that each Political Party would, during November, be briefed on the rate setting process and recommended that representatives of Land and Property

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

Services be invited to attend the Committee meeting in January to provide a presentation on the outcome of the non-domestic revaluation exercise.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and adopted the recommendation.

**Update on NI Council Strategic
Waste Management Arrangements**

The Committee agreed to defer until its meeting in December a report providing an update on joint working between councils on Waste Management issues to enable Party briefings to be held.

Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 21st October, it had adopted a motion calling for the establishment of a Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund of £500k for households in most need in Belfast, which had been proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor Ferguson, on behalf of Councillor Flynn.

The Committee had agreed that a report be submitted to its meeting in November on the funding, design and delivery of the scheme.

Accordingly, the Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which proposed that, given the scale and complexity of the challenges being faced by households across the City, the Council adopt a phased approach to delivery. Phase 1 would focus upon the urgent distribution of £100 fuel vouchers to households in most need, with Phase 2 being developed in tandem, in order to provide a broader range of support over a longer-term period, in collaboration with key voluntary, community and social enterprise and city partners and would be dependent on additional resources becoming available.

The Director then drew the Committee's attention to an initial set of draft design principles, eligibility criteria and delivery and funding allocation models to be considered, following which it was

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the Committee 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.

The proposal was subsequently amended to include Alderman Dorrian's proposal that the Greater Shankill Community Council replace the Greater Shankill Partnership as a Strategic Partner in West Belfast.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor Long,

That the Committee agrees to adopt Option 5, to use Advice Services to deliver the scheme.

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

On a recorded vote, twelve Members voted for the original proposal, as amended, and six against and it was declared carried.

<u>For 12</u>	<u>Against 6</u>
Aldermen Dorrian and Haire; and Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Ferguson, Garrett, McLaughlin, Murphy, Spratt, Verner and Walsh.	Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); and Councillors Heading, Long, Lyons and McMullan.

The Committee agreed further:

- 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. that the Scheme should, if possible, be implemented before Christmas;
- 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, with the proposal to increase the gross annual household income eligibility threshold from £40k to £60k to be referred to the Cost-of-Living Task Group for consideration, to ensure that those most in need, including the working poor, were targeted;

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

- 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 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.

Inquiry into Funding for Levelling Up

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy reminded the Committee that the Levelling Up Fund had been launched early in 2022 as a means of investing in infrastructure across the United Kingdom to support local transport projects, town and high street regeneration and cultural and heritage assets.

He reported that the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee had, on 20th October, launched an inquiry into Funding for Levelling-Up, in order to review the funds available for levelling-up and how effectively resources had been directed to those areas most in need. The inquiry was examining questions around the allocation of levelling-up resources and the aim, size and focus of the many different funds available, as well as exploring how far the Government's approach to funding for levelling up and proposed initiatives, such as Investment Zones, contributed to its objective of levelling up across the United Kingdom, including devolved administrations. The Committee was also seeking to understand how the Government was ensuring that such funds strengthened communities and boosted local economies.

He explained that the Council had been invited to contribute to the inquiry and presented for the Committee's approval a draft response for submission to the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee.

The Committee approved the draft response.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

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

The minute for this item has been restricted on the basis of commercial sensitivity and an ongoing competitive process. The minute will be published in due course.

Special Meeting

It was agreed that, in future, a special meeting of the Committee would be held to enable Members to be fully briefed on those projects which were being recommended by the Area Working Groups to proceed to the next stage in the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund process.

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

The Committee was reminded that the Council, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Public Health Agency had jointly commissioned research in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the range of experiences of minority ethnic populations in Belfast and help inform policy making and service provision.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reviewed the methodology which had been used in the research and pointed out that the interviews and focus groups which had been held over the past six months had examined how minority ethnic populations in Belfast experienced everyday issues, such as employment, accessing housing, healthcare, education, leisure services, civic engagement, community safety and cultural integration.

That research had now been completed and a draft report, entitled “Inequalities experienced by Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Traveller People residing in Belfast” had been produced, which set out a number of recommendations for the commissioning organisations. The draft findings had been presented to the Shared City Partnership on 10th October and the report was due to be launched on 1st December. It was envisaged that the findings would be disseminated to ensure that relevant strategies and programmes, including the Belfast Agenda Refresh, the Good Relations Action Plan and the PEACE PLUS Action Plan, would take into account the lived experience of ethnic minority groups within the City.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Language Working Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Language Strategy Working Group of 11th November, including the recommendation to approve the Language Strategy Action Plan for pre-consultation engagement with the newly established Irish and Ulster-Scots stakeholder forums and existing Council language engagement forums. The Committee would receive an update on the outcome of that engagement in advance of the launch of a public consultation.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

Matters referred back from Council / Motions

Motion - Rates Freeze

The Committee was reminded that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 25th October, had considered the following motion which had been received for submission to the Council on 1st November:

“This Council recognises the impact the rising cost of living crisis will have on Council expenditure, and the pressure this will put on our existing budgets to deliver the same high-quality services.

The Council also recognises the crisis we face will demand a heightened and increases response from local government.

At a time when many people are struggling to heat their homes, or put food on the table, the Council and its partner organisations must be adequately equipped to help navigate this crisis and provide the increased support that is needed for those struggling.

During the Covid pandemic, local Councils were allocated a financial package to help them manage the additional pressures the pandemic presented.

The cost-of-living crisis is a crisis on a similar magnitude and will require additional support to be provided to local Councils, to ensure they are adequately equipped to help mitigate the impact of this crisis on communities.

The Council views any effort to increase rates as a response to these financial pressures as counter intuitive. Any move to increase rates during a cost-of-living crisis will only exacerbate problems for working class communities. It would lead to a further hike in already mounting household bills and could force more people into poverty.

The Council acknowledges the need to avoid another rates increase during the cost-of-living crisis.

As a first step toward avoiding this, the Council will write to Stormont Ministers, the Secretary of State, and the Treasury, urging them to support a financial package of additional funding to be allocated to local Councils to help them manage the cost-of-living crisis.

The Council also commits to writing to all other councils across the north, asking them to adopt a similar position of calling for an increase of government support.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

This will help to ensure that all Councils are adequately equipped to provide support to communities, to pay fair wages to its employees, and deliver high quality services during the cost-of-living crisis.”

The motion had been proposed by Councillor Michael Collins and seconded by Councillor Matt Collins.

The Interim City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services had advised the Standards and Business Committee that those parts of the motion in italics, relating to a Council rates freeze, were not competent, as setting the rate was a legal obligation and must go through a process.

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

Councillor Michael Collins referred, amongst other things, to the pressures being faced by local councils during the current cost of living crisis and highlighted the need for the Government to provide significant financial support, similar to that which had been allocated during the Covid-19 pandemic, to maintain service delivery. Accordingly, he urged the Committee to support his motion.

After discussion, the Committee adopted those parts of the aforementioned motion which were deemed to be competent and agreed that copies of correspondence between NILGA, SOLACE and others and Government and Northern Ireland Executive Departments around the provision of additional financial support for councils, be circulated to all Members.

Governance

Schedule of Meetings 2023

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for 2023, with all meetings to commence at 9.30 a.m.:

- Friday 13th January (Rate setting, if required)
- Friday 20th January
- Friday 17th February
- Friday 24th March
- Friday 14th April
- (No meeting in May - Local Government Elections)

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

- Friday 16th June
- Friday 18th August
- Friday 22nd September
- Friday 20th October
- Friday 24th November
- Friday 15th December

Change of Date of Council Meeting

The Committee approved the change of date of the Council meeting in January from Tuesday, 3rd to Monday, 9th, with proceedings to commence at the usual time of 6.00 p.m.

Renewal of the Scheme of Delegation for Planning

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The Council must prepare a Scheme of Delegation for planning which sets out which decisions on Local and minor planning applications are delegated to officers. The current Scheme of Delegation was implemented in January 2020. In accordance with legislation, the Council is required to review the current Scheme of Delegation no more than every 3 years, i.e. it is next due to be reviewed by January, 2023.**
- 1.2 This report essentially proposes 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.**
- 1.3 The proposed amendments to Scheme of Delegation were noted by the Planning Committee on 18th October with no specific comments made. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is asked to agree the amendments to the Scheme as set out in this report. Under the legislation, the Scheme of Delegation must be agreed by the Department for Infrastructure.**

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the two minor changes to the current Scheme of Delegation for Planning, with a view to it being sent to the Department for Infrastructure for approval.**

3.0 Main Report

3.0 Background

3.1 Section 31 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires a council to prepare a Scheme of Delegation which enables a person appointed by the Council to determine applications for Local development, consents, agreements or approvals required by condition. All Major applications must by law be considered by the Planning Committee.

3.2 Article 9 of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 states that a council must not adopt a Scheme of Delegation until it has been approved by the Department for Infrastructure. Article 11 states that a council must prepare a Scheme of Delegation at intervals of no greater than three years.

3.3 *Development Management Practice Note 15: Councils Schemes of Delegation* provides Departmental guidance. It advises that the main benefits of delegation are:

- to enable the Planning Committee to devote its finite time to determining applications that present issues that the Committee are best served to determine; and
- delegation of planning applications to officers is critical to affecting the overall performance of the development management process as it helps to ensure that decisions are taken at the most appropriate level, costs are minimised and members have more time to concentrate on the most complex cases.

3.4 The Council first published a Scheme of Delegation in March 2015 ahead of transfer of most planning powers to councils. It was then amended in June 2017 following a review (and updated in March 2019 to take account of the Council's new departmental structure). Further amendments were made in January 2020.

3.5 The Scheme of Delegation sets out a range of planning functions which are delegated to officers. These include:

- Decisions on certain types of Local application;
- Decisions on other forms of consent and approval;
- Preservation of trees;
- Determinations under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations;

- Enforcing planning regulations;
- Temporary listing of buildings;
- Responding to LDP and planning application consultations from neighbouring Planning Authorities;
- Conducting of appeals and public examinations;
- Responding to planning related consultations from other agencies;
- Negotiating developer contributions in which the contribution exceeds £30k.

Renewal of the Scheme of Delegation

- 3.6 The Scheme of Delegation was last amended in January 2020 and was essentially a refinement of the Scheme adopted in 2017.
- 3.7 The current Scheme is considered to be working well and it is not proposed to make any significant changes to it at this stage. Instead, it is proposed that there is a fuller review, potentially next year, to tie in with the lean systems experimentation work that the Planning Service is undertaking in respect of processing of planning applications.
- 3.8 Delegation rates since 2018/19 are set out in Table 1 below. It will be noted that the rate of delegated decisions in Belfast is slightly higher than the regional average, which is a positive indicator of an efficient Scheme of Delegation.

Table 1

% delegated decisions by year

*** Unverified**

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22*	2022/23
BCC Delegation Rate (%)	93.4%	92.5%	93.2%	94.5%	N/A
NI Delegation Rate (%)	91.5%	91.2%	92.8%	N/A	N/A

- 3.9 The proportion of officer recommendations overturned by the Planning Committee is also substantially lower than the regional average as shown in Table 2, below. This is positive indicator of Elected Member confidence in officer decisions in Belfast.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

Table 2

% officer recommendations overturned by Committee

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22*	2022/23**
BCC Delegation Rate (%)	2.5%	2.2%	3.8%	N/A	N/A
NI Delegation Rate (%)	11.9%	11.6%	13.9%	N/A	N/A

Proposed Adjustments to the Scheme of Delegation

3.10 It is recommended that the current Scheme of Delegation is renewed subject to two minor modifications set out below:

- 1. Paragraph 3.8.1 – Procedure for Elected Members referring applications to the Committee.** It is recommended that the window for members requesting that an application is referred to the Committee is extended from 21 days to 28 days. Furthermore, that the 28-day period runs not only from the date that the application is advertised in the newspaper but also from the date of Neighbour Notification, whichever is the later.
- 2. Paragraph 3.8.2 – Applications for demolition in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character.** It is recommended that this is amended so that only applications for full demolition that are recommended for approval are required to be referred to the Committee. This will allow officers to refuse applications for full demolition under delegated powers.

3.11 These changes are shown in the proposed modified Scheme of Delegation attached in Appendix 1 accompanying this report. The current adopted Scheme of Delegation is shown in Appendix 2 accompanying this report.

Other Matters

3.12 When the Planning Committee previously considered the Scheme of Delegation in December 2019, it sought a comparison of the then proposed changes with the 2015 and 2017 Schemes of Delegated. This is provided again in Appendix 3 accompanying this report. The proposed modifications to the current Scheme of Delegation (labelled

2019 in Appendix 3) are summarised at paragraph 3.10 of this report.

- 3.13 The Planning Committee also previously requested examples of other Schemes of Delegation. Hyperlinks to other examples are provided again below.

Derry and Strabane Council (bottom of webpage):
<https://www.derrystrabane.com/planning>

Newry, Mourne and Down Council:
https://www.newrymouredown.org/media/uploads/planning_scheme_of_delegation.pdf

Horsham District Council (pages 37 and 38 of the Council's Constitution):
[Horsham District Council : Document Constitution of Horsham District Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/horsham-district-council/document-constitution-of-horsham-district-council)

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.14 The renewal of the current Scheme of Delegation, subject to minor modifications, will enable the Council to continue to determine planning matters in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.15 No adverse impacts have been identified.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

Update on City Region Growth Deal

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with an update on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (i) note the update on progress being made now that the Deal is in the delivery phase, including in relation to:
- agreeing the Contracts for Funding which are required for each of the capital projects delivered through the Deal; and
 - project development and delivery across the pillars of investment; and
- (ii) note the update on the BRCD Council Panel.

3.0 Main Report

Deal Delivery

Contracts for Funding

- 3.1 Before funding can flow to projects for which Outline Business Cases (OBCs) have been approved, Contracts for Funding need to be agreed between departments and the Accountable Body and Funding Agreements agreed between the Accountable Body and Project Sponsors.
- 3.2 Since the last update to the Committee and following the signing of the first individual Contract for Studio Ulster in July, progress has continued to prepare and agree a number of contracts. As previously noted by Members, the Framework Contract was agreed by the BRCD Executive Board and it was agreed that subsequent agreements would be made between the relevant parties without needing specific individual Board approvals. It was also noted that the Committee would be advised of progress to agree the funding agreements for each project.
- 3.3 The Contract for the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) is nearing completion with the Contract now finalised and agreed with the relevant department and partners and is expected to be signed during December following University approvals. Draft Contracts for the Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iREACH) and Momentum One Zero (formerly the Global Innovation Institute) have been shared by the Department for Economy and are being considered.
- 3.4 Following agreement of the Contract with the Department for Communities, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council received approval to sign the Carrickfergus Contract for Funding at its Council meeting on 7th November and this will be signed by the middle of November. Three of the Contracts for projects

within the Tourism and Regenerations pillar, namely Newry City Centre Regeneration, Bangor Waterfront and Mourne Mountain Gateway, are also now being actively progressed.

Progress across BRCD Pillars

3.5 Innovation

Following signing of the Contract for Funding for Studio Ulster in July, construction at the site in Belfast Harbour commenced on 3rd October, following a media launch. When complete in July 2024 it will include world-class commercial Virtual Production stages, fully supported by an integrated R and D and Innovation Centre of Excellence in real-time and virtual production. In the coming months Ulster University are due to complete the Pre-Qualification stage for the Studio Ulster Operator and Delivery Partner.

3.6 The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) has been advanced by Queen's University through to the detailed design stage and it was recently announced that Sam Turner, Chief Technology Officer at the High Value Manufacturing Catapult would be seconded into the position of CEO for AMIC to drive forward plans for delivery, which include the construction of the 'Factory for the Future' at Global Point. AMIC also recently launched its NI Technology Roadmap and the Invitation to Tender for its construction contractor is expected to issue in late 2022 or early 2023.

3.7 Momentum One Zero (formerly known as the Global Innovation Institute) is reaching the end of RIBA Stage 2 (concept design) with approval to proceed to detailed design being sought in the coming months. The iREACH project also continues to move through RIBA Stage 2, is considering in further detail its commercial model and has been undertaking significant stakeholder engagement.

3.8 The Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology project has undertaken a feasibility study to consider an alternative to the proposed demolition and rebuild option, driven by the net zero carbon agenda and by cost. Early procurement of equipment is being considered in relation to the Royal Victoria Hospital Living Lab.

3.9 The Committee is asked to note that, as part of plans to utilise the BRCD funding to leverage additional investment in support of our growth ambitions, a letter of support has been provided for a bid by the Health Innovation Research Alliance (HIRANI), supported by local industry, Invest NI, Universities and other

partner Councils, to become one of 10 regions to partner with Innovate UK to define launchpad support to grow the economic value of established clusters- in this case life and health sciences. This is not direct funding but unlocks £7.5M in-kind and commercial Innovate UK grants for revenue funding to overcome barriers to commercialisation and support local business-led innovation, collaboration and growth, over 2 years (2023-25). This will build from existing and emerging local clusters such as homes for health ageing and precision diagnostics and help support the long-term investments in innovation in life and health sciences planned in each of the City and Growth deals. The bid does not involve any direct financial or resource ask from Belfast City Council.

3.10 Digital

Members will be considering at this meeting a separate report on the Smart Belfast Urban Innovation Framework, which reflects the importance of the BRCD investments to delivering the City's and the indeed the Region's digital innovation ambitions. However, a brief update is provided below on key developments in the digital pillar since the previous report.

- 3.11 Following Executive Board approval in October, the OBC for the Digital twin project led by Digital Catapult UK, which will see a digital twin hub for the UK being established in Belfast, attended Casework Committee on 19th October 2022 and received Ministerial approval on 28th October 2022.
- 3.12 Since the last update to the Committee, consultants have been appointed to commence the development of the OBC for the Venture Fund element of the Innovation Challenge Fund and a Case for Change workshop took place on 9th November.
- 3.13 The i4c Innovation Centre project, led by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council received approval from the Economy Minister in Spring 2022 and the Council have been working intensively with the Department for the Economy to address challenges such as construction inflation and will now be proceeding to seek Department of Finance supply approval.
- 3.14 In relation to the Advanced Wireless business case, engagement has now taken place with key officials in the Department for the Economy in order to discuss options for the project following feedback on the draft OBC. The next steps are now being considered and these will be presented to the Digital Advisory Board for consideration.

3.15 Tourism and Regeneration

The OBC for Destination Royal Hillsborough was considered at Casework Committee on 25th October 2022 with a recommendation for Ministerial approval, which was then secured on 28th October 2022 from the Economy Minister. The project will now proceed for Department of Finance supply approval.

- 3.16** Members will be aware that Belfast Stories is the Council's flagship project and is due to open in 2028 and that the Committee approved the extension of the Project Director for 5 years in line with this timescale. Progress against the agreed programme is ongoing with procurement of professional services now in place to progress design to RIBA 2 and enable a full OBC to be developed. The casework review is anticipated to be held in 2023. A Public consultation exercise has also been ongoing which includes elements of the Stories Collection Framework and will in turn inform the design brief for the project. The key findings of the consultation exercise will be presented to Members at a future meeting along with recommendations and next steps for the project.

3.17 Employability and Skills (E&S)

Further to the update to Members in September, all Councils have approved their contribution to the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund and pre-development work has commenced. This will enable the key resources that supported the Full-Fibre Network to be retained by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to support the OBC and establish the necessary arrangements to operate the fund from 1 April 2023 (subject to business case approval).

- 3.18** To better understand the labour market and skills implications resulting from the jobs created through the city deal investment a significant piece of work is underway through a process of skills assessments. Delivered through a task and finish approach, with input from projects, city deal partners (as deliverers of employability and skills interventions), industry and wider stakeholders are undertaking a deep dive to understand the nature of jobs likely to be created and to identify if and where there is a need to evolve the existing skills offer in response. To date a construction skills assessment is nearing completion, a further assessment is underway focusing upon advanced manufacturing linked to AMIC and additional assessments expected to commence in the forthcoming months will focus upon the digital and creative industries.

- 3.19 Experience to date suggests that the outcomes of skills assessments are likely to result in recommendations that could have implications for BRCD, (particularly partners as deliverers of employability and skills interventions) industry and government departments. The output from this work will inform plans developed through Labour Market Partnerships and the NI Skills Council. The absence of revenue funding to support the E&S priorities of city and growth deals will require consideration as to how partners could '*bend the spend*', i.e. realign existing resources to the needs identified.

3.20 Infrastructure

The Infrastructure Minister published the consultation report on Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 in October and announced the preferred routes. Departmental officials have appointed consultants to deliver the procurement phase of the Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge to facilitate the detailed design and construction. It is expected that it will take approximately three and a half years to deliver the procurement, detailed design and construction phases of the project. Design of the Newry Southern Relief Road continues and preparation of the draft Statutory Orders, along with an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), in advance of statutory public consultation is ongoing.

3.21 BRCD Council Panel

A hybrid meeting of the BRCD Council Panel was held on 28th September, hosted by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. Panel Members considered a detailed programme update and received a presentation on the work that is being undertaken to ensure that social value criteria are being integrated into future BRCD procurements and that social value benefits are then realised.

- 3.22 As part of the update, the Panel also discussed in detail some of the key challenges currently facing the programme, including in particular in relation to construction inflation and the impact of the complexity of governance and approvals processes, which can result in delays to project progression and increased costs. In recent weeks senior level engagement has been taking place with government departments and across City and Growth deals with the aim of developing collaborative solutions to these significant and ongoing challenges, which arise at a time of significant economic and financial uncertainty.

- 3.23 The minutes of the previous Panel meeting hosted by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council were approved by the Panel and are attached. The next meeting will be hosted as a hybrid meeting by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council on 25th January 2023.

3.24 **Financial and Resource Implications**

All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets.

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

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

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Leisure Management Contract Governance
and Performance Reporting**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To present proposals for the future governance of the leisure management contract, including contract compliance and performance reporting.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to consider:

- (i) the recommendation that the People and Communities Committee is the most appropriate route for future Council reports; and

- (ii) the proposed contract compliance and performance report schedules presented below in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Background

The Committee is reminded that, in November 2020, it agreed to review the tri-partite leisure model and the ABL Board, including its membership and governance arrangements. Terms of Reference were approved in June 2021 and First Point Management and Consultancy Limited was appointed to conduct the review.

The final review report was presented to this Committee on 25th March 2022. After consideration, the Committee approved Option 3 as the preferred way forward, namely, to bring Contract Compliance and Performance Monitoring of GLL back into the Council and commence the winding up of ABL. That decision was subsequently ratified by the Council on 4th April.

ABL has been dormant since 6th June and will remain so until formally dissolved.

Contract compliance, performance management and financial transactions have been managed through the City and Neighbourhood Services Department (CNS) since 6th June. This will continue until new mechanisms for direct Council governance are agreed.

Proposals for Committee consideration include general oversight arrangements, periodic reports, key performance indicators, budgets and financial transactions and audit/risk assurances.

3.2 Outcomes and Proposals

This report sets out options and proposals for the future governance of the leisure management contract. CNS will continue to gather and collate contract compliance evidence and performance data as previously required for reporting through Active Belfast Limited.

3.3 Committee Reporting and Governance Overview

Following the decision to bring management of the GLL leisure contract back under direct Council control, an agreed reporting

mechanism is now required. It is recommended that CNS prepares contract compliance and performance monitoring papers to:

- a) Report directly into Committee. People and Communities is recommended as the most appropriate Committee.

It is anticipated that, within the first Committee report, report formats and frequencies, together with specific performance measures, will be presented for consideration.

3.4 Contract Compliance

Contract compliance assurances are already well established. CNS takes a central role in collating information and works with Corporate H and S, Corporate finance, Audit, Governance and Risk Services and Legal Services to review and present assurances.

Contract compliance requirements are set out within the legally binding contract with GLL. As these contractual requirements will remain unchanged, it is proposed that the same suite of check mechanisms and assurance reports be retained as part of direct Council governance procedures. For example, existing mechanisms include:

- b) Assurances on key BCC/GLL policy alignments
- c) Health and Safety (including Safeguarding) reporting
- d) Timelines for submission of key annual proposals around, pricing, programming, marketing and promotion, sports development, community engagement, etc.

3.5 Performance Reporting

Periodic performance report measures and formats have evolved since contract commencement in January 2015. The current scorecard format has provided consistent and comparable management information for the last four years. Nine key performance indicators (KPI's) are presented under the following three themes:

- a) **Business (financial)**
 - Labour cost recovery
 - Expenditure recovery
 - Cost per visit

b) Membership

- Pre-Paid monthly membership net gain
- Pay and Play membership net gain
- Swim School membership net gain

c) Occupancy

- Main hall occupancy to capacity ratio
- Studio occupancy to capacity ratio
- Synthetic Pitch occupancy to capacity ratio

The above KPI's present a solid overview of contract performance. All three themes are accepted within the wider leisure industry as key drivers of overall performance.

To provide the above, CNS would continue to collate more detailed data, beyond the nine listed KPI's, which would be retained on file should additional or more specific ad-hoc performance analysis be requested.

- 3.6 It is recommended that contract compliance and performance reports be presented to the Committee on a six-monthly basis in November and May. This would allow for sufficient time to collate and verify management information data related to the preceding six-month periods of April to September and October to March.

CNS would continue to collate monthly management information data on a centre-by-centre level. Unless otherwise requested, six monthly committee reports would be presented at a strategic overall service level supported by centre specific performance examples where appropriate.

3.7 Summary

The Committee is requested to consider the governance proposals/recommendations set out above.

Key decisions required relate to overall governance mechanisms at 3.4, contract compliance assurances at 3.5 and performance reports at 3.6.

3.8 Communications and Public Relations

None.

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

None.

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

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Belfast City Council Safeguarding
All Ages Policy 2022**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee’s approval the Council’s revised Safeguarding All Ages Policy. The revised Policy had been designed to improve the safety and minimise the risk of harm of people of all ages living in Belfast, including staff, with whom the Council might come into contact and was aligned with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety’s 2016 “Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People” framework document and with the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership’s 2016 Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures.

The Committee approved the Policy, a copy of which can be accessed [here](#), and noted that a launch was planned for 15th February, 2023.

**Smart Belfast Urban Innovation
Framework 2022 – 2026**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To present the refreshed *Smart Belfast: Urban Innovation framework*, which sets out the objectives and programme of work from 2022 to 2026. This report outlines the purpose of the refreshed framework; the wider conditions necessary to support urban innovation in Belfast; and details of the Smart District and the associated programme of work being led by the Council.

1.2 In addition, the report seeks the Committee’s approval for a number of the programme’s first initiatives.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- 1. approve the Smart Belfast urban innovation framework 2023 to 2026;**
- 2. approve (subject to a successful award) the Council’s active participation in the Ulster University-led E-Huub bid to EPSRC;**

3. note the work under way with Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University on Belfast City Council's partnership on a potential £5m bid to EPSRC's Place-based Innovation Impact award programme in the Smart District;
4. note Nesta's engagement with communities and institutions on proposals for the Citizen Opportunity for Digital Innovation (CODI) programme;
5. note that a Hub-IN project roadmap is due to be published in December, which include proposals for a £100,000 Challenge Fund and the project's contribution of £10,000 to the city's Waterfront Task Group; and
6. approve the appointment of a member of the City Innovation Office to be part of the advisory board to the new Northern Ireland Public Data panel.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 The Smart Belfast urban innovation framework (final draft attached) is designed to stimulate collaborative innovation between the industry, innovative SMEs, academia, government and communities to help grow our economy and achieve our shared ambitions. It is based on the understanding that many of Belfast's complex urban challenges are not readily amenable to traditional public policy interventions but require novel solutions involving the co-operation of many innovation actors. In achieving these goals, the framework seeks to maximise investment opportunities, particularly those represented by the Belfast Region City Deal innovation and digital pillars.
- 3.2 Following approval by the Committee in December 2021, the City Innovation Team consulted widely on a draft of the framework from January to March 2022. The findings and recommendations from this consultation, and from further engagement with Members and city partners, have now been incorporated into this final draft.
- 3.3 The final framework is structured around three main elements:
- 3.4
 - (i) The first is the Urban Innovation ecosystem. The eight 'pillars' of the ecosystem represent the conditions necessary for innovation to flourish. Belfast already has strengths in many of these pillars, but some are at a comparatively formative

stage. Responsibility for growing the urban innovation ecosystem is an ongoing and collective effort among many city partners and does not rest exclusively with Belfast City Council. Our analysis of the ecosystem, its pillars, and our recommendations for action, are the basis upon which Belfast City Council will continue to engage with other innovation partners. As such the analysis will inform the Council's position regarding its urban innovation priorities with the likes of Innovation City Belfast, BCRD partners, NI Government Depts and industry.

3.5

- (ii) The second element is the specific programme of work that Belfast City Council will lead on over the next four years. We have engaged extensively within council, and externally with city partners, in developing this programme. It is heavily weighted in favour those city strategies to which we believe urban innovation offers significant added value. We have selected initiatives that are important to our innovation partners, particularly in the private sector and our universities and colleges; and that likely to attract funding and co-investment.

3.6

- (iii) The last major element of the framework is the Belfast Smart District. What differentiates the new framework from the 2017 edition, is a much greater emphasis on the importance of 'place-making' for urban innovation. The Smart District is very much about grounding urban innovation concepts and initiatives in a 'real-world' environment in which they can be developed, tested, stress-tested, and scaled to success across the wider city. Evidence from most other places (including Dublin, Barcelona, Helsinki, Paris, Copenhagen) has shown that an urban innovation programme that is built within a specific, managed, urban environment can offer significant dividends to both the programme and directly to the city. Belfast city centre offers a rich environment for innovation both in terms of leveraging existing planned investments, and as a place where many of the wider urban challenges are manifest at a more intimate and tractable scale. As such it is a good fit to be the location for Belfast's Smart District.

- 3.7 The framework describes the geography of the Belfast Smart District, and the tasks that the City Innovation Office needs to accomplish in order to make it a success.
- 3.8 Finally, for sake of clarity, we have structured the framework around these three separate elements. In practice of course there is no discreet separation – activities will interconnect and reinforce each other. So, for example, the delivery of any one of the programme initiatives will both strengthen the operation of the District while also contributing to the wider ecosystem pillars.

Resourcing the Programme

- 3.9 It is expected that individual programme initiatives will be funded through a mix of co-investment by industry, third-party funding and 'in-kind' contributions. An important factor in selecting initiatives is that they can attract funding either directly or through partner co-investment. Indeed, a key objective of the framework is to be a net attractor of innovation investment to Belfast.
- 3.10 A key resource in this regard will be the Belfast Region City Deal. The new framework is designed to maximise opportunities for Belfast to leverage the key investments from the Digital pillar in particular (ie, the £34 million Innovation for Societal Challenge fund programme and £39 million Infrastructure Enabling Fund). An initial example of this approach in action is the £1 million 'Augment the City' immersive challenge call which will seek to draw down funding from the Digital Pillar to support digital innovation in relation to the visitor experience in the city centre (while also supporting other city deal partners in developing their own visitor experiences).

Early Smart Belfast projects

- 3.11 A number of opportunities have already emerged as a result of early engagement on the framework:

Health E-HUUB project

- 3.12 The Council has been asked to become a partner in a proposal being developed by Ulster University and University College London. The project, which is seeking funding from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), will focus on the discovery, translation & commercialisation of digital health technologies. 'E-HUUB' will include a network of partners spanning large industry, digital

health SMEs, healthcare providers, charities. The long-term vision is to harness data and digital solutions to provide a 'digital front door' that will empower individuals across communities in Belfast to manage their personal health and wellbeing.

- 3.13 If the EPSRC bid is successful, the Council has been asked to provide access to the Smart District environment for trialling and to provide other in-kind support such as facilitating access to communities. The Committee is asked to approve, subject to a successful EPSRC application, Belfast City Council's active participation in the programme.

Place-based Impact Acceleration Account (PBIAA)

- 3.14 The City Innovation Office been engaging with both Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University on a potential Smart District-focused bid to the EPSRC's £25 million Place-based Impact Acceleration Account programme (PBIAA). The PBIAA is a strategic award that provides flexible funding to universities to enable them to drive local impacts from their research. The award is encouraging a focused place-based approach that encourages collaboration on impact between the universities, the local authority and business. It offers an exciting opportunity to drive one or more of the initiatives identified in the Smart Belfast framework.
- 3.15 Applications of up to £5 million must be led by a university, with the closing date of 25 April 2023. The Committee is asked to note that, as part of the Smart Belfast programme, the City Innovation Office will seek agreement with the universities over the coming months on areas of focus that can contribute to the city's policy objectives. If agreed, details on a Belfast focused bid will be brought to Members for approval prior to submission.

Citizen Opportunities for Digital Innovation (CODI)

- 3.16 Work has begun on the 'Citizen Opportunities for Digital Innovation' (CODI) programme. The motivating idea behind CODI is that public and city institutions need to do much more to engage with people and communities on what it means to live in a 'digitally enabled city'. It has implications for personal privacy, decision-making, planning, services, and for the future of work. City institutions also need to better support citizen participation in digital innovation initiatives. Evidence for elsewhere demonstrates that digital projects are much more likely to be successful if people are involved in their co-

design. CODI also has potential as an 'on-ramp' for some people to move into more formal skills and training.

- 3.17 The Committee is asked to note that the City Innovation Office has commissioned Nesta's renowned Centre for Collective Intelligence Design to work with us on a seven-month pilot. With Nesta, we are talking to stakeholders who are already involved in elements of this work (eg) Queen's Community and Place programme, Global Innovation Institute, Markets Development Association, Farset Labs, etc. There are also plans to trial some of the CODI concepts with communities early in 2023. Further details of the work and the proposals for scaling the CODI concept will be shared with Members following this work.

Hub of Innovation on the Maritime Mile

- 3.18 Members will be aware that the City Innovation Office is managing the four-year Horizon 2020 funded Hub of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (HUB IN) project in partnership with the Maritime Belfast Trust. The project, which has attracted over €600,000 to Belfast, aims to transform and regenerate Historic Urban Areas while preserving their unique cultural and social identity. Belfast is one of eight city pilots working on this project and is co-developing new community-focused business models and innovative solutions that will bring together sustainability and cultural heritage.
- 3.19 The Committee is asked to note that a Hub-IN project roadmap is due to be published in December and will include proposals for a £100,000 Challenge Fund to be launched in early Spring 2023. The project is also contributing £10,000 to the city's Waterfront Task Group to support prototypes that will enhance and preserve heritage and animate the mile.

3.20 Northern Ireland Public Data Panel

The City Innovation Office has been working with the Administrative Data Research Centre NI and Northern Ireland Trusted Research Environment to help determine the need for a 'public data panel' that would work with citizens to explore the potential for the re-use of health and other data. Recommendations from this work have now been accepted and a Northern Ireland Public Data Panel will now be established by ADRC with funding from SESRC/UKRI.

- 3.21 The new panel will provide a forum to engage with people on the socially acceptable re-use of public data in research, policymaking, and service provision. This will include the

secondary use of health data to enhance diagnostics, therapeutic, medical research and SME growth. The work has informed our approach to the Citizen Opportunities for Digital Innovation (CODI) pilot which has just commenced.

- 3.22 The Committee is asked to approve the appointment of a staff member from the City Innovation Office to be part of the advisory board for the new Northern Ireland panel.**

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.23 Programme development and delivery costs have been identified in the existing City Innovation team budget. As noted in the body of the report individual initiatives will proceed based on a mix of funding and co-investment from partners.**
- 3.24 Resources for activities associated with the Belfast Region City Deal have already been identified within the existing Council City Deal budget.**

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

- 3.25 A public consultation and Equality Screening was carried out as part of the consultation programme on the draft framework. The framework was screened out; however, any significant projects that emerge during the life of the life of the framework will be subject to individual equality screenings.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Response to Consultation on Every Child: Department
of Education’s Draft Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028**

The Committee was informed that the Department of Education had, on 20th September, published for consultation its draft Every Child: Corporate Plan for 2023 – 2028. The Plan proposed a new vision of “every child and young person being happy, learning and ready to succeed”, with the vision to be underpinned by the following five Strategic Priorities:

- championing all children and young people and the positive impact of education on all aspects of life;
- helping all children and young people where they need support for their learning and wellbeing;
- inspiring all children and young people to make a positive contribution to society;

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

- meeting the learning needs of children and young people and developing their knowledge and skills, enabling them to fulfil their potential; and
- delivering an effective, child-focused, collaborative, high-quality education system.

These Strategic Priorities would, in turn, be supported by the following enablers, which described how the Department would achieve the desired outcomes:

- COLLABORATING – partnering with stakeholders to support co-production and the achievement of shared outcomes;
- OPTIMISING – prioritising, modernising and making most efficient use of resources to achieve the greatest impact, including stopping or changing activities which do not make the desired difference;
- RESPONDING – addressing the long-term impacts of the pandemic and other emerging challenges and needs faced by children and young people and the education workforce; and
- ENGAGING – communicating and consulting with stakeholders to help shape future services.

Council officers had forwarded a draft response to the Department of Education by the closing date of 15th November, with the proviso that it would be subject to approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and ratification by the Council.

The Committee approved the draft response, a copy of which can be accessed [here](#).

Physical Programme and Asset Management

**Alleygating Programme: Phase 5 Funding –
Response from Department of Justice**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 23rd September, it had approved a list of streets to be taken forward under Phase 5 of the Council's alleygating programme, with £500k to be allocated under the Capital Programme for delivery. The Council, at its meeting on 3rd October, in ratifying that decision, had agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Justice Minister requesting that the Department of Justice match the Council's allocation.

The Director of Physical Programmes informed the Committee that a response had been received from Mr. R. Pengelly, Permanent Secretary in the Department of Justice.

The Permanent Secretary had begun by acknowledging the important work being undertaken by the Council around alleygating and the significant level of its investment.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

In terms of the Council's request for match funding, he had confirmed that, given the ongoing priorities within the remit of the Department of Justice and the extraordinary constraints on its budget, the Department was not, at this time, in a position to provide funding. The Department had, in the past, used its powers to assist the Council when alley gates had been sought by residents to prevent access due to anti-social behaviour. However, this had usually been limited to interface areas and had preceded adoption of the gates by the Council. On a small number of occasions, it had agreed to fund such measures, albeit that this had usually been on the recommendation of Policing colleagues for express and pressing community protection needs.

He had gone on to state that the Department of Justice fully recognised the negative impact which antisocial behaviour could have on communities and that it was currently leading on a review of the legislation to ensure that the relevant authorities, such as councils, had effective and proportionate enforcement powers in place to tackle the issue.

The Department of Justice, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Policing Board, provided £826,516 annually to Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, which led on the Department's response to community safety issues at a local level. That funding was, he had pointed out, used by the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships across Belfast's districts to fund a range of projects and initiatives to address antisocial behaviour, including supporting the important work being delivered via the Holyland Intervention Project.

The Permanent Secretary had concluded by again stating that the Department of Justice was not in a position to providing funding on this occasion and by wishing the Council every success with the Programme.

The Committee noted the response.

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. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. This report requests a movement on the Capital Programme for the Carson Tile project which is part of the City Hall programme. This report also provides an overview of recently completed capital projects, funding secured and contracts awarded.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Capital Programme** - agree that the *City Hall Statues City Hall Grounds - Carson Tile* project is moved to delivery stage i.e. *Stage 3 – Committed* on the Capital Programme;
- **Physical Programme Update** - note the update on projects that have been completed recently and projects currently in construction; and
- **Contracts Awarded in Q2 and Q3 2022/23** – note the update in relation to contracts awarded.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will be aware that the Council runs a substantial Physical Programme. This includes the rolling Capital Programme – a multimillion regeneration programme of investment across the city which improves existing Council assets or provides new council facilities. The Council also delivers externally focused funding streams such as BIF, LIF and SOF, as well as numerous capital programmes 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.

3.2 Proposed Movement – Capital Programme

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 & 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:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

Project	Overview	Stage movement
City Hall - Carson Tile	Installation of Carson Tile	Move to Stage 3 - Committed

Carson Tile

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

At the time when the relocation of memorabilia to the exhibition was agreed, there was, as part of that arrangement, a commemorative tile to be installed marking the place at which Sir Edward Carson stood when he signed the Ulster Covenant. HED approval is required for this and following ongoing discussions with HED it has been agreed that this will take the format of a tile within the Rotunda area. The SP&R Committee was updated on this in May 2021 and approved the installation of a plaque with the final design to be agreed. At Committee on 23 September 2022, Members agreed the design for the Carson Tile to be installed in the Rotunda in City Hall. It was further agreed in October 2022 that the material be specified as black granite.

In January 2020, the SP and R Committee agreed to add *City Hall Statues – City Hall Grounds* as a *Stage 1 – Emerging* project on the Capital Programme. The Carson Tile project falls within this programme of work and has progressed to business case stage. It is therefore recommended that the Carson Tile project be moved to *Stage 3 - Committed*.

3.4 **Physical Programme – Projects Completed and Underway**

Members are aware of the scale of the Council's Physical Programme via a range of internal and external funding streams. Below is a brief summary of projects completed over

the last few months, as well as a sample of projects currently underway.

Recently completed projects:

- **Major schemes:**
 - **St Comgall's - £7m restoration of former school to create a multi-use community hub BIF project with Executive Office's SIF Programme; and**
 - **Páirc Nua Chollan – £5.6m - Belfast's new city park funded by Urban Villages and DfC**
- **Capital Programme schemes: Boodles Dam works to the Dam and environmental improvements, Clarawood Playground, Cavehill Adventurous Playground, Ormeau Park (Park Road) Playground, Waterfront / ICC Escalators, Waste Transfer Station Weighbridges, Covered cycle stands (Belmont Park, Inverary Community Centre, Belvoir Activity Centre), Ballysillan and Whiterock 3G pitches with DfC, Balmoral Bowling Club, Sea lion and lion enclosure works at Belfast Zoo.**
- ***BIF Programme:* Lisnasharragh Community Schools Project, Davitt's GAC, H&W Welders FC/Blanchflower Playing Fields, TAGIT Boxing Club**
- ***LIF Programme:* St John Bosco Boxing Club, Wishing Well Family Centre play space**
- ***Living with Water Programme* - Belfast Castle SUDS pilot project**
- ***Other externally funded projects:* Mornington Community Project with Executive Office – SIF Programme on behalf of Executive Office. VOYPIC/Include youth on behalf of DfC, ProKick Gym on behalf of Urban Villages, Expansion of Belfast Bikes network via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund, Revitalisation on behalf of DfI and DfC – Adelaide St upgrade, Electric bike trial e-cargo project and the Entries Phase 1.**

3.5 Projects Underway:

- **Lagan Gateway Greenway Phase 2 – major investment of £5m in a new navigation lock, iconic foot and cycle bridge and new path connections.**
- **City Cemetery Heritage Project - £2.3m scheme to protect, enhance and promote the cemetery's rich heritage. The new service yard is completed. The restoration of the Mortuary Tower & exterior of**

Foxes Lodge is completed. Visitor centre is completed and work is ongoing in preparation for opening. In tandem with this the restoration works on several of the site's key assets such as the Centre Steps and Victorian Fountains is well underway. Design and procurement works are underway with regards to Dual Language signage throughout the site.

- LTP Templemore Baths – £17m restoration of Templemore Baths with a focus on heritage and spa provision, nearing completion
- Forth Meadow Community Greenway – an ambitious and transformational £5m scheme which will see the development of a new 12km urban greenway in West Belfast. Section 1 – Glencairn – Works complete. Works underway: Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road, Section 3- Falls Park/Whiterock, Section 4 – Bog Meadows. Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre - at detailed design stage.
- Peace IV projects - Shankill Women's Centre – underway, Black Mountain Shared Space Centre – mobilisation stage
- Urban Villages projects – major schemes at Marrowbone Millennium Park and Ballysillan Playing Fields and Pitt Park, acting as delivery agent for Colin Valley FC, ABC Trust Health and Leisure Trust and Colin HLC.

Projects in development:

- *Cathedral Gardens, New Crematorium, City Hall Statues – Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken, Alleygating Phase 5*
- Corporate projects – range of IT projects to ensure business continuity and ongoing Fleet replacement programme

- 3.6 This overview is a sample of the projects currently well underway and does not include a number of additional projects either in early stages of development, Planning or procurement, neither does it include all of the activity on maintenance projects or all the legacy projects which still require resource. Photos of the projects recently completed have been circulated. When appropriate, the Physical Programmes Department is happy to arrange site visits to any projects that have been completed.

3.7 Externally Funded Projects 2022/23 - 2023/24

Members will be aware that the Council is the delivery agent of choice for a range of funding partners and that external funding is an increasingly important component for securing funding for projects. Committee is asked to note that letters of offer and amended letters of offer have been received for a range of projects where the Council is acting as the delivery agent. Amended letters of offer are commonly received to reflect minor adjustments required following tender returns. Several of these projects are match funded by the Council, either under the various funding streams i.e. LIF, BIF and SOF or through close alignment with ongoing Council initiatives. The details are attached at Appendix 2, accompanying this report, and the Committee is asked to note the summary provided. The Committee is also asked to agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated for any Physical Programme projects including externally funded projects in 2023/24 as required, with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

Contracts Awarded – Q2 and Q3 2022/23

- 3.8** The Committee is asked to note the award of tenders for capital works, including services related to works at Appendix 3.

Financial and Resources Implications

- 3.9** *Financial* – Costs for the Carson Tile are approx. £6k and will be met from non-recurrent monies.

Resources – Officer time to deliver as required

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

- 3.10** All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process. Installation of Carson Tile contributes to meeting the recommendations of the EQIA City Hall and City Hall Grounds in ensuring Council achieves a greater balance in terms of the persons who are depicted or represented within the grounds.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that a request from a Member for dual-language signage to be erected in the Marrowbone Millennium Park would be considered in the lead up to the project being completed.

Asset Management

The Committee:

Lands adjacent to Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre

- agreed to extend, until 11th September, 2023, the tri-partite licence between the Council, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Piperhill Construction Limited for a portion of Council land adjacent to Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre to be used as a contractor's compound, with the Council to receive a fee of £100 (plus VAT) per week;

Corporation Square Car Park, Girdwood Hub, Grove Playing Fields, Kent Street Car Park, Loughside Recreation Centre and Northumberland Street Car Park

- granted approval to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Northern Ireland Water to enable it, in the event of a major incident, to be granted licences to use the six sites for community water provision;

Picardy Avenue

- approved the disposal of a strip of land adjoining number 1 Picardy Avenue to the occupier, with the Council to receive a single premium payment of £4,000;

Ormeau Park

- granted approval to extend for a further nine months, from 1st April, 2023, the existing licence agreement with GEDA Construction for the use of contractor's compound at Ormeau Park in connection with the Flood Alleviation Project works currently being undertaken on the Ravenhill Road and surrounding areas, with the Council to receive a further licence fee of £7,575; and

Duncrue Estate

- approved the extension of the current term of the ground lease at Plot 27 and 41 Duncrue Estate to 125 years, from 2022, with the Council to receive a premium of £5,000.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Update on Contracts

The Committee:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

- 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
- noted the award of contracts by arc 21, on behalf the Council, as detailed in Table 5 below.

Table 1 - Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Dynamic purchasing system 'DPS' framework to supply a range of food products for Belfast Zoo and other Council catering operations	Up to 5 years	£1,530,000	J Greer	The DPS will provide a flexible, compliant and quicker solution to source a wide range of food products to support Belfast Zoo and internal catering team(s).
The appointment of delivery agent for Gateway to Choices service as part of Belfast Labour Market partnership *Previously approved Oct 21 for 4y&6m at £800k. Now reviewed due to £1.45m funding from DFC and DFE.	Up to 3 years and 3 months	£2,000,000	J Greer	The purpose of the partnership is to make employability and skills interventions more effective and support an inclusive approach to growth in the city.
Procurement of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Enterprise and Business Growth Framework	Up to 6 years	£6,000,000	J Greer	The DPS will be developed to complement and enhance the Enterprise and Business Growth 'EBG' Framework by providing additional, specialist support for businesses. The EBG

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

				framework has already been approved.
Supply, delivery and off-loading of rubber crumb for 3G and 4G pitches	Up to 3 years	£120,000	D Sales	To ensure 3G/4G pitches continue to meet all required H and S legislative requirements.
Consultancy for City Centre Residential Development	Up to 2 years	£160,000	C Reynolds	The continuation of consultancy services which was initially required to progress the Strategic Sites Assessment and Belfast Destination Hub work-streams and aligned with the Covid-19 Recovery Plan. The Strategic Sites Assessment has now progressed to real estate consultancy advice in relation to procuring an investment/development partner through a Competitive Dialogue Process.
West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership Network Support Project	Up to 3 years and 6 months	£135,000	S Toland	West DPCSP has articulated that they want the contractor in place for 3 years, but the funding is in year so needs to be subject to annual approval.
To appoint an Integrated Design Team (IDT) to provide design development services to support The Business Cluster and Community Grant Programme	Up to 10 months	£60,000	C Reynolds	It is proposed to commission an IDT will work with grant recipients to develop concept designs, provide advice regarding statutory approvals (Pavement Café Licence, Planning, utility connections) procurement and pricing schedules.
Insurance reinstatement valuations for council buildings	Up to 5 years	£150,000	T Wallace	Council buildings have not been revalued for insurance purposes for some time so current valuation are now out of date due to inflation,

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

				capital additions and other building alterations.
--	--	--	--	---

Table 2 - Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
SAP annual licence support	Up to 1 year	£53,000	T Wallace	Licenses are obtained directly from SAP	SAP UK Limited
Maintenance and support for SAP, SRM & VIM	Up to 1 year	£74,000	T Wallace	Continued maintenance and support from the incumbent SAP service provider is critical for the successful implementation of the new financial system.	HCL Technologies

Table 3 - Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Duration	Modification	SRO	Description	Supplier
T2136 Development of a Residential Strategy *Please note this request is retrospective	Up to 8 months	Additional 10 months	J Greer	This extension is to complete the works to provide a city centre living vision which will include an analysis on city centre residential development that would provide analysis of the latent demand in terms of quantum and product requirement. The value of the contract remains as per the original contract.	Savills

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

T2056 - Peace IV - Delivery of TechConnects – a cross community peace building programme for children & young people using digital technology Lot 3 - Young People (aged 17-24 years) *Please note this request is retrospective	Up to 2 years	Additional 4 months	S Toland	An extension is requested to 31 January 2023 to allow the project to complete deliverables. The contract extension has been approved by Shared City Partnership and PEACE IV Programme Board in October 2022	Belfast Metropolitan College
T1948 – Hire of grounds maintenance machinery, complete with operator, for use at various Council properties and locations *Please note this request is retrospective	Up to 3 years	Additional 4 months and £6,000	D Sales	An extension to allow for a new procurement exercise. An increase in value of £6K – 8% will be needed to allow work to continue. The original view was the contract would not be required during winter months and could be re-tendered later in the year ahead of the next spring/summer, but service continuity is now required over the winter months.	Clive Richardson Ltd
T2012 - West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership Network Support Project	Up to 3 years	Additional 3 months and £8,000	S Toland	West Belfast DPCSP Members had agreed for this project to be retendered to ensure no gap in service, with the new contractor expected to be in	Falls Community Council

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

				place from 1 January 2023. It was included in the 2022/2023 Belfast PCSP Action Plan that was submitted to the Joint Committee (external funders). Funders decided that they were not content to approve that the Network Support Project be retendered without an evaluation which has delayed the project.	
--	--	--	--	--	--

Table 4: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Appointment of company to support the delivery of a creative digital capacity building programme	Up to 6 months	£50,000	J Greer	Digital Catapult NI are the only organization in NI with their own Immersive Lab, based in Belfast and have access to a wide range of specialist mentors and industry to address the specific nature of the project. Digital Catapult NI are also working with the innovation team in relation to larger City Deal and Challenge funding projects	Digital Catapult NI
Requirement for a PEACE IV Finance & Systems Officer	Up to 9 months	£40,000	D Sales	The existing contracted provider for T1792 Provision	Honeycomb Recruitment

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

				of Temporary Agency Resources: Matrix SCM have confirmed they are unable to fulfil the required role of PEACE IV Finance & Systems Officer within the contractually agreed time period to find a suitable candidate.	
2x Environmental Health Officers and 1x Technical Support Officer required for 24hr shift rota cover for essential service delivery within the Port Health service (Fully funded)	Up to 6 months	Up to £100,000	S Toland	The existing contracted provider for T1792 Provision of Temporary Agency Resources: Matrix SCM have confirmed they are unable to fulfil the required role of 2x Environmental Health Officers and 1x Technical Support Officer within the contractually agreed time period to find a suitable candidate.	MCS Group
Requirement for PEACE IV Project Support Officer	Up to 9 months	£36,000	D Sales	The existing contracted provider for T1792 Provision of Temporary Agency Resources: Matrix SCM have confirmed they are unable to fulfil the required role of PEACE IV Project Support Assistant within the contractually agreed time period to find a suitable candidate.	Hays Recruitment

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

Table 5 - Contracts awarded by arc 21 on behalf of the Council

Contract Title	Duration	SRO
Municipal Waste Disposal Contract – Lot 2	Extend until 31st March, 2023	Cathy Matthews

Equality and Good Relations

Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 7th November, including the recommendations:

PEACE IV

Secretariat

- that any further programme underspends be redirected into the SSS theme to cover increased costs of construction for Forth Meadow Community Greenway.

CYP1 Tech Connects

- to approve the approach to redistribute the project equipment (Lego We Do kits, Laptops and iPads) via EOI to community organisations.

CYP 5 NIHE

- to extend NIHE projects (CYP5 and BPR1) to 31st March 2023, to allow additional time to meet revised targets; and
- to formally note the alternative training option to OCN and online delivery for the Foster Carers Network.

BPR 1 – NIHE

- to approve, in principle, the request for procurement of quantity surveyors for four CCANS place shaping plans, subject to further information and clarification being provided to support the viability of the plans.

BPR 4 - Corrymeela Facilitation

- to note that the final study visit was not viable, due to levels of participation.

BPR 5 – FSP – Roma

- to note a further request to modify the English language classes delivery and to amend Intercultural Navigator Advocacy Project (INAP) targets, noting that four participants of a proposed ten completed, subject to approval by SEUPB.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

BPR6 – St. Comgall's

- to approve an extension to 28th February 2023, to allow for changes to materials to be implemented; and
- to note the exhibition materials (oral histories) and educational resources (worksheets for schools) were being reviewed via an Equality Screening.

SSS Theme

- to approve, in principle, an extension of the Youth Civic Education project to 28th February 2023, subject to the submission of an implementation plan.

GOOD RELATIONS

- to note the award, under the delegated authority of the Director of Neighbourhood Services, of £700 to Shankill Women's Centre for its Christmas Market at Lanark Way on 1st December;
- to approve the use of the additional funding of £7,050 from The Executive Office for programming and animation at the new Urban Villages Colin Park, Páirc Nua Chollann;
- to note that a draft report on the Good Relations Audit and its draft findings would be discussed at its meeting in December, with Mr. Peter Osborne, who was developing the Audit, to be invited to the meeting, to enable Members to feed into the report prior to it being finalised in advance of the January meeting; and
- to note forthcoming events in which the Good Relations Team was involved.

Peace Plus

- to note that the Partnership:
 - agreed the proposed methodology for completing Stage 1 of the co-design process;
 - provided feedback on the process for the residents' survey to inform Stage 1 and agreed that SCP members would become involved in designing the survey; and
 - noted that, given the current resource needs, an exercise to recruit a PEACE Programme Manager had commenced, in accordance with Council procedures, with the associated costs

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

being able to be claimed retrospectively from SEUPB, as part of the Action Plan submission.

Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish Language Week 2023

The Committee agreed to defer until its meeting in December a report providing details of the events being planned to mark Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish Language Week in March 2023, to enable consultation to take place with Irish Language groups.

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 10th November and agreed that further discussions take place with the Knockagh Monument Joint Committee on how the Council could contribute, at no cost, to the work of the Joint Committee.

**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 4th November, as set out below:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2023 EVENTS						
City Site Seeing Tours and City Tours	11th February 2023	City Site Seeing Tours and City Tours Celebration – Reception and Dinner to thank and celebrate staff over recent years Numbers attending – 250 – 300	B and C	Charge £825	No hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality
Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast	24th August 2023	European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies (EFACIS) Conference Welcome Reception for guests attending their 3-day conference taking place in Queens. Numbers attending – 200	A & B	No (waivered as linked to Visit Belfast and Charity)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Ulster Journals Ltd.	14th September 2023	Ulster Tatler Awards 2023 Drinks Reception, Awards, Dinner and entertainment. Numbers attending - 350 - 400	B & C	Charge £825	No hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality
Political Studies Association of Ireland, QUB	21st October 2023	Political Studies Association of Ireland Annual Conference 2023 Dinner for guests attending their 3-day conference	A & B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

		taking place in QUB. Numbers attending – 90				
UK Space Agency	22nd November 2023	UK Space Agency Conference Dinner for guests attending their 3-day conference taking place in ICC Numbers attending – 400	A &B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
2024 EVENTS						
British Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society	7 March 2024	BOFAS Annual Scientific Meeting Conference Gala Dinner for guests attending their 3-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending – 250	A &B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast and Charity)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
British Thoracic Oncology Group	18 April 2024	BTOG Conference Gala Dinner for guests attending their 4-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending – 300	A &B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast and Charity)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group of 26th October.

Building Regulation Fees for Applications involving Insulation

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 At the People and Communities Committee meeting on 22nd September, it was requested that a report be brought back regarding the potential to waive Building Regulation inspection fees for applications which included the provision of insulation. A report was taken to that Committee on 8th November and was deferred for consideration by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the report and the potential to waive fees.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

- 3.1 The installation of loft insulation under the Northern Ireland Building Regulations is considered a controlled element and, therefore, requires a Building Regulations application. As such, there is typically a £60 chargeable fee for each application.
- 3.2 Cavity wall insulation is also a controlled element and requires a Building Regulations application but is specifically exempt from fees under the Building Regulations fees legislation. These are statutory fees set by the Department of Finance and collected by local councils to cover the cost of administration and facilitating the enforcement of Building Regulations
- 3.3 The processes involved in the administration and enforcement of Building Regulations involves processing applications and also the carrying out of Inspections to ascertain compliance with regulations. In reality fees collected for these types of works do not currently cover the costs involved in these processes.
- 3.4 In relation to both loft and cavity wall insulation, inspections are carried out by the Building Control Service to ascertain compliance with the regulations. For example, to ensure that there is adequate ventilation to the roof void to prevent condensation issues.
- 3.5 The Service has carried out some general analysis of the applications received over a four-year period (01/04/2018 - 31/03/2022) to include those which are solely for or include loft insulation as part of a range of measures. Over this period, it

is estimated that on average approximately 1350 applications have been received per year which have included works and fees for loft insulation. Based upon the £60 fee due for these applications, this would equate to an annual fee income of £81,000.

- 3.6 Much of the works being carried out to insulate properties is done as part of government funded schemes. For example, the Department for Communities (DfC) Affordable Warmth Scheme involves BCC working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to provide efficiency measures based upon referral criteria. For this scheme, the Building Regulation fees are covered within the grant funding provided, so the homeowner or tenant is not out of pocket. The same would apply to other schemes and where maintenance contracts are in place.
- 3.7 Having analysed the applications received over the four-year period, it is estimated that over 90% of the applications relating to loft insulation are carried out within funded schemes or contracts.
- 3.8 As such, it is understood that in these circumstances the burden of paying the Building Regulations fees is not borne by the homeowner and they would not benefit from waiving the fee. Rather, they would be retained within the scheme or contract. Given that these operate across the 11 council areas, there would be no guarantee that fees that are waived would be ringfenced for additional applications and measures to be installed in properties within Belfast.
- 3.9 The Service has discussed the waiving of Building Regulation fees with Legal Services who have advised that fees can be waived, but one of the conditions would be that any exemption from fees agreed should be time bound.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 Based upon the analysis carried out for the four-year period it is estimated that on average £81,000 of fees have been paid per year in relation to loft insulation. If fees were to be waived for a determined period, the loss in fee income could be assumed to be a pro rata value of this annual estimate.
- 3.11 Any reduction in income has not been factored into the current year-end projections or the 2023-2024 revenue estimates and rates setting process.

- 3.12 Administering applications and carrying out Inspections of the works will still be required to fulfil the statutory duties outlined. The Service are currently experiencing difficulty in recruitment and retention of Building Control Surveyors with competition from private and public sector and reducing income for areas of work not considered rate borne activity may impact on Service delivery.

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

- 3.13 There are no direct Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs implications.”

After discussion, the Committee agreed to waive Building Regulation inspection fees for those applications involving loft insulation which were not part of funded schemes or maintenance contracts.

**A Future Network For All - NIE Networks
RP7 Price Control Consultation**

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy submitted for the Committee’s approval a draft response to the consultation on NIE Network’s RP7 Price Controls. NIE had stated that the RP7 period, covering 2025 to 2031, would be critical in enabling the changes in the electricity network necessary to achieve the goals set out in the Department for Economy’s Energy Strategy and the recently enacted Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and had set out a series of proposals for consultation, which would be submitted to the Utility Regulator in March 2023 to inform the budget setting process.

The Committee approved the draft response, a copy of which can be accessed [here](#).

**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 2nd November.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Memorial to Baroness May Blood

The Committee agreed to refer to the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group a request from Councillor Murray for the creation of a permanent memorial to the late Baroness May Blood.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th November, 2022**

Use of the Ceremony Room, City Hall

The Committee agreed, at the request of the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor M. Kelly, that a report be submitted to a future meeting on the potential for the Ceremony Room in the City Hall, which was being used to accommodate staff, as part of the Covid-19 arrangements, to be reinstated for marriage and civil partnership ceremonies.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 8th November, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

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

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Verner.

Minutes

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

Declarations of Interest

Following a query, the Members were advised that the report in respect of item 3 (a), Community Provision Grants Update was an update report on previous allocations and that no decisions were required.

No Declarations were reported.

Schedule of Meetings 2023

The Committee approved the schedule of meetings for the People and Communities Committee as outlined below and agreed that all meetings would commence at 5.15 pm:

- Tuesday 10th January at 5.15 pm
- Tuesday 7th February at 5.15 pm
- Tuesday 7th March at 5.15 pm
- Wednesday 22nd March at 5.15 pm – Special - Housing Update
- Tuesday 4th April at 5.15 pm
- (No Meeting in May – Local Government Elections)
- Tuesday 6th June at 5.15 pm

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 8th November, 2022**

- Monday 26th June at 5.15 pm - Special - Youth Council
- Tuesday 8th August at 5.15 pm
- Wednesday 30th August at 5.15 pm – Special - Housing HIP Update
- Tuesday 12th September at 5.15 pm
- Wednesday 27th September at 5.15 pm – Special - Youth Council
- Tuesday 10th October at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 2nd November at 5.15 pm – Special – Housing Update
- Tuesday 7th November at 5.15 pm
- Tuesday 5th December at 5.15 pm
- Monday 18th December at 5.15 pm – Special - Youth Council

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.

Requests for the use of Belfast Parks 2023

The Committee considered requests seeking permission for the use of various parks and facilities during 2023, as follows:

- Belfast Vital / Emerge - Additional Dates – Boucher Road Playing Fields;
- Panoramic Wheel – Botanic Gardens; and
- Fundamania – Boucher Road Playing Fields.

The Members discussed the requests and stated that, whilst they acknowledged the value of such events to the city, they were keen to ensure that disruption for local residents was mitigated for where possible.

Following a query, the Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed that, as agreed at the August meeting, officers were currently liaising with the various stakeholders and Elected Members to arrange a ‘mop up’ meeting to consider the issues that had been raised immediately following this year’s events.

Several Members welcomed the meeting as they felt that there was learning that could be taken from this year’s events, specifically regarding noise and security. They stated that they were keen to progress a more collaborative approach with the event organisers and statutory partners to ensure the successful delivery of such events.

Some discussion ensued regarding areas that could be further improved, this included enhanced disability access and the provision of changing places facilities.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 8th November, 2022**

The Committee granted authority for the aforementioned requests and delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to:

- negotiate a fee where appropriate which recognised the costs to Council and endeavoured to minimise any negative impact on the immediate area and take account of the potential wider benefit to the city economy, in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Manager; and
- negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement to be prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to:
 - The organisers resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
 - Compliance with Coronavirus restrictions in place at the time of the event;
 - the organisers meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service, including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence.

The Committee also granted multiple year approval for Fundamania at the Boucher Road Playing Fields and the Panoramic Wheel at Botanic for a three-year period (2023 – 2025), with the provision that all events with a multiple year approval would be subject to an annual review. The Director of Neighbourhood Services was granted authority, under the scheme of delegation, to remove the permission for subsequent years, if necessary, based on findings from annual reviews and upon officer recommendation.

The Committee noted that the above recommendations were taken as a pre-policy position, in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Team.

Diesel-HVO Vehicle Emissions Trial Report

The Director of Resources and Fleet drew the Members' attention to a report detailing the findings of the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as a replacement for fossil diesel in terms of greenhouse gas and air quality emissions.

A Member referred to the use of palm oil in the production of HVO, stating that he had grave concerns regarding its use as it was not the sustainable alternative that it was purported to be.

The Members noted that in the twelve-month period September 2021 – August 2022, the Council Fleet had consumed approximately 1,062,693 litres of diesel of which 936,710 litres had been supplied from the bulk storage at Duncrue Complex. This represented approximately 88% of diesel usage and would be the figure affected by the transition to HVO.

The Director also referred to the AECOM fleet strategy report that had been commissioned in 2021. As a key interim measure, prior to introducing electric powered vehicles, AECOM had recommended that the fleet should be powered by a non-fossil fuel, namely HVO, a low carbon fuel with less pollutants in terms of air quality.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 8th November, 2022**

The Director advised that, following the recommendation, Resources and Fleet had run a trial on HVO during the summer of 2022 using a small cross section of fleet vehicles and she referred to the results, which included detail in respect of vehicle performance.

The Director outlined that the proposed transition from diesel to HVO would incur more cost, given the increased fuel costs due to worldwide events, HVO had now been quoted at £1.75 per litre. Extrapolating this cost variance of 30 pence per litre (for diesel) across the current 936,710 litres of bunker fuel would indicate an approximate annual uplift of £281k. She advised that these revised figures would be absorbed under Resources and Fleet Uncontrollable Costs for the financial year 2023/24.

The Committee noted the intention to transition all bunker fuelled vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as soon as it could be procured.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Community Provision Grants Update

(Mrs. M. Higgins, Lead Officer – Community Provision, attended in connection with this 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 information requested by members at P&C committee meeting in October 22.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

At October committee members requested that officers present the following information:

1. Analysis of how capacity and revenue grants had been allocated on a geographic basis previously.
2. Identification of capacity issues including potential solutions to this in terms of enhancing/increasing capacity to apply for, and be successful in availing of, these grants.
3. Further breakdown in relation to community of interest/targeting of section 75 groups.

3.2 Geographic analysis of awards

Council made the decision to make some level of award to all applications that were received through the last open call for Capacity and Revenue funding in 20/21. Awards were made across 4 bands with the allocation being linked to the score achieved, further detail on the allocations is provided below. The quality threshold was 50%. Members agreed to include a 4th funding band for groups falling below the quality threshold.

Capacity Building				
Funding Band	Scores	Maximum Award	Number of Applicants	Potential Allocation
1	70% and above	Up to £42,000	13	£548,600
2	60-69%	Up to £28,150	10	£281,500
3	50-59%	Up to £23,500	10	£235,000
4	49% and Below	Up to £9,700	1	£9,700
Revenue				
Funding Band	Scores	Maximum Award	Number of Applicants	Potential Allocation
1	70% and above	Up to £18,000	30	£558,000
2	60-69%	Up to £13,000	26	£338,000
3	50-59%	Up to £9,000	20	£180,000
4	49% and Below	Up to £3,000	8	£24,000

A breakdown of awards by geographic area and community of interest and the band that they were awarded funding is provided below. The highlighted row indicates the % allocation that each area would receive if the current population/deprivation figures were used.

3.4

Capacity Building Grant

	North	South	East	West	Total
% Allocation using Area model	25%	17%	24%	34%	100%
% of Successful Capacity Building Applications by Area	29.41%	26.47%	14.71%	29.41%	100%
Number of Organisations	10	9	5	10	34
Level of Award by Funding Band	B1-3	B1-3	B1-3	B1-4	B1-13
	B2-4	B2-2	B2-2	B2-2	B2-10
	B3-2	B3-4	B3-0	B3-4	B3-10
	B4-1	B4-0	B4-0	B4-0	B4-1
Allocation	£288,138.00	£276,900.00	£168,850.00	£287,448.12	£1,021,336.12

3.5

Revenue Grants for Community Buildings

	North	South	East	West	Total
% Allocation using Area Model	25%	17%	24%	34%	100%
% of Successful Revenue Applications by Area	33.33%	14.29%	11.90%	40.48%	100%
Number of Organisations	28	12	10	34	84
Level of Award by Funding Band	B1 -10	B1-2	B1-4	B1-14	B1-30
	B2-7	B2-5	B2-4	B2-10	B2-26
	B3-11	B3-1	B3-1	B3-7	B3-20
	B4-0	B4-4	B4-1	B4-3	B4-8
Allocation	£322,973.79	£122,000.00	£127,733.00	£412,698.84	£985,405.63

3.6 Identification and Response to Capacity issues

Council officers previously carried out an analysis of capacity issues with a range of community organisations in Summer/Autumn 2019. At that point the priority areas, as identified by the sector, were:

- Ensuring compliance with GDPR
- Financial planning
- Ensuring appropriate policies/procedures are in place

Council officers currently respond to these, and other identified needs, by providing mentoring support and training to groups and the team has also developed 3 toolkits; *Running a Community Organisation*, *Facilities Management*, and *Collaborative Working*, to support organisations. Officers will also support groups to access external funding opportunities.

Furthermore, the recent introduction of the micro/medium grant approach allowed 115 new organisations to access funding and develop experience in delivering small scale programmes in 20/21, 21/22 and 22/23.

Officers provide support for groups who wish to make applications for a range of Council funding and grants opportunities. In advance of the recent round of capacity and revenue funding officers provided 1-2-1 guidance to applicants, and also held

5 Information sessions with a total of 94 representatives from a wide range of organisations attending these sessions.

The sector has been significantly impacted by Covid 19 and the cost-of-living crisis which has seen many organisations review their areas of priority. Increasing costs have also created challenges with some organisations having to reduce their hours of operation. Community Development Officers and other staff are in regular contact with organisations at a local level and are aware of the challenges that they are experiencing.

Once decisions have been made in relation to the 23/26 Capacity and Revenue funding awards, officers will make contact with those organisations who were unsuccessful in receiving funding and offer support for them to plan services and access support through other means.

As per the City & Neighbourhood Department's 3-Year Business Plan, as well as in support of the draft actions identified under the 'Community and Neighbourhood Regeneration' theme of the Belfast Agenda Refresh 22-26 (e.g. 'Develop models for capacity building across all sectors and mainstream learning across the city'), officers will continue to review, revise and refresh our approaches to building capacity, and provision of community development support, working alongside stakeholders to ensure we are incorporating good/ best practice and responding to current and emerging needs.

3.7 Communities of interest/targeting of Section 75 groups

Capacity and Revenue Grants are administered through the Central Grants Unit within Council. Grants are widely advertised, and information is shared with officers from across council who can raise awareness of funding opportunities with groups and partners that they work with. The availability of these grants is promoted through a campaign which includes the placing of advertisements in local and regional newspapers as well as promotion across Belfast City Council's website, social media and officer networks. Applications to the Capacity & Revenue Grants, as with all grants through the Central Grants Unit, are open and equitable to all eligible organisations.

In addition, as outlined in 3.6, information sessions are held to provide further detail on the criteria and application process.

Council does not collect information specific to applications from S75 groups or community of interest groups. However, officers have carried out an analysis of the applications supported in the 2020/21 round of Capacity and Revenue funding which shows that

12% of Capacity Building and 16% of Revenue awards were made to organisations working with identified/or easily identifiable communities of interest. Capacity grant awardees included 2 BME, 1 LGBTQ+ and 1 Women's Group, and Revenue grant awardees included 8 Women's Centres, 3 BME and 2 Special Needs.

Prior to the advertising of the 23/26 Revenue and Capacity Grants Programme, officers sought approval from committee to ensure that the definition of 'community' within the guidance and criteria for the programme was extended to include communities of interest and as a result the guidance stated that the grants scheme was open to *'community development organisations that support, advocate and take action in relation to the interests of their members and communities, where communities will be defined as geographic communities and/or communities of interest.'*

3.8 Current applications

An initial analysis of the number of applications received for the 23/26 programme is outlined in the table below and shows the number of applications received by area compared with the area allocation model which is used for some council funding and is based on figures for population size and levels of deprivation within DEAs. Please note that these are initial figures that may differ once applications have been considered and scored (i.e. when the assessment stages is complete). It is worth noting that some organisations who previously applied have not on this occasion and that there is also a total of 27 new applicants to the 23/26 grant programmes, (18 – Revenue, 9 Capacity).

Area	Capacity	Revenue	Total	Allocation per area based on population size and deprivation	Capacity and Revenue Total %
North	12	26	38	25%	28.8%
South	10	14	24	17%	18.2%
East	6	11	17	24%	12.9%
West	15	38	53	34%	40.2%
Total	43	89	132	100%	100%

Officers will bring an update on the outcome of 23/26 application assessments to committee with options for an allocation approach in December 2022.

3.9 Financial Implications

All activity outlined in this report can be delivered within existing budgets.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

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

Several Members referred to the differing levels of allocation across the District Electoral Areas (DEAs) with discussion around South Belfast, specifically the low number of applications from the Balmoral area.

Discussion ensued regarding the ongoing issues that some organisations and groups had with capacity and how they could be assisted to optimize their ability to access the funding streams available.

During discussion the Members noted that there were often significant variances in the capacity from one group to another, with many simply not having the expertise to fill in the application forms as they were such small groups/organisations.

A Member encouraged the other Elected Members to liaise with these groups to ensure that they were aware of any funding opportunities and to also signpost them to where assistance might be available.

A further Member referred to the fact that monitoring statistics were not available for either geographic groups or Section 75 Groups.

Another Member also asked officers to investigate any assistance that might be available to people from the deaf community to help them with the application process.

The Lead Officer – Community Provision, advised that applications to these funding programmes were made via the online grants platform. Although the system sought information on the geographic and Section 75 background of participants this information was not regularly provided by applicants. She undertook to engage with the Central Grants Unit to explore ways in which this information could be sought on a mandatory basis. However, she advised that this could not be completed retrospectively and that it would take some time to amend the online system.

The Committee noted the update and agreed that officers would include an analysis of allocations on a DEA level in the December report and that they would engage with the Central Grants Unit to explore ways to gather and report on information on applicants from geographic and Section 75 backgrounds for future rounds of funding.

Tree Strategy (including a short presentation on the Strategy)

(Mr. A. McHaffie, Senior Woodland and Recreation Officer, and Ms. M. McAleer, Performance and Improvement Officer, attended in connection with this item.)

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. K. Rogers from Treeconomics, who joined remotely via Teams.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 8th November, 2022**

Mr. Rogers commenced by providing a brief overview of the key aspects of the work to date on the Belfast Tree Strategy 2022 – 2032, this included detail regarding the consultative process with the various stakeholders, including the public.

He referred to the future vision for woodlands, hedges, and tree provision in the city, detailing that the strategy proposed to incorporate the aims of the Council and key city partners and to also be reflective of existing programmes, such as, Belfast One Million Trees, the Belfast Local Development Plan, the Belfast Agenda and to ensure that the final strategy would ultimately link with Belfast's climate and well-being ambitions.

He drew the Members' attention to the vision of the Belfast Tree Strategy and discussed how this vision could be achieved, noting that the strategy would have a 10-year life span from its launch date and would set out a commitment to delivering key priorities and actions through a fully resources action plan which would be reviewed at approximately three yearly intervals.

The representative concluded by providing an overview of the targets, priorities and actions that had been identified, along with specific detail regarding how it was proposed that these could be delivered through the strategy.

The Committee then considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this summary report is to update Members on the outcome of the Belfast Tree Strategy Survey and final steps in the development of the Council's draft Tree strategy.**

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the report and:**

- 1. Note the results of the tree strategy survey and summary of respondent comments.**
- 2. Note the draft strategy and the final phase of consultation and engagement on it.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1 Following a procurement exercise, Council appointed Treeconomics to work with to produce a Tree Strategy for Belfast. Company details can be viewed via this link [About - Treeconomics](#) Treeconomics works internationally with community groups, research organisations, public bodies, municipalities, and private business to complete projects which highlight the value of trees. They have a wealth of experience in this area of work having**

worked on similar projects with Birmingham City Council producing The Urban Forest Master Plan Birmingham's Urban Forest Master Plan - Treeconomics ,The London Borough of Ealing and a tree study for the Royal Parks in Hyde Park , London.

- 3.2 The draft strategy focuses on the maintenance and development of the natural environment. Produced in accordance with national guidance, it is designed to provide robust and objective justification for future tree provision across Belfast.
- 3.3 In order to produce the draft strategy, we have engaged with key stakeholders through a series of workshops. Details of the stakeholders are acknowledged in the draft strategy and listed in the appendix of the report, available on mod.gov.
- 3.4 As an initial step and on the advice of key stakeholders, we invited the public to fill in a survey so we could capture people's views as to what they wanted to see in our tree strategy. This survey (available on mod.gov) ran via Your Say Belfast from 27 July to 27 August 2022 and received 615 responses which will help inform the strategy and future policy.
- 3.5 The strategy will have a 10-year lifespan from its launch date and will set out a commitment to delivering key priorities and actions in a fully resourced action plan which will be reviewed at approximately three yearly intervals starting from February 2023. The strategy will incorporate the aims of council and key city partners and will reflect existing programmes such as Belfast One Million Trees, the Belfast Local Development Plan, the Belfast Agenda and clearly links tree planting and management with Belfast's climate ambitions and the benefits that trees provide to health and wellbeing.
- 3.6 The proposed Belfast Tree Strategy lays out a clear vision:

'That Belfast is a city which focuses on protecting, enhancing and expanding its woodlands, hedges, and trees, connecting people to nature, and ensuring that these continue to be a major asset to everyone who lives, works, and visits our city.'
- 3.7 C&NS had hoped to issue the draft strategy in September 2022, but the volume of responses received was higher than anticipated and the project team needed more time to consider the views of the public and incorporate them into the final draft strategy which is attached at Appendix 2 and available on mod.gov. Consultation on the draft strategy will include its publication in December 2022 on Your Say Belfast and all stakeholders will have 12 weeks to comment on the document. This will be supported by several tree management webinars and education events aimed at community

groups during that period which will be publicised in the local media.

3.8 The Council received 615 responses to the initial public survey which ran in July and August of this year. A summary of the responses to the survey questions can be found in Appendix 4, available on mod.gov. A synopsis of the headline results included the following:

- Council received 615 responses from in total with the District Electoral Area (DEA) with the three highest number of respondents as follows.
- Botanic (Blackstaff, Central , Ormeau Stranmillis, and Windsor) with 160 respondents.
- Lisnasharragh (Cregagh, Hillfoot, Merok, Orangefield, Ravenhill and Rosetta) with 120 respondents
- Balmoral (Belvoir, Finaghy, Malone, Musgrave and Upper Malone) with 116 respondents.
- 95% of all responses came from the members of the public and every DEA returned a response.
- 93.5% of all respondents felt there are too few trees in Belfast
- 81.1% of respondents could see a tree from their property
- 92.7% of all respondents felt that Belfast would benefit from having a dedicated tree strategy in place.
- Approx.33% of all respondents disagreed/somewhat disagreed that street trees seemed well cared for in Belfast
- Approx. 88% of all respondents felt that trees are worth the financial cost of maintaining them.
- Approx. 78% of all respondents agreed that planting new trees on private property in Belfast is important.

3.9 In addition, to answering questions there was an opportunity to provide commentary and many respondents took time to do this providing feedback and insight about trees and what they mean to both Belfast's residents and visitors alike. A synopsis of the comments received included the following:

- Protecting Belfast's Tree's, woodlands, and hedges for future generations
- Producing a comprehensive tree strategy for the city and moving forward with its delivery
- Environmental education, community, and volunteer opportunities to get involved with the delivery of the strategy
- Concerns regarding tree felling, tree management, health and safety, woodland, and hedgerow maintenance
- Tree provision and planting to ensure equality of distribution across the City

- Planning advice and concerns regarding trees
 - Biodiversity and concerns for native species
 - Environmental and climate change concerns
- 3.10 Treeconomics will be present at committee and will deliver a short presentation to members that will provide the committee with a summary of the key aspects of the work to date and future actions needed to deliver the strategy. The presentation will cover
- the history and current state of the Urban Forest
 - the future vision for Woodlands, Hedges and trees provision in the city
 - the action plan in particular the Targets, Priorities and Actions identified to deliver the strategy
- 3.11 The Belfast tree strategy 2023 -2033 and the associated action delivery plan will be taken forward by relevant staff from City and Neighbourhood Services and Council partners as identified in the action plan that will accompany the strategy. It is proposed that this action plan will be independently evaluated in February 2024 following year one and at three yearly intervals thereafter. The reports produced will be presented to elected members of this committee for review and comments post evaluation and review by CNS DMT. Council will also comply with any associated monitoring requirements as set out by external funders of the strategy and agreed by council.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.12 The project total to date is £30k. The Council has contributed £20k and provision from this was made from existing revenue estimates. The remaining £10k was kindly provided by the Woodland Trust.
- 3.13 Resourcing of staff and equipment required to deliver the strategy and associated activity for Years 1 to 3 will be included in the Action plan which will be reported to members in February/March of 2023

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.14 An equality screening exercise and rural needs assessment will be carried out and approved by the Council's Equality and Diversity Officer for issue with the draft strategy."

During discussion, the Members highlighted the following points:

- the use of plastic protection covering on whips and whether this could be replaced by a biodegradable alternative;

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 8th November, 2022**

- the better use of educational campaigns to promote the benefits of trees in the city, including the trees in the city challenge;
- the lack off and need for more green spaces in the city;
- the need for utility companies to try and find better alternatives when accessing sites, to avoid cutting down established trees;
- the use of tree planting in helping to alleviate flooding issues;
- the use of small ornamental trees in built up areas, for example, alleyways;
- the need for a proper and established maintenance programme for trees in the city; and
- the possibility of tree giveaways to try and encourage people to plant trees on their own properties.

A Member raised the issue of Tree Protection Orders and whether these could be extended across the City but was advised that this was within the remit of the planning Committee.

During discussion in regard to Street Trees, the Senior Woodland and Recreation Officer advised that he was currently liaising with representatives from the Department for Infrastructure who were also keen to plant more trees in the city. He advised that both the Council and DfI were keen to plant more trees, but that cognizance needed to be given to the location of utilities.

At this stage in proceedings the Chairperson thanked Mr. Rodgers for his input, following which he left the meeting.

The Committee:

- agreed to recommend to the Planning Committee that it give consideration to extending Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) across the city;
- noted the results of the tree strategy survey and summary of respondent comments; and
- noted the draft strategy and the final phase of consultation and engagement.

**Building Regulation fees for applications
including insulation**

(Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control, and Mr. I. Harper, Building Control Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Planning and Place took the Committee through a report which considered the potential to waive Building Regulation inspection fees for applications which included the provision of insulation.

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to enable it to be considered as part of the overall rate setting process.

**Liaison Agreement for the Investigation
of Work-Related Deaths**

The Director of City Services drew the Members' attention to the updated Liaison Agreement between Northern Ireland District Councils, the Health and Safety Executive for NI (HSENI), the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI) available [here](#). She explained that this document enabled the various statutory agencies to work together effectively during investigations of work-related deaths.

The Members noted that the original document had been signed in 2007 and this revised protocol ensured that the agreement was up to date with current legislation and practice.

The Committee agreed that the Council sign up to the revised Liaison Agreement for the Investigation of Work-Related Deaths.

**Update on Air Quality Detailed Assessment
for Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and Fine Particulate
Matter (PM_{2.5})**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The Committee will be aware that the council has appointed Aecom Consultants via a competitive tender process to undertake a detailed ambient air quality assessment for the Belfast City Council area for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). The council has declared four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) across the city for a combination of exceedances of annual and 1-hour mean nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) air quality objectives. These exceedances are related principally to road transport emissions and so the AQMAs encompass arterial road routes. No AQMAs are currently declared for particulate matter (PM₁₀). Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) is not currently in regulation for the purposes of the council's statutory local air quality management functions but it is nevertheless being addressed as a component of the detailed assessment process.**
- 1.2 Information concerning progress with the detailed assessment was last formally provided to Committee at its meeting of 9th November 2021 as a component of a wider Air Quality Monitoring Report (Agenda item 9).**
- 1.3 At the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 11th October 2022, the Committee requested that a report be brought to the November or December 2022 meeting concerning**

progress with the detailed assessment. This report serves to address that request.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- Note the contents of this report.
- Consider whether the formal presentation by Aecom for the detailed assessment project can be considered as an agenda item at either the February or March 2023 scheduled meeting of the People and Communities Committee, or whether the Committee would wish to receive the presentation at a special meeting of the Committee.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1** The Committee will be aware that the detailed assessment for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) is comprised of a number of key components; namely, additional ambient monitoring for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}); automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) surveys to more accurately characterise the local road fleet and road transport emissions; development of an emission inventory for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) for the Belfast City Council area and; detailed atmospheric dispersion modelling studies to identify the location and geographic extent of any exceedances of UK, European or World Health Organisation (WHO) air quality objectives, standards or guideline values. The Committee is advised that the WHO global air quality guideline values have been updated since the detailed assessment project was commenced.
- 3.2** In addition to the council's extensive air quality monitoring network, Aecom had recommended the installation of an additional six Zephyr small scale air quality monitors for NO₂ and PM_{2.5}, located so as to characterise principal sources of these pollutants across the city in greater detail. The monitors have therefore been located on the A55 Upper Knockbreda Road adjacent to St. Bernard's Primary School in order to characterise road transport related ambient concentrations at this location; at Clara Street in order to characterise local domestic related concentrations; at the boundary of George Best Belfast City Airport; adjacent to the A12 Westlink to characterise road transport concentrations; at Mount Eagles Glen in order to characterise domestic, transport and other sources of NO₂ and PM_{2.5} at this location, and at Lombard Street in the city centre in

order to characterise the concentrations of NO₂ and PM_{2.5} to which those visiting, living and working in the city centre are being exposed.

- 3.3 It should be noted that the Belfast Harbour have separately installed additional Zephyr small scale air quality monitors across the harbour area in order to characterise ambient air quality at that location. It is understood that data from the Belfast Harbour monitoring network will be made available to Aecom as an addition to the detailed assessment monitoring data. Members will be aware that Belfast Harbour Commissioners are a key partner and contributor to development and implementation of the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026.
- 3.4 Ambient monitoring was undertaken by Aecom during 2021, into early 2022, with ownership of the monitors and responsibility for their operation now transferred to the council. The Zephyr small scale air quality monitors have been retained in their locations and continue to be operated pending the outcome of the detailed assessment, whereupon they may be relocated to focus on any new areas of exceedance identified through the detailed assessment.
- 3.5 A monitoring report is presently being finalised by Aecom and it is proposed that a 'standalone' monitoring report will be added to the Member's Library once completed. The monitoring data will additionally be used to validate, verify and adjust the subsequent dispersion modelling studies for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}); and it will form a component of the final project report and presentation to Committee.
- 3.6 Whilst the monitoring report and data interpretation are not yet finalised, Aecom have indicated that there were no exceedances of the statutory Air Quality Strategy objectives at the Zephyr monitoring locations, with the exception of scaled data for the A12 Westlink site, which exhibited monitored NO₂ concentrations in excess of the 40 µgm⁻³ annual mean objective during 2019 and 2021. Aecom have added that it is important to note that this site is located immediately adjacent to the A12 Westlink and so when the data is adjusted for distance, it is likely that the site would not exceed the annual mean objective at a location of relevant human health exposure. This comment is in keeping with Belfast City Council's nitrogen dioxide monitoring data and conclusions detailed within, '*Section 2.2 Comparison of Monitoring Results with Air Quality Objectives*' of the council's 2022 Air Quality Progress Report. For PM₁₀, annual mean concentrations were below the 40 µgm⁻³ annual mean objective during 2019 and 2021 for ratified and scaled data. Whilst Aecom have considered the monitoring data against the WHO Air Quality Guidelines detailed

in the 2005 Global Update, council officers have asked Aecom to reconsider the data against the 2021 revised WHO values in the final monitoring report. However, preliminary ratified and scaled annual mean concentrations for PM_{2.5} across the Zephyr monitoring sites ranged from approximately 7.1 – 13 µgm⁻³ in 2019 and from approximately 7 – 12.1 µgm⁻³ in 2021. These concentrations are above the 2021 WHO recommended annual air quality guideline level of 5 µgm⁻³ for PM_{2.5}.

- 3.7 Aecom are currently completing an emissions inventory for the Belfast City Council area in conjunction with the council's Air Quality Officers and undertaking preliminary dispersion modelling and associated model validation, verification and adjustment works. The emissions inventory comprises data derived from the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, road transport and road geometry data obtained from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads, industrial emissions data from the Public Register for Pollution, Prevention and Control Permitted Processes, and relevant activity data for the Port of Belfast and George Best Belfast City Airport, etc.
- 3.8 The Committee will be aware that the detailed assessment project is scheduled to conclude at the end of March 2023. As part of the project reporting requirements, Aecom is to provide a formal presentation to the People and Communities Committee in February or March 2023. The Committee is invited therefore to consider whether the project presentation by Aecom can be considered as an agenda item at either the February or March 2023 scheduled meeting of the People and Communities Committee or whether the Committee would wish to receive the Aecom detailed assessment presentation at a special meeting of the Committee, on a date to be agreed.
- 3.9 As an addendum to this report, the Committee is invited to note that the council's 2022 Air Quality Progress Report, which was considered at Committee on 9th August 2022, has been appraised by the technical assessors, it has been accepted and it is available via the DAERA NI Air website as follows:
<https://www.airqualityni.co.uk/laqm/district-council-reports#511>

Finance and Resource Implications

3.10 **Financial**

There are no financial or resource implications for the council in connection with this report. The Committee is advised that in addition to revenue funding from the council supporting this detailed air quality assessment project, the assessment is also being supported by the Department of Agriculture, Environment

and Rural Affairs (DAERA) through the local air quality management grant process.

3.11 Human Resources

There are no human resource implications for the council in connection with this report. The detailed assessment project is being delivered from within existing Environmental Protection, Public Health and Housing Unit staffing resources.

3.12 Asset and Other Implications

There are no asset or other implications for the council in connection with this report.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment implications for the council in connection with this report.”

The Committee noted the update and agreed to convene a special meeting of the People and Communities Committee during February 2023, at which representatives from the appointed consultants, Aecom, would present an update on the detailed assessment project.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Community Infrastructure Pilots

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the proposed Community Infrastructure Pilot approved by Committee on 9th November 2021.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note and approve the update in terms of revised governance and timescales for the Community Infrastructure Pilot projects.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

Community infrastructure is commonly defined as a complex system of facilities, programmes, and social networks that aims to

improve people's quality of life. These services, networks and physical assets work in tandem to form the foundation of a strong neighbourhood.

- 3.2** During Summer/Autumn 2021, Council commenced their engagement process to update the community plan for Belfast, the Belfast Agenda. The need to build and enhance community infrastructure and to contribute to neighbourhood regeneration across the four quadrants of the city has been identified as a priority and is a key commitment in the draft refreshed Belfast Agenda plan (due to be formally consulted on Jan-Mar 2023).
- 3.3** Committee (alongside Area Working Groups) previously considered reports in May and November 2021 which agreed the approach proposed within them (namely the development of Community Infrastructure Pilots) to help address weak community infrastructure in targeted localities, with members subsequently deciding that there should be 8 pilot projects developed (2 per area – N, S, E & W, rather than the 4 – one per area of the city initially proposed).
- 3.4** It was agreed that Neighbourhood Integration Managers, supported by the Neighbourhood Services Manager aligned with community planning and the community provision review, within Neighbourhood Services/CNS would lead on developing and delivering the approach, working alongside identified internal and external stakeholders, and key communities/community groups within the 8 areas selected. The table below, outlines the NIM for each area, as well as the areas chosen by members for targeting.

East Neighbourhood Integration Manager – Kathy Watters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ormiston DEA – Braniel • Lisnasharragh DEA – Clonduff
South Neighbourhood Integration Manager – Denise Smith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Botanic DEA – Ballynafeigh (including Annadale) • Balmoral DEA – Finaghy
North Neighbourhood Integration Manager – Eimear McCullough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oldpark DEA – Mid Antrim Road (Limestone/Glandore) • Castle DEA – Lower Shore Road
West Neighbourhood Integration Manager – Alice McGlone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colin DEA – Black's Gate (former Visteon site) • Court DEA – Glencairn

3.5 Explanation for delay – resource pressures within CNS/Neighbourhood Services

Planned development and delivery of the initiative has been significantly impacted since committee/council approval was given in late 2021. In particular, the high level of vacancies which have existed within Neighbourhood Services (95 posts as at October 2022), has adversely impacted on the delivery of business-as-usual activities as well as any new or emerging work. In addition, in early 2022, the departures of both the Neighbourhood Services Director and one of the four Neighbourhood Services Managers, meant that the capacity of the senior team was also reduced by 40% for several months. These factors, along with the need to reinstate business-as-usual activities which had been de-prioritised during Covid, severely impacted the ability to progress the pilot initiatives.

However, as per the recent updates to Area Working Groups – there has been a realignment of portfolio areas with one NSM now focussed on community funding and capacity and neighbourhood integration – specifically supported by the NIMs as well as staff within the Belfast Health Development Unit and Community Resource Unit to take forward more developmental, opportunistic and problem-solving related actions – as identified by members and via community planning. Now that the fourth Neighbourhood Services Manager is in post (from October 2022), it will mean that this team will have more capacity – certainly in the last quarter of the year to pick up some of the priority developmental action (albeit with a caveat that there is now an urgent need to take forward member and community priorities in relation to addressing cost-of-living pressures).

Appendix 2 (available on mod.gov) outlines in more detail the actions identified under the draft Belfast Agenda Community and Neighbourhood Regeneration theme, you will see that these include development of four place-based community plans, as well as to develop local demonstrator interventions, models for capacity building, and new and innovative ways of strengthening civic voice and participation – as well as a number of other actions relevant to what was originally intended by Council in taking forward the community infrastructure pilots. Incorporating these aims within community planning will allow us to broaden the approach to include other partners, maximising opportunities for collaborative gain and focus.

3.6 Neighbourhood Integration linkages with Community Planning

It had been previously recommended to establish a new advisory group for developing and overseeing the Community

Infrastructure Pilots initiative which would be made up of representatives from the Living Here Board, AWGs, DfC, NICVA, NIHE, Volunteer Now and relevant BCC staff. However, as work has developed over the past year in relation to community planning and refreshing the Belfast Agenda (particularly under the 'Community and Neighbourhood Regeneration' theme) officers are now recommending that the group which has been established to develop and deliver the action plan under this theme is potentially best placed to consider how we (Council and wider stakeholders) improve our community capacity building approaches going forward (as per the draft actions outlined in 3.6). Core membership of this group includes: BCC, BHSCT, DfC, NIHE, PHA, PSNI, SPPG (formerly HSCB) along with reps from each of the Belfast Area Partnerships (North rep selected via North NRPs) and two reps from the VCSE Panel under Community Planning.

3.7 In-year actions

Neighbourhood Integration Managers have been working alongside key staff from across CNS and wider Council on an area basis during 2022/23 – and this has included work and engagement within the localities identified for targeting within the original community infrastructure pilot approach. However, during this time the NIMs have also been tasked with supporting a broad range of other developmental efforts such as Covid response and recovery funding-main link for strategic and thematic partners, introduction of Social Supermarkets, Urban Villages (planning/community engagement/monitoring), thematic working in support of community planning (connectivity-Complex Lives-Children & Young People), being the key 'area' link and navigator internally (obo Directors, Senior Managers and members) as well as externally obo VCSE and statutory partners and stakeholders.

3.8 Financial & resource implications

P&C Committee originally agreed 15k per area (x 4) in May 2021, community infrastructure pilots were referenced in a broader report on 'Community Development and Capacity Building Support' brought to P&C Committee in November 2021 which stated, 'further detail will be provided the next round of Area Working Groups when areas will be selected.' AWGs then met during Nov and Dec 2021 with a proposal tabled that each AWG should select two pilot sites and that 15k per pilot would be allocated for a 2-year period (from Apr 22 to Mar 24). A subsequent report was then taken through SP&R Committee in December 2021 which noted the 8 pilots (2 per area) selected by the AWGs.

3.9 In each of the reports from that time, it was stated that *'all financial resources outlined in this report can be delivered through existing*

budgets' and it was originally intended to use departmental underspends to provide funding for the pilots.

Members will be aware of the current deficit reported to SP&R in August and that all underspends are to be used to address these significant costs in-year.

Updated forecasts for Quarter 2 are due to be reported to SP&R on 18th November. Finance colleagues are aware of the priority of these pilots and are currently working to identify how these costs might be met from future departmental underspends or the realignment of specified reserves as part of the medium term financial plan in line with the other pressures facing the council at this time.

In late December/early January, Council will also finalise decisions on the Capacity and Revenue Grant funding awards. Thus, early in the New Year, we will have a clearer position in relation to available budget, as well as knowledge of who will be the lead capacity building Council-funded organisations for the next 3-year period 23/24-25/26, and furthermore we will have the final version of the refreshed Belfast Agenda produced in March 2023, meaning that we will then be able to review how best we improve our efforts to address capacity at a citywide and neighbourhood level.

Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.10 The activity outlined in this report will be Equality and Rural Needs screened as part of the screening exercise on the overall Community Planning approach."**

A Member welcomed the report but stated that she felt it was a complex approach, she suggested that a meeting be arranged to enable officers and Elected Members to further explore any short-term actions that could be taken to try and improve community capacity in the participating areas.

Discussion ensued regarding the specific lack of community capacity in certain geographic areas and the need to ensure that communities of interest were assisted.

The Committee noted the report and agreed that a meeting be convened between officers and Elected Members to further explore any short-term actions that could be taken to support the participating areas identified in the Community Infrastructure Pilot.

Installation of Gates at Crescent Park

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

Operational Issues

Pre-Loved Toys – Pilot

The Director of Resources and Fleet advised the Members that, during early October 2022, Council officers had met with Councillor Groogan to explore the possibility of launching a pre-loved toys scheme which would aim to ease the financial burden on families during these challenging times. They were reminded that this suggestion had been raised previously as a Motion.

The Director advised that officers had discussed the scheme with their counterparts in neighbouring councils which had operated similar successful initiatives in recent years, to establish good practice and to fast-track the project.

She reported that it was proposed that the pilot would accept a range of pre-loved toys at the Council's four recycling centres over a 3–4-week period in November. The toys would be stored in the re-use containers and East Belfast Mission (EBM), the organisation that currently collects re-use materials from the containers, and it had agreed to include the pre-loved toys in their collection round.

The Members were advised that a social media campaign would inform the public as to which pre-loved toys were suitable for the scheme and the EBM would assess the toys for acceptability for sale and/or onward gifting. The EBM would store the toys and distribute to the distribution partners/charities. The toys would then be sold at a reduced rate by the distribution partners to members of the public or also be gifted by these parties. She reported that the distribution partners who had indicated a willingness to participate had established outlets located on main arterial routes; Newtownards Road (East), Park Centre off Falls Road (West), Antrim Road (North) and Botanic Avenue (South).

The Director advised that, at the end of the pilot, the scheme would be evaluated to determine its success and to enable any learning points to be captured and considered for any similar future schemes.

A Member welcomed the scheme and stated that she felt this would be a valuable pilot to study from a learning perspective as other potential schemes, such as a school uniform scheme, could learn from the pilot.

A Member raised the fact that other organisations or groups might also wish to be involved with the distribution in their local areas.

The Director stated that the proposed distribution partner list was not exclusive and advised the Members that should other groups or organisations be interested they should be asked to contact her, however, she reiterated the extremely tight timescales involved.

The Committee granted delegated authority to the Director of Resources and Fleet to operate a pre-loved toys scheme in line with the proposal set out in the report and noted that should other groups or organisations be interested in helping with the distribution of the toys that their details should be forwarded to the Director.

Enforcement Action within Smoke Control Areas

(Mr. A. Curran, Environmental Protection Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 At its hybrid meeting of 9th August 2022, under restricted agenda item 2e, wherein the Committee considered the Belfast City Council 2022 Air Quality Progress Report, as part of the resultant discussion concerning the Progress Report, a member of the Committee asked for an update on enforcement action within the smokeless zones across the city. This report serves to address that request.**
- 1.2 The Committee is advised that within Northern Ireland, statutory smoke control functions and enforcement are provided for via the Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 and so is reflective of common industrial and domestic combustion processes and abatement technologies of that time.**
- 1.3 Under the auspices of the above legislation, Smoke Control Areas were created to control emissions of smoke from industrial premises and homes in the city at a time when there was a greater reliance on coal fired appliances as the primary heating source for domestic premises. A grant was provided to domestic occupiers to assist with the conversion to approved ‘smokeless’ appliances.**
- 1.4 Within Smoke Control Areas, residents are required to use authorised fuels commonly known as ‘smokeless fuels’ unless an exempt appliance has been installed. Businesses and industries are also required to take steps to ensure that dust, fumes grit and gases are minimised.**
- 1.5 Smoke control works were substantially completed for the Belfast City Council area towards the late nineties, with most of the developed areas of the city designated as Smoke Control Areas, with the exception of the mountainous areas to the west / north west of the city, the port area and those areas subsumed from neighbouring councils under the 2015 Local Government Reform that were not designated as Smoke Control Areas by their previous council.**
- 1.6 In view of more recent legislative controls for industrial and commercial activities, combined with consumer preferences for alternative heating systems such as gas, oil and renewable**

technologies, the prevalence of solid fuel appliances in use across the city has declined over recent years. Accordingly, whilst particulate matter (PM₁₀) continues to be monitored at a number of locations across the city, concentrations do not currently warrant action under the Council's local air quality management processes and objectives. The Committee will be aware that our current Air Quality Management Areas, which have been designated along a number of the city's arterial routes, combined with our 2021-2026 Air Quality Action Plan, are primarily aimed at addressing the few remaining transport related nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) hotspots.

- 1.7 The Council continues to use its range of enforcement powers to address ambient air quality issues and complaints using a proportionate and graduated approach.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to

Note the contents of this report.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Committee is advised that the Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 was commenced on 10th February 1981 and includes a number of statutory tools for addressing emissions of particulate matter in order to improve ambient air quality. The legislation is reflective of common industrial and domestic combustion processes and abatement technologies of that time.
- 3.2 The Order contains a general provision at Article 3 relating to the prohibition of dark smoke from chimneys, i.e., '*Subject to the provisions of this Order, dark smoke shall not be emitted from a chimney of any building, and if, on any day, dark smoke is so emitted, the occupier of the building shall be guilty of an offence*'. Dark smoke is defined as smoke which, if compared in the appropriate manner with a chart of the type known on 9th June 1964 as the Ringelmann Chart, would appear to be as dark as, or darker than shade 2 on that chart.
- 3.3 The Order also addresses dark smoke from industrial or trade premises at Article 4, and smoke, grit and dust from furnaces at Articles 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13. These interventions have however largely been superseded by newer emissions control legislation. The Industrial Pollution Control (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 and more recently the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013, recognise that

certain industrial processes and activities can cause harm to the surrounding environment and as a consequence, those activities must be operated under a permit. Within Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) regulates what are referred to in legislation as the larger and potentially more polluting Part A and B activities, whereas district councils regulate smaller Part C installations for emissions to air only. Permits relating to combustion and incineration activities routinely include detailed ambient air pollution emission limits for sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO) and total particulate matter, along with monitoring and compliance conditions. Permits for other industrial activities that involve dust generation also routinely include emission limits, monitoring and compliance requirements for particulate matter. Medium combustion plant and specified generators have also recently become regulated under the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013.

- 3.4 Articles 14 and 15 of the Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 address chimney heights to ensure that chimneys are installed to avoid the potential for nuisance from smoke, grit, dust or gas emissions. At present, chimney height matters are mostly dealt with as a component of the council's local air quality management functions through the planning process, via the submission of a rigorous Air Quality Impact Assessment for a proposed development. The Committee will be aware that the Belfast City Council 2022 Air Quality Progress Report, considered by Committee during its meeting of 9th August 2022, contained at, '*Section 4 Planning Applications*' a list of major new developments across the city that had the potential to have a negative impact on ambient air quality during the 2021 period, where ambient air quality impacts were managed through the planning process.
- 3.5 Under Article 17 of the Order, which relates to Smoke Control Areas, a council may declare the whole or any part of its district as a Smoke Control Area. If on any day, smoke is emitted from a chimney of any building within a Smoke Control Area, the occupier of that building shall be guilty of an offence, unless they can prove that the fuel used was authorised or that the appliance used are approved by the Departments and are capable of not producing smoke.
- 3.6 A list of currently authorised fuels for Northern Ireland, including inherently smokeless generic fuels such as anthracite, semi-anthracite, electricity, gas and low volatile steam coals, is available via the following Defra weblink:
<https://smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/fuels.php?country=northern-ireland>

- 3.7 It should be noted that home heating oil is not an authorised fuel as it is not inherently smokeless but under the subordinate legislation, appliances using oil are exempt from the provisions of Article 17 of the Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. This exemption is conditional upon the appliance being installed, maintained and operated so as to minimise the emission of smoke.
- 3.8 Currently exempted combustion appliances within Northern Ireland and any associated exemption conditions are available via the following Defra weblink:
<https://smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/appliances.php?country=northern-ireland>
The exempted appliances listed typically include what are termed multi-fuel stoves, wood burning stoves, wood pellet stoves, room heater stoves or various light and ultra-light boilers. The exemption process is presently administered by the Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme (HETAS) and involves the manufacturer of the appliance demonstrating through accredited emissions testing that the appliance can achieve permitted smoke emissions limits that are related to the appliance's output in kilowatts.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-exemption-of-an-appliance-in-a-smoke-control-area>
- 3.9 When a Smoke Control Area was declared by a council, domestic property owners were able to claim a grant of up to 70% of the approved adaptation expenditure incurred in complying with the requirements of the Smoke Control Area, providing that the house was built before 1st March 1969 and was not in the ownership of the NIHE or Housing Association. The grants were funded by the Council (30%) and DoENI / DAERA (40%).
- 3.10 Reasonable works in connection with compliance or adaptation works included; adapting or converting a fireplace; replacing any fireplace with another fireplace or some other means of heating or cooking; altering a chimney which serves a fireplace; providing gas ignition, electric ignition or any other special means of ignition; or carrying out any other incidental operation.
- 3.11 The Committee is advised that the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland (DoENI), now the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), issued guidance in October 2006 concerning, '*Policy Guidance on Smoke Control Areas LAQM.SCANI(06)*'. The guidance advises that there are a number of situations where a district council may consider it appropriate to declare a Smoke Control Area. For example, as part of a strategy to improve local air quality, where there is evidence of elevated concentrations of emissions from coal burning, or as part of an Action Plan within an Air Quality Management Area.

The Committee will be aware that the principal focus of the council's recently adopted Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 is to address the few remaining transport related nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) 'hot spots' within our four Air Quality Management Areas. There is no evidence to support the need for further Smoke Control Areas in the undesignated areas and nor has funding provision been agreed with DAERA to support grants to householders.

- 3.12 All complaints are investigated using a graduated approach and in the first instance, officers will seek to establish if the smoke is due to lighting up which is permissible. Thereafter, advice will be provided to the occupier/homeowner on the types of fuels that are permissible for use within Smoke Control Areas. Whilst the Council has the power to prosecute for offences under the Order, officers will always seek to use a graduated approach to achieve compliance. Complaints are mostly resolved through dialogue and advice.
- 3.13 To support compliance, we highlighted our smoke control areas in June 2022 as part of this year's Clean Air Day promotions. Officers are presently developing an awareness campaign with Corporate Communications, to be delivered during the colder winter months via the council's social media channels, to highlight our smoke control areas and the use of authorised fuels. We are also working with the Community Awareness Team to incorporate key air quality messages into their schools education programme which will include this aspect of air quality.
- 3.14 In light of the current cost of living crisis however, any enforcement action taken must be proportionate and in the public interest. A person guilty of an offence under Article 17 Smoke Control Areas is liable upon summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (£1,000).

Finance and Resource Implications

Financial

- 3.15 There are no financial or resource implications for the council in connection with this report.

Human Resources

- 3.16 There are no human resource implications for the council in connection with this report. Smoke control enforcement works are undertaken by staff within the Environmental Protection, Public Health and Housing Unit from within existing resources.

Asset and Other Implications

- 3.17 There are no asset or other implications for the council in connection with this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.18 There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment implications for the council in connection with this report.”

A Member sought further clarity in respect of data around the number of enforcements actions taken and the specific number of households that were not covered by smokeless zones.

A further Member raised the issue of emissions from bonfires and the impact on Air Pollution.

Following discussion, the Committee noted the report and agreed that officers would meet with Councillor O’Hara to discuss further the specific data around smokeless zone areas.

Chairperson

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 22nd November, 2022

SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

In attendance: Mr. D. Bone, City Services Manager;
Ms. V. Donnelly, City Protection Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were recorded from Councillors Cobain and Maghie.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Update from NIHE on New Build Programme

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Ms. F. McGrath, Head of Place Shaping Belfast, and joining remotely, Mr. A. Hannaway, Interim Regional Manager, and Ms. H. Russell, Housing Solutions Manager, representing the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).

The Head of Place Shaping Belfast advised the Members that the update report on the Social Housing Development Programme for the period 2022/23 (figures as at, 17th November 2022), had been circulated with the agenda and she drew their attention to the following key points:

- social housing completions – 180;
- social housing units under construction currently 1619; and
- 1,409 units programmed to start through the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP).

She outlined the current demographic trends and the resultant social waiting list needs, and apprised the Committee regarding the performance by the Housing Executive in relation to new build start and completion and future delivery timescales.

In response to a Member's question in regard to the energy efficiency ratings for new builds, the NIHE Representative advised that, where possible, Housing Associations were including solar panels and heat pumps amongst other efficiency measures.

**Special People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 22nd November, 2022**

The Member stated that he would like to see the NIHE activity encouraging the Housing Associations to increase such measures to ensure that all new builds had above average energy ratings.

A further Member welcomed the Community Planning linkages between the Council and Housing Executive and encouraged the Housing Executive to also liaise with the Housing Associations regarding the future Place Shaping of areas, along with the Department for Communities (DfC). He emphasised that when Place Shaping were considering housing schemes it was not just about addressing housing need but also building communities.

Discussion also ensued regarding the requirement for developers to provide at least a 20% allocation of social and affordable housing as part of planning requirements, several Members reiterated the need for more mixed tenure housing and expressed the opinion that the 20% target should be viewed as a minimum requirement.

Following a query from a Member regarding mixed tenure housing, the Head of Place Shaping confirmed that the NIHE was committed to supporting the 20% social and affordable housing policy as it viewed that it would help bring forward a balanced community for all developments.

In response to several issues which had been raised during discussion, the representatives confirmed that:

- a demand existed for smaller units as well as family homes;
- the Housing Executive favoured a mix of social and private housing in the city centre and advised that a scoping exercise of Belfast was being undertaken currently with both the Council and DfC to try and identify suitable land for future social and private housing schemes;
- the NIHE was committed 100% to mixed tenure and shared housing in the city centre as they considered that there was a latent demand for this and were looking forward to the first site emerging;
- the NIHE were watching from a waiting list perspective any new developments as they progressed through the planning system and confirmed that it was also liaising with the Planners to ensure that schemes would be brought forward for both social and affordable elements; and
- the Housing Executive recognised the need to keep tenants updated regarding the Tower Block Strategy and rehoming and noted that the schemes could not progress until the residents had all been rehomed. They also noted the desire for many of the residents to be rehoused within the same area and stated that they would be keen to accommodate as many people as possible.

A Member raised the need for land to be released for new build social housing in the Shankill area, which would include some properties with four bedrooms. The Interim Regional Manager advised that four bedrooms properties were usually only built if a specific need had been identified and he undertook to liaise with the Member further in this regard.

**Special People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 22nd November, 2022**

A further Member highlighted the need for additional social housing to be built in the Highfield Area, stating that the existing housing was now over 75 years old and that there was significant demand and housing stress in the area.

The Head of Place Shaping advised that a new Housing Needs Assessment had recently been completed for Belfast and she undertook to forward this to the Members.

The update concluded with the Interim Regional Manager encouraging any Members who were aware of issues with mould in social housing to contact the Housing Executive with their concerns, this was in light of the recent coroner's outcome in regard to the death of a toddler in 2020 which had been as a result of prolonged exposure to black mould.

The Deputy Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the NIHE representatives for the update.

Noted.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 26th October, 2022

SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);
Alderman Dorrian;
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Duffy, Heading,
Hussey, T. Kelly, Lyons, Maskey, McCabe,
McDonough-Brown, 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; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Whyte declared an interest regarding item 2.a) Queen's University Belfast, as he worked for the organisation.

Presentations

Queen's University Belfast

The Committee was reminded that representative's from Queen's University Belfast (QUB) had been invited 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. It was highlighted that QUB were also scheduled to present to Committee again in December to discuss Purpose-Built Managed Student Accommodation in Belfast, alongside the Ulster University.

The Chairperson welcomed representatives of Queen's University Belfast to the meeting: Mr. R. Feeney, Director of Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility, and Ms. K. Baillie, Deputy Director Strategic Programmes (Belfast Region City Deal).

Mr. Feeney explained the reasons behind the University's declaration of a critical incident in October in relation to the cost-of-living crisis on both its staff and students. He provided an overview of the financial assistance and measures which had been put in place to help its students and staff, following consultation with its Trade and Student Unions.

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 26th October, 2022**

Ms. Baillie provided an overview of the Belfast Region City Deal which unlocks £1 billion of transformative co-investment to deliver more than 20 highly ambitious projects and programmes. She advised how its impact-focussed Innovation Centres were helping to lead the way for a new Belfast region, bringing together great minds and creative thinking to solve some of the biggest global challenges. She explained that the Innovation Centres intend to create extraordinary ecosystems and drive momentum to create real-world impact through connected-up, purpose-driven innovation.

She detailed the three pillars of Innovation: Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre; Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare; and Global Innovation Institute and detailed the benefits and potential economic impact.

During Members questions, the representatives explained further the impact the cost-of-living crisis had had on student accommodation fees, and how the one-off payments to staff and students had been funded.

In answer to a Member's question on recent staff resignations, Mr. Feeney confirmed that the University had commenced a staff restructuring exercise which should be completed by the start of 2023 and highlighted that this would have no impact on the City Deal financial contribution as the fund had been ring-fenced.

In relation to a possible reduction in student numbers, Mr. Feeney reported that potential funding cuts might impact student admissions in future years and highlighted the necessity of an extra ten thousand student places by the end of 2030, together with the challenges faced by the cap on funding for Northern Ireland students. He also pointed out the importance of growing the international student provision.

During further discussion, Mr. Feeney pointed out that the University had a Widening Participation Programme which assisted student intake came from lower income backgrounds and QUB were exploring new initiatives in this regard. He advised that further information would be provided to the Committee in relation to how areas of social deprivation benefit from the economic impact of the University.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance, and they retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that, where relevant, QUB would provide further information on the issues raised.

Artemis Technologies

The Chairperson welcomed representatives of Artemis Technologies to the meeting: Mr. I. Percy, CEO; and Ms. K. Thompson SIPF Programme Director, Belfast Maritime Consortium.

Mr. Percy provided a presentation on the Strength in Places-funded Belfast Maritime Consortium programme and the development of Artemis eFoiler™.

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 26th October, 2022**

He provided an overview of the company's inception to lead in the decarbonisation of the maritime industry and to provide design and engineering services to high - performance and commercial clients, as well as developing unique products, like the world's most advanced maritime simulators.

He explained the vision for the decarbonisation of Maritime Transport and illustrated how the solution of using Artemis eFoiler™ vessels would work.

The Committee was reminded that the Belfast Maritime Consortium (BMC) led by Artemis Technologies had been awarded £33 million in 2020 from the UK Research and Innovation flagship Strength in Places (SIP) Fund.

He highlighted that BMC was using the SIP Fund to launch the world's most advanced high-speed zero-emission passenger ferry and develop the technical and operational requirements for a maritime transport system of the future. The project costs were £53million (of which £33million was in grant funding) with a timeframe from September 2020 – 31 January 2024.

He advised that the key objectives were to:

- Develop the technical and operational requirements for a maritime transport system of the future;
- Research into marine composite materials, integration of sensors, anti-fouling, collision avoidance systems, cyber security and safety;
- Create an education programme and route to high value jobs;
- Act as a catalyst for collaboration between NI's marine, aerospace and automotive clusters; and
- Demonstrate the technologies and innovations created during the project through the operation of passenger ferry pilot scheme.

He reported that the consortium members currently included: Artemis Technologies, Spirit Aerosystems, Creative Composites, Condor Ferries, Belfast City Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Power NI, Belfast Harbour, Queen's University, Ulster University, Belfast Met, Invest NI, Catalyst and NI Advanced Composites and Engineering (NIACE).

He explained that, as part of the project, Artemis Technologies had also developed and launched globally a 100% electric high-speed foiling workboat prototype from the company's research and manufacturing facility in Belfast and provided details of how the vessel worked.

He described the project of a zero emission foiling ferry service between Belfast and Bangor and reported that this was expected to be operational in 2024.

He highlighted that the Council and Ards and North Down Borough Council had confirmed mutual interest in exploring the commercial viability of a zero emission foiling ferry service to:

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 26th October, 2022**

- develop a competitive ferry transportation service that offers commuter choice and congestion relief;
- that is integrated into local and regional transportation plans and services; and
- acts as a catalyst for economic development and tourism.

Mr. Percy described the benefits of using sustainable and public transport, together with a comparison matrix of transport methods, highlighting the advantages of the eFoiler Ferry and its large capacity for passengers and bicycles, together with lower fuel costs. He provided examples of where ferry services had been used around the world and the additional benefits ferry terminals brought to the social and economics of a city.

He pointed out that the project included working in partnership with Belfast City Council, Maritime UK and other partners to develop a programme of outreach initiatives to showcase the maritime sector, encourage participation in the sector from young people across the city and provide an educational pathway to rewarding careers.

He confirmed that the Council could further support the project by engaging with the Proposed Solution; Include zero-emission water borne transportation in Net-Zero Carbon Roadmap and Lobby the Department for Infrastructure for necessary funding and legal changes. He also invited the Committee to a site visit to Artemis Technologies.

During Members Questions, the representative's answered a range of questions in relation to the manufacturing of the vessels, timescales of the projects, infrastructure maintenance, pontoon requirements and the potential for other ferry routes.

He provided further detail on the collaboration between Artemis and Belfast Met's apprenticeship programme and advised that it was central to its plans to build a pipeline of skills to support the development of this new class of zero emission craft.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that a site visit to Artemis Technologies be arranged in the future.

Community Finance Ireland

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Sharvin, Head of Community Finance (NI), to the Committee and he was admitted to the meeting.

Mr Sharvin explained that Community Finance Ireland (CFI) was a charity providing loan finance to third sector organisations, including charities, community organisations, social enterprises and sports clubs. It was established in the late 1990s in response to concerns regarding decreasing grant support and the need for community organisations to have access to alternative sources of funding. He advised that, as a registered charity, all profits generated by CFI were retained and recycled for reinvestment into the third sector.

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 26th October, 2022**

He highlighted that the organisation had been established as Ulster Community Investment Trust, but had recently rebranded as Community Finance Ireland to reflect its all-island business model.

Mr. Sharvin provided an overview of the organisations typical loan purposes and clients. He advised that the benefits of using Community Finance Ireland included:

- We take a 'Relationship Approach'- We are accessible and value face-to-face meetings;
- Minimum bureaucracy;
- Competitive Interest rate;
- Support & guidance throughout term of loan;
- No penalties against early repayment;
- Flexible & tailored specifically to need;
- No Arrangement Fee; and
- As a charity all profits go back into the pot for reinvestment into the sector

He highlighted that the considerations of investment included a positive social impact, management competency and repayment capacity. The Committee were shown a video of testimonials from two recent loan clients.

During Members questions, Mr. Sharvin advised that marketing streams included local community referrals systems such as enterprise networks, online footprint, webinars, social media and local press. He explained further its interest rates, how the organisation had established its initial capital investment, and detailed the role of its Board Members and Membership opportunities.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked Mr. Sharvin for his attendance and he retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Requests to Present

Translink - Metro Update

It was reported that Correspondence had been received from Translink requesting to present to this Committee on the ongoing Zero Emission Fleet rollout programme, the passenger growth numbers and to discuss the Translink position on the emerging 'A Bolder Vision for Belfast'

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to receive a presentation from Translink at a future Committee.

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 26th October, 2022**

People's Museum of the Troubles and Peace Project

The Committee agreed to defer the request to present and that the Museum of the Troubles and Peace Project discuss its proposals with the Council's Cultural and Tourism Unit, in the first instance.

Chairperson

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 9th November, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);
The High Sherriff, Councillor Hussey;
Alderman Dorrian:
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Duffy, Hanvey,
Heading, T. Kelly, Lyons, Maskey, McCabe,
McDonough-Brown, 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. S. Dolan, Senior Development Manager;
Ms. E. Clarke, Creative Programme Manager;
Mr. C. McCreery, Cultural Development Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Ferguson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 12th October 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 November, subject to the following amendments:

- Under the heading "Blue and Green Infrastructure Funding", the Council had agreed to engage with the Department for Infrastructure to investigate the replacement of Browns Bridge in Lagan Valley Regional Park, which was an unadopted asset, through the Blue/Green Infrastructure Funding, and in relation to unadopted alleyways across the City and the impact on residents, an external legal opinion was sought on how the adoption of alleyways might be actioned;
- Under the heading "Artemis Technologies", the Council had agreed that in relation to the presentation from Queen's University, to write to Queen's University to clarify if all staff would be in receipt of the Cost-of-living assistance payment outlined at the Special Committee, together with data on the number of international and local student admissions and the impact of funding cuts might have on future admissions.; and

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

- Under the heading “Housing Led Regeneration Programme Update”, the Council had agreed an amendment which had been restricted due to commercial sensitivity, as outlined in the Council Decision Register.

Declarations of Interest

In relation to item 5.a) Supporting Vibrant Business Destinations Update, Councillors Beattie, Duffy, McCabe and McLaughlin declared an interest in that they worked for or were associated with the West Belfast Partnership Board and left the room while this item was being considered. Councillor McCabe also declared an interest, under the same item, in that she was associated with Féile an Phobail.

Committee Schedule 2023

The Committee approved the schedule of meetings for 2023 as follows:

- Wednesday, 11th January at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 8th February at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 22nd February at 5.15 pm (Special);
- Wednesday, 8th March at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 5th April at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 7th June at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 21st June at 5.15 pm (Special);
- Wednesday, 9th August at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 23rd August at 5.15 pm (Special);
- Wednesday, 13th September at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 11th October at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 25th October at 5.15 pm (Special);
- Wednesday, 8th November at 5.15 pm;
- Wednesday, 22nd November at 5.15 pm (Special); and
- Wednesday, 6th December at 5.15 pm.

Presentation

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

The Chairperson introduced Mr. D. McFarlane, Eastern Divisional Roads Manager, Mr. M. McKendry, Belfast North Section Engineer, Mr. D. Williams, Belfast South Section Engineer, and Mr. C. McLaughlin, to the Committee and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. McFarlane provided a brief overview of the 2022/23 Autumn Report on the work of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads across the Belfast City Council area which had been submitted in advance of the Committee for consideration.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

He advised that the report contained details of works already completed across the Council area during the year 2022/23 as well as setting out initial proposals for schemes to be undertaken in the year 2022/23.

He informed the Committee that, in the absence of an Executive, the Department of Finance (DoF) had provided the Department with contingency planning envelopes, for both Resource and Capital, to assist with making decisions on the allocation of resources until a budget was established. The planning envelope provided an allocation for capital structural maintenance activities in 2022/23, which included resurfacing.

In relation to contracting resources, he advised that, following the legal challenges to the award of asphalt resurfacing contracts in 2021, regrettably the Belfast City Council area had been without a replacement resurfacing contract since November 2021. However, the Department had developed a new interim procurement strategy for resurfacing contracts and a new contract for the Belfast North area had recently been awarded. It was anticipated that a new contract for the Belfast South area would be awarded in early 2023. As a consequence, there would be a delay commencing the 2022/23 resurfacing programmes in the Belfast area.

He pointed out that the Department was continuing with a Limited Service policy for routine maintenance activities such as defect repair and gully emptying, which allowed the Department to repair defects greater than 50mm on all roads, including low trafficked rural roads and on high trafficked roads, defects greater than 20mm would also be repaired. The Department would aim to cut all roadside verges and sightline grass at least twice between April and October with sightlines at bends and junctions being cut more frequently as required to ensure public safety was not compromised. He also advised that a full street lighting repair service would continue during 2022/23.

He provided the Committee with updates on the main strategic transportation schemes for the city, together with an overview of the DfI Roads Programme of Works for 2022/23 for those projects and schemes that had been completed and were in progress, which included updates on minor works, maintenance of structures and inspections. He also summarised the updates to network traffic and street lighting, collision remedial schemes, traffic schemes and pedestrian measures and resident's parking schemes.

In advance of the meeting, the representatives had been provided with issues which the Committee had previously raised. Mr. McFarlane provided an update on the following matters:

Junctions (improvement works, plans and progress)

- Clifton Street / North Queens Street – DfC led scheme. DfI Roads would consider traffic impacts which would influence design;
- Frederick Street / York Street – interim scheme in delivery phase following opening of Ulster University, Junctions Working Group involved in choice of final layout which was compatible with York Street Interchange, Placemaking and Active Travel Review. AECOM was bringing this to Roads 'A Group'; and

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

- Peter's Hill – traffic impacts were being modelled and discussed. Junction improvements would be delivered by DfC in conjunction with their public realm scheme.

Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2035 (progress updates, timelines)

- Being prepared by the Department in collaboration with the five local councils within the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area (BMUA), in line with respective councils' Local Development Plan (LDP), Local Policies Plan (LPP) timescales;
- Envisaged that the Greater Belfast Area would form the first iteration and would be delivered in line with Belfast City Council's LDP LPP;
- Transport Planning and Modelling Unit (TPMU) continued to engage with the Council;
- TPMU was planning to arrange a meeting before Christmas with the council's LDP team to provide an update on progress; and
- The next stage - formal launch of the BMTP in 2023.

Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2 (progress updates, timelines)

- The public consultation report for the scheme was published on the 21st October, 2022;
- Preferred routes would be Antrim Road in the North, Ormeau Road and Saintfield Road in the South;
- Extension to the existing G2 from to QUB and the City Hospital;
- The North and South routes would seek to extend to Glengormley and Carryduff;
- BRT2 connecting to the north through the city centre was yet to be confirmed – as it would need to align with the Bolder Vision and proposals around the Civic Spine; and
- Earliest Go-Live date was September 2027, dependent on funding.

York Street Interchange

- Placemaking and Active Travel Review (PATR) was published on 11th October, 2022 and recommended that three of the options considered in it were further developed;
- Further engagement with stakeholders, including Belfast City Council and Ulster University and local residents' groups.
- Scheduled to conclude early in 2023;
- On 31st October, 2022 the Permanent Secretary met an all-party delegation from the Council and Ulster University to discuss works in the vicinity of the new campus, AECOM gave a presentation on the outcome of the YSI - Placemaking and Active Travel Review report. This could be delivered to the full Council at a later date for information purposes.

York Street Controlled Zone

- Experimental Order was advertised on 14th September and closed 6th October, 2022;
- Proposal was to restrict vehicular traffic between Great Patrick Street and Donegal Street except for busses, cyclists and blue badge holders;
- 19 responses to the consultation were received by the Department - 14 objected to the scheme, 3 supported the scheme, 1 was neither for or against and 1 was received outside the consultation period;
- Policy required that the Department considered these representations and replied in detail to the individuals concerned regarding the issues raised; and
- Should any objection remain after this stage, a submission would be made to Transport and Legislation Branch for direction on the way forward.

Delivery and Implementation of the Belfast Cycle Network

- The Belfast Cycling Network Delivery Plan (2022-2031) sets out a blueprint for the development and operation of the cycling infrastructure in the city for the next ten years. The Plan highlighted those schemes that could be deliverable in the short term – the medium term – and the long term;
 - The timescale for delivery of each project would be refined as each project was designed, consulted upon and constructed. Progress would also be dependent on the level of annual funding available for active travel;
 - DfI Roads was currently progressing the Short Term (2022-25) schemes identified within the plan. There were 16 short-term schemes (for delivery between 2022-25). DfI Roads were working with key partners including Belfast City Council, Department for Communities, Belfast Harbour, PSNI, Community Groups etc; and
 - The Department was currently considering its approach to the delivery of the schemes in the Belfast Cycling Network to allow a greater focus on scheme delivery. There were a number of stakeholders involved, most importantly members of the public and it would take a careful approach to explain the benefits the cycle network to them. Some would consider that any measures would have a detrimental impact on their local area or access to existing provision, and this needs to be considered and consulted on within the design process.
-
- *Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge* - a key element of the walking and cycling network to connect Belfast city centre with the south and east of the city and the Connswater Community Greenway, to improve access to Ormeau Park for recreational use. Planned opening in 2025 with a current estimate for the project of £12.9m

Pavement Orders and Footpath Parking

- The Footways (Prohibition of Waiting) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 - proposal to amend to prohibit vehicles waiting on a footway adjacent to a bus stand, on a footway adjacent to the limits of any mandatory cycle lane or school keep clear, however needed Ministerial approval.

During discussion, Mr. McFarlane answered a range of questions in relation to the residents parking schemes, concerns over safety and traffic calming measures, the support for pedestrianisation of the city centre, and the consultation process of cycle routes.

A number of Members stressed the inability to contact DfI Roads staff to obtain updates on urgent remedial works and the importance of obtaining direct phone numbers for key staff that could provide such updates. Mr McFarlane advised that this would be explored and encouraged Councillors to avail of the online fault reporting system on NI Direct, or to contact the department directly via the eastern secretariat email address.

In relation to the BRT North South Glider Route, one Member raised the importance of residents parking schemes along the route before the Glider Route commenced. Mr. McFarlane explained the process further and stated that he would send the comment to the Belfast Rapid Transport Team for perusal.

During further discussion, regarding the Cycling Strategy for the City and its targets, Members expressed their concern at the lack of progress on the Bicycle Network and other active travel measures. Mr. McFarlane explained the resource issues and highlighted that the new Director's remit would help to expedite the process and network further.

The Members drew the attention of the officers from DfI Roads to a number of additional matters, which Mr. McFarlane advised would be investigated and a further update submitted to the Committee in due course:

- In relation to the Temporary Bollards on the Donegall Road – Safety Concerns for residents regarding access - update on when this would be addressed;
- An update on the residents parking scheme review and what, if any, have/ would be delivered across the City;
- The need for residents parking scheme's along the proposed new Glider Route;
- The need to review College Park Residents Parking Scheme;
- Lack of communication and the need for Members to have up to date, direct contact details for the DfI Roads Team so that issues could be resolved in a timely manner;
- An update on the delivery of Orpen Park / Porter Park Traffic Calming Scheme – was there a plan in place for what this would be and a timeline for implementation;
- Update on resurfacing of Roads and Pathways in Belvoir – Grays Park Avenue, Grays Park Gardens and Grays Park Drive;

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

- Cycle Network Development Plan - Resources and Budget Update and data on what had been implemented in the last two years;
- Learnings from Limestone/Cavehill proposed cycle lane consultation process;
- Potholes and resurfacing in Lagmore Glen/Twinbrook area;
- Update on Hill Street Pedestrianisation; and
- Update on the expected delivery of 38 disabled Parking Bays which had been approved.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that, where relevant, DfI Roads would provide further information on the issues raised.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the report associated with the following two 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 2 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.

Future City Centre Programme: Vacant to Vibrant

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided an update on the progress of the pilot capital grant scheme, 'Vacant to Vibrant', including the outcome of recent application submissions.

The Committee:

- Noted the update in relation to the city centre Vacant to Vibrant pilot capital grant scheme and that regular updates would be submitted to the Committee for consideration;
- Noted the update on the Business Cluster and Community Grant Scheme; and
- Agreed to the recommended grant award as outlined within the report.

City Centre Revitalisation and Connectivity

The Director of City Regeneration and Development updated the Committee on recent correspondence from the Department of Infrastructure in relation to Road Closure Notices and informed the Committee of the outcomes and recommendations of the RSUA Open Belfast Design Competition.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

After discussion, the Committee:

- Noted the updates within this report in relation to the Road Closure Orders in respect of Brunswick Steet, Union Steet and Castle Place; and
- Noted the outcomes of the RSUA Open Belfast Design Competition and agreed that, at this stage, the proposal would not be brought forward to delivery due to the escalation in costs and the lack of funding.

Regenerating Places & Improving Infrastructure

Council Powers on Vesting

The Committee deferred consideration of the item to allow the Committee more time to review the report.

Horizon Europe Urban Planning 2030 Proposal

The Committee was reminded that various services across the Council, including the Climate Unit and City Regeneration and Development Division, were working together to ensure an integrated approach between urban planning, achieving net zero and aspects of resilience such as supporting play and environmental sustainability through engagement with key stakeholders, including young people, families, and businesses.

In December 2020, Belfast had launched the Belfast Resilience Strategy alongside the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap and, with initiatives such as the Belfast One Million Trees programme, these formed key elements of the city's ambitions to achieve carbon neutrality (80% reduction by 2030 and 100% by 2050). Officers had been working collaboratively to align play, climate neutrality, tree planting and green infrastructure by developing the award-winning Urban Childhood Framework and had tested these new approaches in the design and implementation of the Cathedral Gardens pop-up park and the new Grey to Green programme.

The Director of City Regeneration and Development advised that, as a result of the Council's membership in the Resilient Cities Network, it had been invited, at short notice, to participate in a Horizon Europe funding application from the UP2030 (Urban Planning 2030) fund. Horizon Europe was the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion, which looked to tackle climate change, help to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and boost the EU's competitiveness and growth and was focused on supporting cities achieve net zero.

She explained that UP2030 aimed to guide cities through the socio-technical transitions required to meet their climate neutrality ambitions. It would do so by enabling a quantum leap from a 'business as usual' project-by-project decarbonisation approach to a vision-driven, strategy-based approach that was anchored on sound projects and renewed policy development. The approach used urban planning and design as a vehicle to create better connected, more compact, net-zero neighbourhoods that promote liveability and, through designing with intent, promote mitigation actions.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

She confirmed that the Urban Planning 2030 consortium was made up of 46 partners with a total budget of €11,956,686. Belfast had been selected as one of the pilot cities, based primarily on the work via the Resilience Strategy and Bolder Vision, and had been nominated to receive €204,250 to support research, training and policy development related to the creation of a net zero district through: Enhanced tree planting, linking to the Resilience Strategy and Belfast One Million Trees; Green infrastructure, linking to the Bolder Vision and Council's Grey to Green initiative in the city centre; and Play, linking to the Urban Childhood Framework, and Belfast's membership of the Real Play Coalition (a global initiative led by the Lego Foundation, IKEA, ARUP, UNICEF and National Geographic).

She reported that, through the UP2030 funding, the Council would seek to create a framework that would be applied to regeneration projects that integrated tree planting, green infrastructure, play and co-design with young people and supported the integration of play and environmental sustainability into city design. She highlighted that, to maintain alignment with the Bolder Vision interventions, it was proposed that the framework could potentially be tested initially in the Linen Quarter district, which had the aspirations of becoming the first sustainable and net-zero business neighbourhood in Northern Ireland. Lessons learned from this pilot would then be used to identify opportunities in other neighbourhoods and bring forward the concept of net-zero neighbourhoods across the city and the intention was to work across council departments and with city stakeholders to elevate and embed the learning and approaches.

The Director also advised that a declaration of honour had been undertaken in order to remain within the bid process and officers were working with the consortium's administrative partner, Fraunhofer, to move the UK applicants from the status of being a Partner to that of an Associate (given that the UK was no longer within the EU). This would mean that funding would be underwritten by the UK government rather than the EU and advice had been sought and confirmed with Legal Services in relation to this designation. She pointed out that it was anticipated that the final Letter of Offer from SEUPB would be signed in December, with a project kick-off meeting of partners likely to take place in early 2023, with a delivery period of three years. It was expected that the Council would team up with another partner, who was linked to the consortium, on the delivery of this project. An initial conversation had been held with one of the Consortium advisor partners, Mapping for Change, around the possibility of cooperating with them in order to bring the project forward.

During discussion, Members highlighted the potential for a pilot project in a residential area, such as a neighbourhood near a motorway. The Director confirmed that the pilot was not location specific at this stage and could be discussed further.

After discussion, the Committee:

- Noted the progress of a Horizon Europe Urban Planning 2030 bid to support development of a framework that integrated environmental sustainability and urban development aligned to the creation of a net zero neighbourhood as a pilot proposal and the

offer of funding to further develop the project which was confirmed not to be definitive of any area at this stage; and

- Approved the participation of the Council as an Associate Member of the Urban Planning 2030 consortium as identified in the report.

**Correspondence from the Office of the
Minister for Infrastructure – Belfast Cycle
Delivery Plan and Pedestrian Crossing**

The Committee noted the correspondence which had been received from the office of the Minister of Infrastructure regarding the Belfast Cycle Delivery Plan and potential pedestrian crossing at the Ravenhill Road/Ardenlee Avenue Junction.

**Proposed Public Realm Scheme at Little York St
and Little Patrick Street**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

**To provide an update on the Little York St Little Patrick Street
Place Making Public Realm Design Work aligned to the
Section 76 Developer Contributions secured in the area**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the emerging design proposals for a proposed Place Making Public Realm Scheme at Little York Street-Little Patrick Street and the Lancaster St entrance aligned to utilising the Section 76 Developer Contributions secured from the adjoining developments**
- **Agree the approach of the design works as outlined within this paper, pending consultation with stakeholders including the local communities, development managers and statutory partners, in relation to the utilisation of the Section 76 Developer Contributions within this area for the Little York Little Patrick / Lancaster St scheme subject to due diligence through the Capital Programme and approval at SP&R**

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 The CG&R Committee have received a number of reports relating to emerging projects to address the connectivity**

issues between the city centre and the local and new communities and development opportunities that sit on the northern side of the Dunbar Link. These projects include the Fredrick St Junction, and the North South Spine located at Tomb St. Officers are currently engaging with Belfast Harbour Commissioners on the North South Spine in order to bring forward a jointly funded proposal to bring this scheme up to RIBA Stage 3. An all-party delegation met with the Permanent Secretary for DfI and the University of Ulster on the 31st of October in relation to certain schemes coming forward in the University of Ulster area, and to address the time required to bring forward schemes, in particular now that the University Campus has opened and the pedestrian footfall levels have greatly increased within the area. DfI are to present their Autumn Report to this Committee meeting and have been asked to bring further detail on the emerging designs and timeframes for the schemes required to assist in the successful relocation of the University to the new City Centre Campus. Further reports on these schemes will also be brought to future meetings of this Committee.

- 3.2 The CG&R Committee agreed in September 2019 to the development of a place making public realm catalyst project within the University Quarter of the Greater Clarendon and Sailortown area in order to utilise secured Section 76 Developer Contributions from a number of Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBMSA) Blocks within the Little York Street / Little Patrick Street area. The completed PBMSA developments within this small area are now operational and demand is exceeding supply. In total, the Little York Street Little Patrick St developments will be home to some 4,000 students within a very hard landscaped area on the fringe of the city centre with little local amenities. They are also located adjacent to existing communities in the Lancaster St area. A further report to CG&R Committee in October 2019 noted that there is also potential to explore the future vehicular requirements and potential pedestrianisation of Little York Street and Little Patrick Street to bring forward a high quality place-making project that would address road safety issues connected with 'rat-runs' through the area and safety issues in general that exist due to the environment surrounding these blocks.
- 3.3 The legal agreements which secured these 'historic' developer contributions (typically referred to as Section 76 Agreements in planning terms) tightly define how they may be used for public realm improvements. Each Section 76 agreement is accompanied by a plan which defines the geographical area within which the contributions may be

spent. The agreements also specify the purpose and timeframe (usually seven years) of expenditure, and that failure to meet these requirements would result in repayment to developers. The Little York Street Little Patrick St scheme has been developed in order to comply within the conditions as contained with the legal Section 76 agreements.

- 3.4 Together with the Fredrick St Junction project and the North South Spine these three projects provide an opportunity to deliver on several of the emerging Bolder Vision Key Moves including Reimagining the Inner Ring and ending Car Dominance, Reducing the Severance to Communities and Supporting City Centre Living.

3.5 Main Report

Greater Clarendon/Sailortown – Great Patrick Street/York Street Junction and Little Patrick Street and Little York Street

The Little Patrick Street/Little York Street place making project was developed as a result of Council securing developer contributions (typically referred to as Section 76 Agreements in planning terms) for public realm improvements within the University Quarter of the Greater Clarendon and Sailortown area. The contributions relate to purpose-built managed student accommodation buildings developed in the area and will provide an enhanced city centre living experience for existing and future residents within the area. In order to deliver a high-quality project with the developer contributions Officers have appointed a design team to bring the project to detailed design, planning and construction.

- 3.6 The proposed public realm scheme at Little York Street-Little Patrick Street is situated within an area bound by Great Patrick Street, York Street, Great George's Street and Nelson Street and dissect four managed student accommodation buildings and is a 2-minute walk to the newly constructed University of Ulster campus.
- 3.7 With the PBMSA developments creating a home for some 4,000 students the area has become densely populated and these streets are critical public spaces that should serve as extensions of living spaces, enabling and enhancing the interaction of new and existing neighbourhood residents in order to sustain a sense of community.
- 3.8 Little Patrick Street and Little York Street is often used as a shortcut for traffic accessing the city core and has been identified as a source of late-night noise due to excessive &

loud traffic through the streets. The objective of the scheme is to provide a reconfigured street design limiting access through the area to servicing and drop-off/pick provision for the accommodation blocks as well as enhancing place-making and public realm provision to provide a high-quality street within the area. The scheme will also bring forward proposals in conjunction with the local community to address the connection into the local Lancaster St community area to enhance the character of the area and to improve the connection to the emerging Fredrick St Junction.

- 3.9 The concept design looks to achieve the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists through the area by adopting a quiet streets approach by pedestrianising Little Patrick Street (West) and Little York Street (South) by implementing a physical restriction/road closure, first by temporary closure then by abandonment and a one-way traffic system proposed for Little York Street (North) and Little Patrick Street (East) which would see vehicular traffic come off the main road network at Great Georges Street and exit at Nelson Street.
- 3.10 As well as the design addressing safety concerns around traffic movement it also creates an environment for safe passage of pedestrians and cyclists with enhanced public footways, subtle lighting positioned under seated planters which deters anti-social behaviour while also respecting that students live here adjacent to a local community, and the inclusion of rain gardens which adds greening to an urban setting and reduces rainfall runoff and mitigates the impact of pollution.
- 3.11 The emerging preferred designs are included within appendix 1 (copy available on the Council's website) of this report and will be utilised to form the basis of consultation with DfI and with the local communities. Design work is ongoing to develop the options to undertake works at the entrance to the Lancaster St area and a co-design process will be undertaken with the local community to develop these proposals. To enable the detailed design work to continue and to inform the consultation with DfI additional surveys, including traffic modelling, topographical surveys and Risk Assessments etc are required and will be carried out in line with the developing design.
- 3.12 Pending approval from this Committee for the emerging works, and following consultation with the local community, statutory partners and the PBMSA providers, it is intended to develop these designs to RIBA Stage 3 and to bring the scheme forward to Planning in early 2023 followed by

procurement and construction with regular reports to be brought to this Committee as the scheme progresses.

3.13 Finance & Resource Implications

Capital costs for this scheme will be met from existing S76 agreements in line with the conditions of those agreements, and subject to the due diligence of the Capital Programme process and approval from SP&R Committee

Procured design costs are as previously agreed by the CG&R Committee in October 2019. Additional surveys and design to inform the detailed design works and to satisfy the DfI requirements will be met from previously agreed departmental budgets

3.14 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

Equality & Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment will be considered as a part of the design development process.”

The Committee:

- Noted the emerging design proposals for a proposed Place Making Public Realm Scheme at Little York Street-Little Patrick Street and the Lancaster Steet entrance aligned to utilising the Section 76 Developer Contributions secured from the adjoining developments; and
- Agreed the approach of the design works as outlined within the report, pending consultation with stakeholders, including the local communities, development managers and statutory partners in relation to the utilisation of the Section 76 Developer Contributions within the area for the Little York Little Patrick / Lancaster Steet scheme. It was also noted that this would be subject to due diligence through the Capital Programme and required approval at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Growing Business & the Economy

Supporting Vibrant Business Destinations Update

The Committee was provided with an update on the work to support local commercial districts through the Supporting Vibrant Business Destinations programme. This programme aimed to work with business/traders associations to develop and deliver interventions that could drive footfall and create vibrancy in those areas.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th February, Members were provided with an overview and update of the approach to supporting local business associations to develop and deliver interventions to drive footfall and create vibrancy in those areas.

The Director of Economic Development advised that the overarching purpose of the pilot initiative was to strengthen the competitiveness of our local business destinations, focusing on actions which aimed to:

- Support the development of shared and safely accessible commercial areas;
- Support the diversification of business destinations outside of the city centre;
- Bring together key stakeholders to benefit business destinations outside of the city centre; and
- Improve the quality of urban design, distinctiveness, and townscape quality.

He informed the Committee that, following feedback from a range of businesses and traders associations across the city and through engagement with the Department for Communities (DfC), an opportunity had been identified to secure resources through the DfC Revitalisation programme. Vibrant Business Destinations was identified as a pilot programme and was in keeping with the work which had been undertaken by the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) to develop a “Living High Street Toolkit”. He confirmed that the Council had successfully secured funding of £475,000 from the DfC, which would be supplemented by a contribution from the Council’s resources to enable the delivery of advice and support to assist businesses to access the scheme. The scheme was intended to complement a wider programme of support and activity that was taking place within the city centre, including the targeted interventions to address vacancies and previous business support interventions through the Covid Revitalisation Programme.

He reported that the pilot initiative aimed to support up to 10 business associations to a maximum of £40,000 each, for expenditure on a range of eligible activities, and the objectives were to:

- Increase engagement and partnership working between statutory partners and local business associations;
- Support the development of area-based actions plans which addressed specific local concerns and deliver specific, measurable benefits over the short/medium and long term;
- Increase footfall and sales as a direct result of marketing and promotional activity; generating new customers or sustaining customer loyalty through increasing sales revenue, increasing the number of new customers or developing repeat business;
- Enhance the profile of the area with a view to stimulating economic activity;
- Support the growth and development of businesses engaged in associated activity; and

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

- Support the sustainability of businesses and local business associations.

He highlighted that the initiative had a two-stage application process. Stage one involved the completion of an Expression of Interest (EOI) by 31st May, 2023. The basic eligibility criteria included the following:

- Groups or established associations must be led by the business community (including social enterprises and cooperatives) to address locally based issues and be committed to becoming a constituted association;
- Groups or established associations must be made up of retail/hospitality/consumer facing businesses located on road frontage/local high streets;
- The priority focus was on arterial routes and routes with a minimum number of 15 confirmed businesses located on road frontage;
- Group membership should be representative of the businesses in the eligible area – both by volume and by business type; and
- Business membership must represent predominantly owner-occupiers and independent traders, however, could involve representation from community organisations.

Following successful completion of an EOI at stage 1, groups were supported to become formally constituted, where they weren't already, and to develop area-based action plans. The action plans would provide an analysis of the locality, the physical environment, existing provision and key challenges and opportunities. It would identify priority issues to be addressed to improve the business environment through engagement with existing businesses and stakeholders in the area. The action plans would form the basis for moving to a stage 2 application.

The Director of Economic Development advised that, to date, there had been 47 requests for an Expression of Interest which covered a range of areas across the city and there had now been 6 formal expressions of interests submitted. He confirmed that work was currently underway to support these groups to become constituted and to develop area-based action plans. Following completion and approval of action plans they could progress to stage 2 of the process. A successful Stage 2 application would enable the groups to draw down funding to support their action plan delivery.

He highlighted that a number of requests for expressions of interests had not met the initial criteria of the programme and had not progressed. Work was underway to support those groups who would be deemed eligible, however, there had been a number of issues that have resulted in delays and non-progression to date including: Closure of businesses and concern for the future of some businesses given the current energy prices; Timeframes and effort for businesses to develop constituted associations with the adequate number of members; and Internal issues within business associations and disbandment. He advised that the team had been working closely with businesses to try and overcome these issues and support the process where possible and had also been

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

working to ensure there was an adequate spread of applications across all parts of the city.

He outlined the range of communications and marketing activity to raise awareness of the pilot project, which included Council social media platforms and e-shots, City Matters, direct intervention via officers and email circulation to Council Members.

He confirmed that the activities outlined within the report would be resourced through the existing Enterprise and Business Growth budget for 2022/23 and funding secured through the Department for Communities.

The Committee:

- Noted the Council's update and work which had been undertaken to support the delivery of area-based Vibrant Business Destinations; and
- Noted that the pilot initiative was currently open to Expressions of Interest from local business/traders groups located outside the city centre and Business Improvement Districts.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Christmas Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a summary of the Christmas programme proposed in November / December 2022.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- **Note the contents of this report and that further information on the socio-economic impact of Christmas activity will be presented in due course (post event).**

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 On an annual basis, the Council's Culture and Events Units delivers a series of large-scale public events, which are free to access by both citizens and visitors to the city, on behalf of Belfast City Council. This is further supported by the activity of other teams who support a number of annual programmes and activities and the Markets Unit who manage the delivery**

of the Christmas Market at City Hall in addition to year-round activity at St George's and Smithfield markets.

- 3.2 Members will recall that in 2021, officers adopted a different approach to the Christmas 2021 programme which replaced the traditional switch - on ceremony. In the context of Covid, the challenge for officers was to design a programme that continued to be cognisant of safety considerations and have the ability to respond to a changing environment whilst meeting the needs of city stakeholders including those businesses impacted by the pandemic. The cessation of the traditional Christmas Light Switch was also in response to safety concerns regarding crowd control raised by colleagues in our Corporate Health and Safety Unit. In addition, feedback from city centre traders on the traditional light switch was not entirely positive, with many highlighting traffic, parking congestion and the event itself acting as a barrier to normal trading at a crucial time of year.
- 3.3 As well as responding to the pandemic the Christmas programme also aimed to meet the development objectives set out in the ten-year Cultural Strategy, including long-term recommendations for events in the city including better strategic alignment across the Council in the design and, delivery of these event-based programmes and above all ensuring the activities were authentic and utilising our local supply chain.
- 3.4 Cultural animation and creative interventions were identified as fundamental in welcoming people back into the city and played a significant role in creating an authentic and open environment at Christmas.
- 3.5 As a consequence, in 2021, the Christmas programme consisted of a combination of creative initiatives such as street performance, projections, music, window dressing and lighting installations all inspired by the theme '*Once Upon a Time in Belfast*', utilising local artists, creatives and designers to create an authentic and engaging experience for all throughout the festive season.
- 3.6 The weekend event proved to be successful. Despite concerns over moving away from the traditional switch on format, the new approach offered increased value for money and audience satisfaction in an environment that was designed to prioritise public safety.
- 3.7 Estimated audiences over the 2 evenings (20 & 21 November) was 15,000, with the event primarily taking place in the City

Centre across key zones which included Donegall Place, Cornmarket, Royal Avenue, Fountain Street, Fountain Lane, Queen Street, Castle Street, Castle Lane, Berry Street, Rosemary Street and Lower Garfield Street. The audience profile was similar to the previous format with a strong focus on families.

3.8 Belfast City Council also commissioned an independent socio-economic survey for the *Once Upon a time in Belfast* themed - event. Results included the following feedback:

- 65% of visitors were from the Belfast City Council area, and a further 35% from elsewhere with a small percentage of visitors from Republic of Ireland (3%).
- 54% attended the event with children.
- 84% gave the event a rating of 8 out of 10 or above, including 27% who rated it as 'Extremely good'.
- 92% of visitors agreed that the event improves the city's reputation as a host for events like these and as a place to visit.
- 69% of visitors said they would 'definitely' revisit the *Once Upon a Time in Belfast* event in future years, while 99% agree there should be more events like this in Belfast.
- 98% believed that events like this encourage people to come to Belfast, and 93% said that such events improve their sense of well-being and community.

3.9 In 2022, it is intended that the 2021 model of Christmas animation and event delivery would be further consolidated through a programme of seasonal animation in the city centre, which would support economic recovery in the city post pandemic and uplift the city and visitors in the context of the current economic climate.

3.10 Benefits would include:

- Improve the cultural vibrancy of the city
- Foster civic pride
- Position the Belfast brand
- Support the local culture, arts and events sectors
- Deliver direct economic benefits
- Support businesses

3.11 Christmas Programme 19th November 2022

Belfast's Christmas celebrations will officially begin on Saturday 19th November with the '*Christmas in Belfast*' opening day event, which will take place from 6pm to 9pm.

3.12 In 2022, the opening weekend activity is being reduced from two nights to one and will focus on Saturday night only. This decision has been taken based on the findings of the independent evaluation and feedback from 2021, which evidenced that the opening evening (Saturday) was much better attended than the Sunday. By reprofiling the event and animation budget into the Saturday night only, the programme can be uplifted to enhance the visitor experience and increase impact. The event schedule will consist of a range of elements including:

- Christmas lighting scheme
- Lighting projections
- Music programme
- Procession
- Window animation
- Street animation
- 2 Royal Avenue
- Christmas Market
- Lord Mayor Role
- Marketing and Communications Activity

3.13 Christmas Lighting Scheme

2022 will be year 3 of the existing Christmas Lighting Scheme which will begin on the 19th of November and run until the 4th January. The scheme will be identical to the 2021 programme, with the addition of icicles on Ann Street and the positioning and lighting on 12 additional trees on Donegall place.

3.14 Lighting Projections

City Hall will be illuminated from 18th November to 7th January inclusive. This has consistently generated a positive response from the public. A temporary lighting scheme will also be devised for 2 Royal Avenue at the former Tesco site and the Bank of Ireland building. This will include mapped projections which will operate from 19th November to 1st January.

3.15 Another highlight for the Christmas period will be the lighting of the old Bank of Ireland Building at the bottom of Royal Avenue which will run from 19th November to 1st February. The lighting up of the Bank of Ireland building received significant coverage on social media in 2021. This will be repeated for 2022, raising awareness of the significant ongoing work on the Belfast Stories project. Additional

illuminations across the city on the 19th November will include Fountain House above Primark on Donegall Place and the Mayfair building in Cornmarket.

3.16 Music Programme

On the evening of the 19th, a music and animation programme will take place across the city across a number of zones (subject to change):

- Zone 1 - Donegall Place (From Carroll's to McDonald's (both sides of street) and Fountain Lane)
- Zone 2 - Waterstones, Fountain Street, College St, Fountain Mezzanine, St Mary's Church, Queen's St and Castle Street
- Zone 3 - Berry Street, Rosemary St, Tesco Metro, Castlecourt Front, Lower Garfield Street, BOI Building (All Royal Avenue)
- Zone 4 - Lombard St, Castle Place / Kiosk and front of Bank buildings
- Zone 5 - Cornmarket - Dunnes Stores, Ann St, Arthur St, Castle Arcade, Castle Lane and Calendar Street

- 3.17** A raised platform will also be in situ on the evening of the 19th (likely location in front of 2 Royal Avenue - TBC) with a three-hour set from 6pm to 9pm showcasing local musicians.

In addition, a music programme will be curated across the Christmas period including several music elements for the opening night including performances at Rosemary Street Presbyterian Church and music on Berry Street and Lower Garfield Street.

- 3.18** A 4 week 'weekend programme' of Christmas Animation will also be delivered. The activity will primarily take place in the city centre from 1pm-5pm each Saturday and Sunday in the build- up to Christmas.

3.19 Procession

An external provider (Lux) have been engaged to create an interactive 'White and Bright' cavalcade of props and performers which will move through Royal Avenue / Donegall Place on the evening of the event. It is likely that some props will also remain static for the event duration. This will be complemented by a community engagement programme of choreographed costumed performances, creating a real festive spectacle.

3.20 Window Animation

US Folk have been engaged to produce winter-themed window vinyls to create a more aesthetically pleasing city centre offering over the festive period. These vinyls are designed to remain in situ throughout winter and are therefore not completely focused on the Christmas theme. BCCM will independently operate a 'Christmas for All' themed window dressing competition for businesses in the city centre.

- 3.21** In addition, the programme will also include 'live' window animation on the opening night (19 November) in two of the main retail stores on Donegall Place. This will include music and comedy theatre sketches running throughout the event. This proved to be extremely popular in 2021. The Visit Belfast window will also be dressed during this period.

3.22 Street Animation

A range of 50+ Belfast - based organisations from the cultural, arts and theatre / performance sectors will be engaged to take part in this event and provide the animation over the opening night. The entertainment onsite will be a mix of music, dance, street performance, comedy and theatrical performance under the overall creative banner of *Christmas in Belfast*.

3.23 2 Royal Avenue

Maywe, the council-appointed provider in 2 Royal Avenue will operate an uplifted events programme over the festive period. This will include a Winter's Den in 2 Royal Avenue commencing on 19th November. This will create a welcoming hub for all to enjoy. Visitors will be able to experience a range of sustainable events including:

- Up-cycling Christmas decoration programme
- Up-cycling Christmas jumper workshops
- Creating own advent calendars
- Sustainable Christmas crackers
- 'Swap - shop'
- Santa's Post Box (open Thursday-Sunday weekly, with late night opening Thursday and Friday evenings)
- Advent Calendars
- Alpine Lodge
- Teddy Bear Hospital and Toy repair café
- Sustainable Wrapping service (cash for Kids drop-off point)

- 3.24 In addition, a wide range of free events will be on offer also from 19th November in 2 Royal Avenue, this will include twilight pottery and art markets, fashion swap nights, Christmas carolling events, storytelling, music, festive jazz for seniors, family silent discos, sustainable arts and craft and workshops and a Crufty Christmas Fashion Show in aid of Guide Dogs NI. Throughout the festive period the venue will welcome a range of community-based choirs, musical events and musicians both inside and outside the venue.
- 3.25 Council have also commissioned US Folk, a Belfast-based agency representing some NI's top illustrative and design talent. They will create an overall look and feel for 2 Royal Avenue's Christmas programme - The Winter's Den - this will include a suite of characters and folk illustrations which will come to life via a bespoke AR App made especially for Christmas. Audiences will be encouraged to engage with this AR app on their mobile devices where they will discover the Christmas characters come to life through animation on their screens when they visit 2 Royal Avenue. They will discover a secret treasure hunt via the AR, where they can collect stickers as they discover. The characters will also be incorporated on vinyl décor across vacant shop unit windows on Royal Avenue, as well as in shop windows across the city meaning the public can interact with the designs and treasure hunt via the AR App throughout the city centre during the festive season. This will run throughout the Christmas period from 19th November into January.
- 3.26 Christmas Market

The Christmas Market will run this year from Saturday 19th November to Thursday 22nd December. Market Place Europe Limited (MPEL) has held the Continental Markets contract for the past 17 years and have been awarded the contract for the next 3+2 years. Changes to the contract this year include a larger seating area, an enhanced Christmas experience with themed and animated walkways. There will be over 100 stalls and the new contract also sets out the requirement for 40% local traders and 60% continental traders. There will be a Santa's Grotto supporting the Lord Mayors Charity and a return of free school educational tours, to be extended this year to out of school hours childcare and youth service providers. MPEL also ran the Jolly Big Business Boost offering a free chalet to a young business. When the Continental Market trades at the front of the city hall the footfall increases into St Georges Market and throughout the city Centre. The Christmas Market and the local Christmas offer in St George's trade side by side very successfully.

MPEL has offered a free pitch to St Georges Market traders this year and in previous years to further enhance trade for the local traders.

3.27 Role of Lord Mayor

The Lord Mayor will play a key role in leading the Christmas procession, as well as the official opening of the 2 Royal Avenue Christmas programme on 19th November. An opportunity will also be possible for the Lord Mayor to speak from the raised platform in the city centre on the 19th November to those in attendance at the event.

- 3.28 A video message from the Lord Mayor to citizens and visitors to the city will be issued online on Monday 19th November to coincide with the opening of the Christmas programme (this will be pre-recorded on the evening of the 18th in front of City Hall).

3.29 Marketing and Communications Activity

Council will operate a digital campaign with pulse screens and online advertising to promote the fact that there is an event taking place on 19th November, as well as weekend entertainment thereafter and seasonal activities in 2 Royal Avenue. Council will be directing people to www.belfastcity.gov.uk/christmas URL, where the 19th November event information will be displayed prominently on the page. As information is finalised on the event schedule, online messaging will be strengthened.

- 3.30 Promotion will take place across digital platforms and via key partners including BID One and Visit Belfast. City Matters went to print before event details were confirmed, but a generic update was provided to highlight 19th November and 2 Royal Avenue in edition to be circulated to just under 160k homes w/c 7th November. A press release will also be issued w/c 7th November to promote the finer and confirmed details of the event schedule.

3.31 Economic Context

Following Covid and within the context of a cost-of-living crisis, Council are cognisant of providing support to city traders, with a focus on hope and optimism at Christmas. Council's Christmas campaign will have the following principles,

- Sustainability
- Giving back
- Sense of Home

3.32 Christmas lights are an essential part of dressing the city, in 2019 Council secured a new lighting scheme which features more energy - efficient lights. In addition, the lighting scheme will be turned on each evening between 3pm / 4pm and will be turned off at 1am. The pole mounted features operated by DFI will operate from dusk to dawn.

3.33 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications to this report. All expenditure is within existing departmental budgets and approvals.

3.34 Equality & Good Relations Implications

None.”

During discussion, the Director of Economic Development explained further the impact of the Christmas events across the City and the Health and Safety concerns of a Christmas Lights ‘Switch-On’ event. He advised that some city centre roads were unable to be part of the Christmas Lighting Scheme because of the current infrastructure, due to building works, but would be explored for next year.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and that further information on the socio-economic impact of Christmas activity would be presented in due course (post event).

Music Strategy

The Committee considered the undernoted report and associated appendix:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 At a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in March 2022, it was agreed that the draft Music Strategy would complete a 12-week public consultation. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of feedback and present the final strategy for approval.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of this report and feedback received as part of the public consultation.

- Agree the final music strategy, ‘Music Matters: A Roadmap for Belfast’ including the priorities

3.0 Main report

Members will be aware that at a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in March 2022, it was agreed that the draft Music Strategy would complete a 12-week public consultation.

3.1 Becoming a UNESCO City of Music

As members will be aware, Belfast submitted an application in June 2021 and was officially awarded the title of UNESCO City of Music on 8 November 2021, bestowing upon the City the international recognition that music is part of our identity – past, current, and future. We became only the third city in the UK to be awarded the status, with Liverpool receiving it in 2016 and Glasgow in 2008, and we are the first city on the island of Ireland to be granted the prestigious accolade.

Development of the Draft Music Strategy

The development of a new music strategy is aimed at supporting the ambitions submitted in Belfast’s UNESCO application, delivering a more joined-up and visible music offer whilst also increasing opportunities for production and civic engagement in music across the city on a permanent basis.

In 2020, Council contracted Sound Diplomacy to develop an analysis of the Belfast music ecosystem; exploring how best to support its evolution and recovery from COVID-19, and its application to become a UNESCO City of Music. Following this, The Fourth Pillar, Morgan Young Consulting and Score Draw Music worked with Council to develop Sound Diplomacy’s research into a roadmap for music and the associated strategic recommendations. This included:

- 27 City of Music Steering Group meetings with 20 members representing various genres & city stakeholders such as Tourism NI, BBC, British Council and Arts Council NI.
- An online survey on music (both for audiences and sector workers) 1500+ responses
- 45 one to one meetings with music and city stakeholders representing a variety of expertise
- 6 round table workshops about music recovery for artists and music sector workers

3.2 Music Strategy – strategic themes and priorities

We want to reshape music in Belfast, so it is characterised by quality, sustainable projects, and accompanied by long-term strategic investment. This strategy constitutes a response to the challenges, concerns and, indeed, opportunities that exist and is intended to take a foundational approach – one which will deliver the fundamental needs of individuals working in or engaging with music and one which has identified the shortfalls in the local music ecosystem and sought to eliminate them. In our approach, we have chosen to put musicians, performers and music creators first for, without them, Belfast would be a culturally and economically poorer place.

Mirroring the A City Imagining cultural strategy the music strategy has 4 strategic themes, each having 4 strategic priorities. There are a number of actions and recommendations given for each priority catering to many areas of need across the music sector.

Theme 1: Place artists at the heart - Recognising the value of creators

Theme 2: Nurture the sector - Strengthening the structures to support those who guide and invest in creators

Theme 3: Ignite the live experience - Liberating the live music sector as a major catalyst for cultural and economic growth

Theme 4: Unlock the unifying power of UNESCO - Sharing the gift of music with the people of Belfast

3.3 Public Consultation

Following approval by City Growth and Regeneration Committee, the draft Music Strategy completed a 12-week public consultation. As part of this process Council engaged directly with over 162 stakeholders including:

- Online citizens and stakeholder engagement:
The council carried out an online 12-week consultation via the Council's YourSay engagement platform to gather information, and this provided an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to review proposals, provide feedback and help shape the final plan. Results indicated 327 visitors and 112 full responses to the survey.
- 5 public events held in venues across the city, namely Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich, the Oh Yeah Music

Centre, The Duncairn Centre, 2 Royal Avenue and Vault Studios

- 2 online sessions for the general public plus 2 online sessions with both the Disability Advisory Forum and the Sign Language Users Forum.

The overall feedback on the plan was very positive with a great deal of useful insight that we can utilise when shaping our implementation plans. Key elements of the draft strategy which received strong support in the consultation include:

- More artist development opportunities
- Greater accessibility for artists and audience members with disabilities
- More spaces for musicians to thrive / perform / practice
- A need to consult the sector about the current licensing laws
- A more inclusive city and music sector
- Music education, information sharing and signposting
- Increasing the perception of the value of music
- More accessible funding structures
- A review of funding currently available to the music sector
- A music hub
- Preventing venue closure
- A safer night time economy and the Get Home Safe policy
- Greater mental health support for musicians
- An expansion of the Gig Buddies scheme
- Engagement with the wider media sector to explore opportunities for locally created music to be featured across platforms
- A professional looking one-stop website with well managed information about what is happening throughout Belfast
- Filling vacant spaces with creative endeavours

3.4 Theme 1: Place artists at the heart.

This theme focused on recognising the value of creators. Several respondents indicated the need to ensure that opportunities for development are not just limited to younger people and that the needs of older people are reflected and understood. To reflect these concerns, this theme contains a new action point, namely:

- 4.5 Action - Engage with community groups such as the Over the Hill music collective to develop a greater

understanding of the needs of older and retired music creators as well as any potential barriers to older audiences participating in music.

Engagement also highlighted other key areas which will be considered and incorporated into the final implementation plan, namely:

- Inclusion of information sharing and education around matters such as rights, monetising music, utilising marketing and PR and the use of collection societies while ensuring artists are able to advise us on what is most important
- Ensuring that we understand particular needs within areas of music that have more barriers to typical engagement
- More music engagement possibilities within public spaces

3.5 Theme 2: Nurture the sector

This theme was focused on strengthening the structures to support those who guide and invest in creators. Feedback highlighted several key areas which will be considered and incorporated into the final implementation plan, namely:

- Ensure the inclusion of nightclubs and DJs when exploring development and support schemes
- Look at the possibility of developing apprenticeships as one option for upskilling the sector
- Host regular masterclasses for music creators and people involved in the music sector to develop and learn new skills
- Better encouragement of Musicians' Union rates of pay as the norm for what music creators deserve
- More opportunities for cross-genre and multi-disciplinary collaboration

3.6 Theme 3: Ignite the live experience

This theme focused on liberating the live music sector as a major catalyst for cultural and economic growth. Within this section of the consultation, we received several responses regarding grassroots music venues within our sector. Respondents highlighted the need for the venues within our city to have improved equipment and spaces as this would benefit their sustainability, the quality of music output as well as the attractiveness of Belfast to touring acts and booking agents. To reflect this feedback, this theme contains two new

actions to show further support for the need to preserve and better understand the needs of our grassroots music venues:

- 9.4 - Engage with the Music Venue Trust and the Music Venues Alliance to gain a greater understanding of the issues facing the survival of grassroots music venues in Belfast and the ways in which these challenges can be addressed
- 9.5 - Review current support for venues to upgrade the quality of their event spaces and equipment. Work with partners to explore additional financial support strategies where necessary.

Feedback also highlighted several key areas which will be considered and incorporated into the final implementation plan, namely:

- A review of the effect of the current public and private transport infrastructure on the music economy and steps that can be taken to support more transport availability in the evenings and night.
- Engage with organisations such as the Musicians' Union to create a fairer sector with a higher standard of care for music creators

3.7 Theme 4: Unlock the unifying power of UNESCO

This theme focused on sharing the gift of music with the people of Belfast. Feedback highlighted several key areas which will be considered and incorporated into the final implementation plan, namely:

- Opportunities to better utilise the networks within our sister cities to expand reach of local music creators
- Explore opportunities to improve public awareness of events, festivals and conferences taking place within the city
- Work with both the local community and external industry to boost Belfast as an international touring destination

3.8 Governance Model

As part of our consultation with the sector we also requested feedback regarding The Belfast Music Leadership Model and the Governance recommendations. Feedback highlighted several key areas which will be considered and incorporated into the final implementation plan, namely:

- Ensure there is representation of individuals with an understanding of the night-time economy within the Belfast Region Music Board
- Engage members of the music education sector within the leadership model, such as those from local universities, colleges and schools as well as private tutors and trad groups
- Ensure diverse representation of backgrounds, genres, ages and skills
- Ensure no conflicts of interest in decision making
- Ensure music consumers and audiences are represented
- Conduct a regular review to assess the effectiveness of the board's objectives

3.9 Next steps

Following agreement on the final strategy, next steps include:

- Dec 2022 – Strategy published
- Jan 2023 – Recruitment and meeting of Belfast Region Music Board
- Jan 2023 – Publication of implementation plan and delivery of recommendations and actions
- Feb 2023 – Delivery of comms strategy – new website, social media, newsletters

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

There are currently no financial implications attached to this report. Phase 1 delivery has been agreed as part of approvals for UNESCO City of Music. The additional resources required have been considered and agreed as part of the structural review for Economic Development.

3.11 Equality & Good Relations Implications

This music strategy is part of the overarching cultural strategy for Belfast that has been subject to EQIA. An equality screening has been completed and mitigating actions will be considered as part of the public consultation.”

During discussion, the Director of Economic Development provided further information on continued stakeholder engagement, governance procedures put in place and future funding allocation. In response to Members concerns in relation to the music organisations not listed in the Strategy document as partners or allies, he highlighted that the organisations listed were illustrative, and the document was not prescriptive in what organisation would be involved in the Music Strategy.

The Committee:

- Noted the contents of the report and the feedback received as part of the public consultation; and
- Agreed the final music strategy, “Music Matters: A Roadmap for Belfast” including the priorities.

2024 Programme Update

The Committee considered the following report, together with a presentation which outlined the Strategic Case for Belfast 2024.

“1.0 Purpose of Report”

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out:

- **Strategic case, concept and creative developments for *Belfast 2024* – our ambitious year of cultural and creative celebration for Belfast including updates on brand and programme development and civic engagement approach.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

Note the content of this report and the summary of the strategic case and developments for delivery for *Belfast 2024*, and current approach and budget allocation for delivering St Patrick’s Day for 2023.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Belfast 2024

***Belfast 2024* is a year-long celebration of home-grown culture featuring new and exciting events, theatre, music, and art developed through new co-design and partnership models with the city stakeholders, the creative sector and the citizens of Belfast. The year delivers on the aims of the City Council’s Cultural and Tourism strategies, Belfast Agenda, *Bolder Vision* and City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy. All founded in a belief and a commitment from Council that culture, sustainability, collaboration, partnership and people should be at the heart of the city’s Development to:**

- **Work towards Belfast becoming a more ‘attractive’ place to live and work**

- Addressing city dereliction, by increasing vibrancy and civic pride
- Recognise the Climate Crisis, develop awareness & change cultural behaviours
- Re-activate Belfast's Tourism Sector and develop our Cultural Tourism offer
- Deliver a distinct portfolio of city events connected to citizens and attracting international visitors promoting Belfast as a world-class cultural destination

3.2 Strategic Case for Belfast 2024

The Belfast Agenda provides a long-term framework for how community planning partners will work collaboratively to deliver an ambitious and inclusive vision that will create a better quality of life for all citizens in Belfast. Catalysed by the European Capital of Culture Bid development in 2017, which involved the largest and most significant public engagement programme Council has undertaken to date, Council has been undergoing significant strategic development in Culture & Tourism. The results of which are 3 new strategies for the city – *A City Imagining* Cultural Strategy, *Make Yourself at Home* Tourism Plan and *Music Matters* Roadmap - putting creativity, and the people of this city, at the heart of Belfast's development and growth opportunities.

A City Imagining launched in April 2020, has been developed with the people of Belfast and places culture and creativity at the heart of civic development. Outward-looking, forward-facing, innovative and inclusive, the strategy is supported by an Investment Model and an Implementation Plan that proposes a new partnership approach to funding and actions, and aims to:

- Support the cultural life of the city by enabling our people to be active, dynamic
- and creative agents of change
- Invest in our cultural and creative sectors to develop the skills and capacity for
- production and innovation
- Position Belfast as an international testing ground for new approaches to cultural
- engagement, development and placemaking
- Establish Belfast as a cultural destination

Belfast 2024 is a core strategic aim of the cultural strategy and will directly deliver on the above ambitions. *Belfast 2024* is a core ambition that will deliver on the priorities outlined in The Belfast Agenda which sets an ambition to be a culturally

vibrant city; *A City Imagining* Belfast City Council's 10-year cultural strategy; *The Bolder Vision* city-centre regeneration strategy and *Resilient Belfast*, the city's resilience aspirations and vision of what and where we want to be as a city. *Belfast 2024* will also target all four strategic themes in the *Make Yourself at Home* Tourism Plan, including Growth, Position (in tourist markets), Sustainable Tourism and the overall experience. As a member of the Agenda for Culture 2021 Council will ensure the programme for 2024 will also seek to align to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Based on these strategic priorities and goals, there is hopes of creating memorable and interactive spaces and moments across the city which will be critical to ensuring locals reconnect with their city and visitors are drawn in from outside of Belfast.

3.3 Benefits for Cities of Culture

City of Culture events – both European Capital of Culture and UK City of Culture designations, have played a key role in the development of several cities across the UK and Ireland. These events and programmes have held to increase the visibility of these cities bringing significant tourism as well as helping cultural development, which otherwise may not have occurred.

The city of culture designation has also provided significant opportunity to promote civic integration and overall regeneration for the delivering cities boosting prosperity, civic pride and placemaking.

Hull was designated UK City of Culture in 2017, a city of similar size and make up as Belfast with a shared industrial past has seen significant transformation in the last 5 years catalysed by their year of cultural celebration. Their 2017 programme for culture delivered:

- £178.1m in Day Visitor Spend and £61m in Overnight Visitor Spend; £20m and £3.1m more than in 2016, respectively.
- Increased the value of tourism from £285m in 2016 to £313m in 2017.
- Delivered 6.2m total volume of visits, 548,600 more than 2016.
- Created 589 total actual tourism jobs.
- £500m invested due to the City of Culture 2017
- Celebrations created £450m worth of advertising and media coverage

More recently Coventry was awarded the UK City of Culture title in 2021, and despite major disruption to their plans brought on by the pandemic they still:

- Created 1,486 jobs.
- Generated £51.2m gross GVA.
- Secured £172.6m in investment as a direct result of the City of Culture 2021.
- 320,000 visitors recorded, of which 213,555 tracked through ticketed events.

3.4 The impact for Belfast

Delivering on our own year of cultural celebration in 2024 will have transformational change for Belfast – the impacts of which will be felt across the cultural, tourism and hospitality sectors directly but also at a wider civic and international level and bring about lasting legacy for the city as a place and for its people.

The priorities of the city's cultural strategy, reinforced by the new tourism plan, will facilitate the creativity, capacity building and energy that is required in the lead up to this celebration and beyond. Our vision for the year is to create a legacy of better understanding our identity, our relationships with each other and our place in the world.

Belfast is different. Our history, our culture, our music, our industrial heritage, even our sense of humour all set us apart from other cities. So too does how our city has developed over recent decades and the challenges we face in the future development of Belfast.

Climate: If Belfast can transition to low carbon (or net zero carbon) economy in the next thirty years, and do it in an equitable way, it will secure its long-term future. If it does not, it will spend much more on disaster recovery, it will fail to meet its Belfast Agenda priorities and worse still, it could ultimately become a smaller, poorer city.

Vibrancy: At present, Belfast's vacant unit rate is 22.2%, which is 4.7% above the NI average and 9.5% above the UK average (Belfast City Centre Management Vacant Units Report). In order for Belfast to be a vibrant and safe place to live, residents must be provided with an opportunity to lead engaged and fulfilled lives and surrounded by bustling, energetic high streets.

Culture and arts: Government investment in the arts has fallen by 30% over the last decade, and is currently lower than the UK and Republic of Ireland average (Arts Council NI). A resilient city is a culturally vibrant city. One which values culture and its role. Ensuring the city can tackle intractable problems and adapt to future challenges will require a significant expansion of the creative sector.

Belfast 2024 can play a significant role in building a cohesive 'bolder' Belfast by delivering a major year of creativity focusing on the themes of our people, our place and our planet which will humanise city challenges through thought provoking moments and compelling experiences, changing mindsets and releasing new meanings, paving our way into a culturally vibrant and resilient city of the future.

Belfast 2024 will contribute to the long-term vision for the city to become one of the world's greatest urban transformations; germinating an ecosystem of social, cultural, environmental, and economic initiatives that will catalyse new ideas, enterprise, skills, well-being, leisure, education, play and curiosity.

Through Belfast 2024 we aim to deliver:

£9m investment in creative and place-based programmes across Belfast in 2024 including:

- £2.5m directly to creative and cultural sector commissioning
- £1.5m directly to re-imagining and raising ambition of our city's signature events
- £2m to co-commissioned spectacle programmes with Dublin City Council & Bradford 2025
- £1m directly to civic based programmes led by co-design & engagement
- £1m to an ambitious, engaging and powerful Marcomms plan delivered with partners
- £1m to production crew, volunteering programmes and direct events delivery
- 6 signature events headlining the year inc St Patrick's Day, Maritime Festival & Christmas
- If successful with bidding hosting The Fleadh Ceoil
- 80 home-grown festivals delivering on 2024 themes
- Up to 70 brand new events commissioned by Council co-designed with the city
- 500 artist contracts
- 300 trained volunteers

- 50 citywide and neighbourhood events and programmes
- 10 international artist exchanges
- 14 artists in residence
- 10 national and international collaborations

Belfast City Council will continue to host a number of landmark international projects in the lead up to 2024 in such as UNBOXED 2022, where the Northern Irish commission – *Our Place in Space* – is now in Liverpool, and has been one of the most successful and well-received of all UNBOXED projects and will find a permanent home with National Museums NI in 2023.

3.5 Belfast beyond the Good Friday Agreement

2023 also marks the 25 year anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, a moment in time to mark the next chapter for our country, and Belfast's future, a welcome time to host One Young World, the most significant global youth leadership conference focused on platforming, developing and inspiring the future leaders of the world. As begin a new chapter for our country, and our city, and build towards delivering *Belfast 2024* the focus will be on catalysing a new future for our city, where we imagine where we will be in 25 years time from now, a new, greener, more inclusive, connected and creative city.

3.6 Recognising the crisis in the cultural sector

Delivery of our ambitious year of cultural celebration in 2024 is needed more than ever as our city recovers from the pandemic whilst also facing unprecedented economic pressures in the current financial climate. We recognise the profound socio-economic impacts of the pandemic across the city, especially for the culture and arts sector.

- The Lyric Theatre, NI's landmark Producing Theatre are projecting energy bills of £240k in 2022-23 - an increase of almost 2.5 times the costs pre-Covid and almost £90k within the last year alone.
- Belfast Children's Festival, a CMAG Imagine Festival, have had the service charge for their premises has increased by 43% without any prior warning and is now higher
- than their rent.
- There is reduced well-being as a result of increased cost of living/static salaries
- There is poor mental health as a result of reduced opportunities for delivery and local provision

- There is a talent exodus – people are leaving the sector or choosing to join other sectors due to better terms and conditions and greater job-security.
- There is a barrier to developing high quality partnerships with ROI/GB/Europe as the sector are increasingly misaligned in terms of resource and increasing prices and the long-term impact of lower investment and on-going issues brought about by Brexit

Council's Culture Team have been pivoting our programmes and to help recover and build the capacity of our cultural sector whilst maintaining our commitment to a year of cultural celebration in our city, originally planned for 2023 this will now take place in 2024 recognising the impact on the city's capacity to deliver on this ambition post-pandemic.

Creative collaboration will be at the heart of Belfast's recovery ensuring that we can build back better – across culture, tourism and hospitality - leaving a lasting legacy for these sectors, as well as the people of the city. While the full impact of Covid-19 and our current economic crisis is as yet unknown, what is clear is that recovery will require determination and genuine partnership working as well as creative and innovative approaches to our city's future development.

In continuing to deliver our home-grown year of cultural celebration in 2024 we will build much needed capacity and ambition in our creative sector whilst delivering on our strategic priorities for civic participation in cultural development as well as placing Belfast on the map internationally as a culturally vibrant destination.

3.7 Belfast 2024 Guiding Principles - our people, our place, our planet

People & Place are at the heart of our cultural strategy *A City Imagining* and our tourism plan *Make Yourself at Home*. Placemaking is a people-centred approach to delivering a local and shared vision. People shape places. Culturally vibrant cities are places where people negotiate their sense of belonging and where the private sphere connects to the public.

Local government is ideally positioned when it comes to placemaking, with an ability to connect with and bring together a diverse range of people and sectors across the city. It is in this role that Council must show leadership and *Belfast*

2024 is a manifestation of this vision for putting people and place at the heart of what we do. We also recognise the need to focus on our role as facilitators, strengthening collaborations between sectors and silos in this city, using creativity and the ambitions of 2024 as our vehicle.

People & Place are therefore at the core of our guiding Principles which all work commissioned under the 2024 banner will follow: Collaboration and Co-design, New work, Our Shared Planet, Future thinking and Public space.

3.8 Belfast 2024 Signature Events

Despite the richness of Belfast's cultural offer and a number of significant successes in recent years, the city has not yet established itself as a truly global events destination. What the city has demonstrated with the *A City Imagining* strategy and *Make Yourself at Home* Tourism plan is the potential to be different, authentic and distinctly Belfast. Events can challenge and articulate a city's diverse identity and personality, a core theme in our cultural strategy.

Council's culture team have been working with the city and the sector to design a new approach to developing and delivering Belfast's events and festivals, which will come to fruition as core events in our Belfast 2024 programme – namely new approaches, engaging local and international creatives, to delivering St Patrick's Day and Maritime Festival, placing Belfast on the map for offering a distinct experience for these traditional calendar events. We will also continue to work closely with our four Imagine Festivals – Belfast Children's Festival, NI Science Festival, Feile and Mela – to raise their ambition in 2024 with regards to vision, content and collaboration resulting in a distinct core of signature events as pillars throughout our 2024 programme which will have legacy beyond the year itself.

3.9 Belfast 2024 Signature Partners

Successful cities of culture have shown that investment in homegrown talent has long-term and measurable impacts. It is also recognised that to develop local talent, and importantly raise their ambition, our creative sector needs to be inspired by and work in collaboration with international creative and cultural partners on a long-term and meaningful basis to raise the bar locally as well as garnering Belfast's reputation as a cultural and global destination.

Belfast 2024 will seek to anchor at least three significant international partnerships to deliver on this vision for the year. Importantly these partners will work in collaboration with our civic and creative sectors to co-design their contributions to the programming for 2024, working together with our city in leaving a lasting legacy and developing long-term relationships with globally recognised creative and cultural brands.

3.10 Our Open Call to the city

It is imperative that Belfast 2024's ambitious programme is to be created by and for the people of Belfast - the residents and workers of the city, the artists and creatives of the city, the cultural and non-cultural organisations of the city coming together with people of all ages and from all backgrounds to collaborate and create with us for 2024.

In November Council will launch its first Open Call for ideas via a new procurement model shaped on a Design Contest which gathers ideas at a high level and most importantly provides a vehicle seed-funding for ideas to be developed to full feasibility stage before being submitted for commissioning. We will ask the civic and creative sectors across our city to share with us ideas they want to develop for this year of creativity, to ensure we create and build this programme together. Council is particularly looking for ideas that will involve new ways of working through innovative processes, collaborations and co-design. They may evolve into new ways of delivering on our city events, such as Christmas, or new processes in engaging citizens in cultural activity from having a role as co-creators to learning new skills and even performing. We want to support new, ambitious ideas and initiatives that are about bringing people together to create new connections and collaborations, to think and work in new ways through creativity and imagination. We will support this process of ideation through a two-stage submission, giving time and seed-funding to develop ideas to full feasibility to lead to full commissioning beginning in May 2023. Successful commission teams will work closely with Council's Culture and 2024 team to develop their ideas into projects, events and programmes with a view to delivering these bespoke cultural activities throughout Belfast in 2024.

3.11 Platforming Belfast's up and coming talent

Belfast 2024 will provide a vital platform to celebrate some of our most successful and contemporary up and coming artists who are from Belfast and Northern Ireland.

Many Northern Irish artists have recently gained recognition at a national and international level, winning Emmy Awards in music as well as the coveted Turner Prize for visual arts. Platforming these artists in 2024 will provide local gravitas for Belfast 2024, raising our visibility and reputation globally as well as inspiring for younger generations from Northern Ireland who want to explore, and achieve a successful, career in the creative arts in this country

3.12 Timeline for Commissioning *Belfast 2024* Programme

Stage 1 Nov 22: Idea Open Call launches/ developing signature partnerships

Stage 2 Mar 23: Seed funding for feasibility studies for ideas

Stage 3 Apr 23: Feasibility submissions. Successful Belfast 2024 Commissions contracted

Stage 4 Apr+ 23: Development in partnership w/ Council's 2024 team

Stage 5 2024: Delivery throughout the city in 2024

3.13 *Belfast 204* Brand Development

Council's Culture and Comms teams have been working in collaboration with McCadden to develop a stand alone brand for our year of cultural celebration in 2024, recognising we are not a UK City of Culture, nor a European Capital of Culture, but that this year is about us, and our collective ambitions for our city to celebrate our creativity and be seen as a truly culturally vibrant city and global destination and therefore this year needs a distinctive brand that everyone across the city can engage with, adopt, adapt and have ownership of. The result of which is the name *Belfast 2024*, with a distinct, contemporary and fun suite of design assets that are flexible and adaptable which can be used to gather momentum throughout 2023 and promote events throughout 2024 across the city in various media and platforms.

Learning from other cities of culture, who have delivered projects of this scale and above such as Hull, Leeds and Liverpool, the importance of Marcomms for Belfast 2024 cannot be underestimated. Council's Culture and Comms teams are currently working up a full Marcomms plan for Belfast 2024 in partnership with key stakeholders such as Tourism Northern Ireland and Visit Belfast.

3.14 Civic Engagement & Co-design

A new approach to civic cultural engagement is being developed for Belfast 2024.

Rather than having a traditional audience role, citizens across Belfast will be invited and supported to co-create and participate in this year-long creative programme with Belfast City Council and the creative and cultural sector. Together we will co-design events, experiences and initiatives that empower people's creativity and increase our capacity to express and nurture it – in our city, neighbourhoods and lives. We will open opportunities for citizens to connect over their interests and explore what creativity means to them, encouraging ambition across the city for our citizens to try something for the first time or take their cherished creative pursuits even further.

To achieve this, we are developing new processes in areas such as procurement, communications, government and in our cross-departmental and cross-sectoral working.

We are putting civic participation at the heart of Belfast 2024, so citizens see themselves and their creativity reflected in this programme.

3.15 Updates on St Patrick's Day 2023

Members are reminded that £240,000 was approved previously by Committee in April 2022 for the St Patrick's Day 2023 event.

Approval is now requested to allocate an additional £90,000 from existing council and departmental budgets as follows:

April Committee Allocation	£240,000
Additional Council Allocation	£90,000
Total Budget	£330,000

Additional budget will uplift the event through building ongoing momentum towards the plans for a year of cultural celebration in 2024, as well as bid activities associated with Fleadh Cheoil. This will include:

- Additional programming elements including Ards Comhaltas Branch (key Fleadh Cheoil partner)

- Enhancing the visitor experience and increasing event dwell time within city centre
- Future-proofing the event in respect of delivery structure and stakeholder engagement models

This will increase the Council's investment in St Patrick's Day to £330,000.

3.16 Financial & Resource Implications

£90,000 requested for allocation to delivery of St Patrick's Day in 2023. As laid out above these monies are within existing departmental budgets agreed by Committee in March 2022 for the purpose of delivering city events.

£1.85million to cover the 2024 Open Call process launching later in November has been approved by CMT & SP&R in October 2022, this is allocated from the cultural reserve budget for 2024 development and delivery.

3.17 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The cultural strategy, *A City Imagining*, which included the strategic ambitions of 2024, has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)."

During discussion, the Director of Economic Development described the intended legacy of Belfast 2024 and highlighted the need to increase participation, funding and resources for the Arts Sector. He also explained further the St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

The Director of Economic Development advised that a Workshop would be organised in the new year to provide further details of the developing plans for Belfast 2024.

The Committee:

- noted the contents of the report and the summary of the strategic case and developments for delivery for *Belfast 2024*;
- noted the current approach and budget allocation for delivering St Patrick's Day for 2023; and
- Noted that a Belfast 2024 Workshop would be organised in early 2023.

Cultural Mapping for Culture, Arts and Heritage

The Committee was reminded that, as a key action of Belfast's ten-year cultural strategy, *A City Imagining*, the Culture Unit, in partnership and the Department for

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

Communities, had jointly commissioned a report on Belfast's cultural infrastructure. The aim of this report was to analyse what physical space was available for residents to experience culture, and to examine current physical resource allocation for the cultural sector across the city.

The Director of Economic Development advised that the overall cultural mapping project was key to the delivery of the city's cultural strategy and the city's community plan (the Belfast Agenda). He described the significance of the research, and the requirement for a whole city approach in terms of a critical analysis of physical resources for cultural activity, identifying gaps and models of good practice – starting with a study of the physical resources for culture. He pointed out that the Culture Team were committed to delivering a cultural mapping of the city within A City Imagining implementation plan 2020-2023.

He explained that the Cultural Mapping project addressed the existing and future needs of Belfast's cultural and creative industries sector by ensuring that policy was informed by up to date and accurate data whilst also providing a valuable resource for the public to increase engagement and participation. Furthermore, this data had the potential to be utilised by residents, visitors, artists, cultural and creative organisations, funders and planners. This Cultural Mapping Report was Phase One of a major cultural mapping project which included the following phases:

- **Phase One** - A review and analysis of Belfast's hard cultural infrastructure;
- **Phase Two** – Study and Scoping of the soft infrastructure, identifying cultural resources, networks links and patterns of cultural practice. Research with partners and community networks, wide-reaching public engagement and cluster engagement, crowdsourcing ideas; and
- **Phase Three** – An interactive digital cultural map product that would allow residents to browse the city's cultural offerings. This would be similar in concept to Dublin's 'culture near you' project.

The Cultural Mapping report (copy available [here](#)) provided strategic recommendations for improving Belfast's creative provisions in the short and long term and could be seen as a tool that could inform broader plans for the city alongside other areas, including, but not limited to, regeneration, heritage, and economic development.

He outlined the recommendations within the Cultural Mapping Report as follows:

- A key recommendation in this phase one report focused on addressing the shortage of affordable artist studio space in Belfast. Members would be aware that, at a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in February 2022, it had been agreed to open a new funding scheme for artist led organisations to provide financial and development support for this sector. As part of this support, members also agreed a strategic review of artist studios and maker-spaces in Belfast which would identify examples of best practice and potential solutions to this issue. This research would be conducted over the coming months, with a number of long-term recommendations presented to Committee in March 2023;

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

- The report identified 2 Royal Avenue as a space which could accommodate artists. On 15th April, 2022, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had approved the proposal around *Meanwhile Use* until the end of 2023 at our recently acquired 2 Royal Avenue building, with a focus on cultural, animation and creative activities. The proposal was to create a non-commercial space in the heart of the city and provide citizens and visitors with a free and accessible place to relax and enjoy arts programming and a cultural offering, whilst developing long term strategy use. In July 2022, the Council had submitted an application to the Levelling Up Fund, proposing a 'Creative Hub', for the building at 2 Royal Avenue. The concept was based on a mixture of complimentary commercial, creative and cultural activities across the building to create one holistic offer;
- Recommendations in this Cultural Mapping report also focused on Cultural Entrepreneurship as it related to physical space. As members would be aware, The Vacant to Vibrant, 2 year pilot, Capital Grant Scheme had allocated £1m to seek to support local independent businesses and SME's, social economy businesses and creative and cultural organisations that would provide a unique or distinct offer for the city centre and transform vacant spaces to become vibrant. This scheme had garnered interest from the cultural sector. At the Expression of Interest stage, approximately 33% of the submissions by businesses/organisations were from cultural sector. Many from the cultural sector Eols have indicated that they were seeking maker space and their property requirements also might not align with the parameters of this grant, which would primarily seek to occupy and activate vacant ground floor space in prominent areas of the city centre; and
- Long term recommendations in the report included a hotel levy. As members would be aware, this was considered in the tourism plan for Belfast, "Make Yourself at Home", presented to the Committee on 6th April 2022. Within this plan, it was acknowledged that, while areas like passenger duty and visitor levies were not within the remit of the Council, we would adopt policy positions based on up-to-date research, consultation and evidence.

The Director of Economic Development informed the Committee of the next steps in the Cultural Mapping Process. Phase Two of the Cultural Mapping work would delve deeper into research and scoping of the infrastructure identified in this initial phase. The phase would create a holistic view of the cultural sector and identify networks and artistic and cultural practice patterns. This would also include looking into public participation, cluster interaction, research with partners and community networks, and the people and groups that use these spaces as their workplace. He advised that his work was due to be commissioned in November 2022, with a report presented to the

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

Committee in May 2023. The overarching objective of this work was twofold, firstly, to increase and understanding of cultural infrastructure, drive use and participation and, secondly, to seek to agree long term remedies with partners in areas where gaps in provision were demonstrated. He pointed out that the Team would also continue to work with organisations across the city to locate and source suitable properties where there was an immediate or emergency need.

During discussion, the Director of Economic Development explained further the methodology of the report and the engagement with the Arts Council and other cultural bodies. Members raised the issue of some research gaps in the Cultural Mapping report, in that not all Musical Venues and Theatres had been included from across the City and some venues needed to be defined further. The Director advised that the report was not a complete list of cultural venues, however, Members could submit any additional prominent cultural venues to be included in the audit for consideration.

One Member also pointed out that the Balmoral DEA needed to be included in the illustrative maps of the city.

The Committee noted the contents of the Phase One report on Cultural Mapping and that Members would submit any additional prominent cultural venues to be included in the audit to the Director of Economic Development for consideration.

Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2022-23

It was reported that The Department for Communities was inviting local Councils to administer the Access and Inclusion Programme 2022-23 within their respective local Council areas and to submit an application for funding to the Department by 17th November, 2022. The Department had formally launched the programme as a competitive process on 20th October 2022, which advised that a total fund of £624,000 was available for this programme.

The Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme aimed to:

- Improve access to arts, culture and active recreation venues across NI for people with disabilities;
- Make arts, cultural and active recreation venues more inclusive across society; and
- Increase participation in arts, culture and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.

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

The Culture Development Unit (previously Tourism, Culture Heritage and Arts Unit) had managed the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Access and Inclusion Programme within Belfast and had received support for 24 projects with total value of £412,554, of which five were Council projects. In 2020/21, they had administered 11 Access and Inclusion grants with a total value of £185,443 and 9 Programme grants in 2021/22 with a total value of £143,667. Examples of projects supported included improved access to the City

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

Hall and the Tropical Ravine; easier access for audience and participants to not for profit cultural venues across the city; installation of new specialised playground facilities and changing spaces; and provision of equipment to provide immersive theatrical experiences for children with complex needs.

Capital works and equipment costs were eligible under this programme. The maximum grant was £30,000 and applicants were required to contribute at least 10% of the total project costs. To receive a £30,000 grant, therefore, applicants must provide a contribution of at least £3,000.

This year, the Department for Communities was particularly keen to welcome applications for Changing Places facilities, accessible equipment for play parks and projects that would impact positively on sustainability and climate change. Projects must complete on or before 31st March, 2023. The Department for Communities had advised that no extensions would be considered to the project completion date.

The Committee granted permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage the Access and Inclusion Programme 2022-23.

Market License Application

The Committee was advised that the following Market License Applications had been submitted:

- ***Vault Art Studios, 4 – 84 Tower Street Belfast*** - to host a two-day Christmas Market on Saturday 3rd December and Sunday, 4th December, 11am – 17:00pm; and
- ***Fine and at Dandy Market*** - a monthly variety market beginning in February/ March 2023, in either Elmwood Hall or the Titanic Hotel depending on availability. proposing to trade on the first Sunday of every month from 1-5pm.

In line with the overall Belfast City Council Markets Development Strategy, these two proposed events would help to enhance these two areas of the city and, in doing so, drive footfall into the areas.

The Committee:

- Agreed to grant the licence to Vault Art Studios for a one-off Christmas Market; and.
- Agreed to grant a licence to Kellie Mairs (Fine and Dandy market) for the running of a monthly market in Elmwood Studios / Titanic Hotel.

Strategic and Operational Issues

Belfast Zoo - Fun Run Event Request

It was reported that a request had been received from Monkstown Spartans Athletics Club to hold a 'Zoo Challenge 5k fun run' in the grounds of Belfast Zoo. The organiser were flexible with dates, and the zoo proposed that this should be held in

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th November, 2022**

the off-peak season (September 2023). The organiser intended to use the entire zoo site (public areas) and car park, with an anticipated number of participants of 250 to 500 maximum to be permitted.

The organiser intended to charge a registration fee to participants of £18 per person with a portion of the fee contributed to Belfast Zoo. The organiser also intended to donate a portion of the registration fee to their selected charity. The event would not impact on normal zoo opening hours, with set-up, run, and dismantle taking place prior to normal opening at 10.00am.

The Committee was informed that the organiser had submitted all relevant documentation, including public liability insurance, risk assessment and event management plan and the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Unit had confirmed suitability of the event to take place, as per the risk assessment and event management plan supplied.

The Committee approved the fun run event at Belfast Zoo.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 16th November, 2022

MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

- Members present: Councillor Matt Collins (Chairperson); and
Councillors Canavan, Gormley, Howard,
M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee, McAteer, McCann,
McCoubrey, McCullough, McCusker, McKeown,
Murray, Nelson, Smyth and Thompson.
- 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. U. McMullan, Solicitor;
Ms. L. Hillis, Principal Building Control Surveyor;
Ms. M. Gallagher, Senior Building Control Surveyor;
Mr. J. Cunningham, Senior Licensing Officer;
Mr. D. McCampbell, Lead Building Control Surveyor;
Ms. C. Reynolds, Director, City Regeneration and
Development
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer;
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Alderman Sandford.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 19th October 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 November, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor McKeown declared an interest in the review of Pavement Café Licence for City Picnic, Fountain Street (item 2h) in that he had advocated on their behalf to find a resolution in correspondence to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). He left the meeting while the matter was being discussed.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

Councillor McCullough declared an interest in the Application for the Grant of a Seven-day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for Grove Park, Jellicoe Avenue (Item 2d). He left the meeting while the matter was being discussed.

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. She 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.

**Application for a New Licence to operate a House of
Multiple Occupation - 30 Eblana Street**

The HMO Unit Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration an application for a Licence permitting the use of premises as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To consider an application for a Licence permitting the use of premises as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Premises	Application No.	Applicant(s)	Managing Agents
30 Eblana Street, Belfast, BT7 1LD	9399	Mr Enda Hughes	Boyle Properties

Members are reminded that licences are issued for a 5-year period with standard conditions. Where it is considered necessary to do so, the Committee can also impose special conditions.

Background

1.2 An individual purporting to be the owner of the accommodation submitted an HMO licence application on 22nd August, 2019 and an HMO licence was granted to that individual on 30th December, 2019.

1.3 However, following an application to vary the managing agent of the property, officers established that the individual to

whom the licence was granted was not, in fact, the legal owner of the property. Instead, he was one of two directors of a limited company who actually owned the property. Members will be aware that a limited company is a separate legal entity.

- 1.4 Officers sought and obtained advice from Counsel on the validity of the licence and legal services advised that section 8(1) of the 2016 Act clearly requires that the *owner* of the accommodation must apply for a licence, which was not the case here. Therefore, officers held that the misrepresentations made by the abovementioned individual regarding the ownership of the property, invalidated the licence meaning it no longer had effect. The NIHMO Unit emailed the individual advising him of the Council's decision on 26th July, 2022.
- 1.5 On 23rd June 2022, the applicant, Mr. Hughes, submitted an application for a new HMO licence (He was a prospective purchaser of the property at the time).
- 1.6 The sale of the property was completed on 28th July, 2022.
- 1.7 Therefore, given that there was no valid licence in place when the applicant's purchase of the property completed, the applicant could not avail of section 28 of the 2016 Act.
- 1.8 Had the licence remained in effect and, whilst still being an application for a new licence, with overprovision being taken into account (as indeed it must be), the Council would not have deemed granting this application to result in overprovision, given that it would effectively have been a transfer of an existing licence.
- 2.0 Recommendations
- 2.1 Taking into account the information presented Committee is asked to hear from the Applicant and make a decision to either:
 - (i) grant the application, with or without any special conditions; or
 - (ii) refuse the application.
- 2.2 If the application is refused, the applicants have a right of appeal to the County Court. Such an appeal must be lodged within 28 days of formal notification of the decision.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 Pursuant to the 2016 Act, the Council may only grant a licence if it is satisfied that:

- a) the occupation of the living accommodation as an HMO would not constitute a breach of planning control;
- b) the owner, and any managing agent of it, are fit and proper persons;
- c) the proposed management arrangements are satisfactory);
- d) the granting of the licence will not result in overprovision of HMOs in the locality;
- e) the living accommodation is fit for human habitation and:
 - (i) is suitable for occupation as an HMO by the number of persons to be specified in the licence, or
 - (ii) can be made so suitable by including conditions in the licence.

Planning

3.2 As this is a new application, the Council's Planning Service was consulted. It confirmed that a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development ('CLEUD') was granted in May, 2022 with the planning reference LA04/2022/0558/LDE.

Fitness

3.3 When considering the fitness of an applicant the Council must have regard to any offences concerning fraud/ dishonesty, violence, drugs, human trafficking, firearms, sexual offences, unlawful discrimination in, or in connection with, the carrying on of any business; or any provision of the law relating to housing or of landlord and tenant law. It also permits the Council to take into account any other matter which the council considers to be relevant.

3.4 The NIHMO Unit has consulted with the following units within the Council's City and Neighbourhood Services Department –

- (a) Environmental Protection Unit ('EPU') – it has confirmed that in relation to night-time noise there

has been no relevant enforcement action required in respect of the HMO in the last 5 years,

- (b) Environmental Protection Unit ('EPU') – it has confirmed that in relation to day-time noise there has been no relevant enforcement action required in respect of the HMO in the last 5 years,
- (c) Public Health and Housing Unit ('PHHU') – it has confirmed that in relation to rubbish accumulation/filthy premises, there has been no relevant enforcement action required in respect of the HMO in the last 5 years,
- (d) Enforcement Unit ('EU') – it has confirmed that in relation to litter and waste, there has been no relevant enforcement action required in respect of the HMO in the last 5 years,

3.5 The applicant and Managing Agent have confirmed that they have not been convicted of any relevant offences as set out at paragraph 3.3 of this report.

3.6 The applicant or Managing Agent have not been convicted of any HMO related offences by the Council. The EPU, PHHU and EU, solely in respect of their statutory functions, have confirmed that there are no relevant, previous convictions in respect of the Applicant, Managing Agent or occupants. Due to data protection issues which have recently arisen, PSNI has not been accepting or responding to notification of these applications. Officers are continuing to engage with PSNI to find a resolution to this issue.

Overprovision

3.7 For the purpose of determining whether or not the granting of a licence would result in an overprovision of HMOs in the locality of the accommodation, and in order to ensure consistency as both a planning and licensing authority the locality was defined as being HMO Policy Area 'HMO 2/22 Botanic, Holylands, Rugby' as defined in the document 'Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) Subject Plan for Belfast City Council Area 2015'.

3.8 Legal Services has advised that there is a clear requirement in section 8 of the 2016 Act for the Council to be satisfied that the granting of a licence will not result in overprovision.

- 3.9 On the date of assessment, 17th October 2022, there were a total of 1087 licensed HMOs in HMO policy area 'HMO 2/22 Botanic, Holylands, Rugby'. This equates to just over 45% of the total dwelling units of 2409 within the policy area. Which in turn exceeds the 30% development limit as set out at Policy HMO 1. The 1087 licensed HMOs have a capacity of 4897 persons**
- 3.10 The total number of dwelling units in a Policy Area is measured by Ordnance Survey's Pointer database.**
- 3.11 The Council must also consider the need for housing accommodation in the locality and the extent to which HMO accommodation is required to meet that need.**
- 3.12 The Council recognises that there is a need for intensive forms of housing and to meet this need, HMOs are an important component of this housing provision. HMOs, alongside other accommodation options within the private rented sector, play an important role in meeting the housing needs of people who are single, who have temporary employment, students, low-income households and, more recently, migrant workers.**
- 3.13 In September 2017, The Housing Executive published the document 'Housing Market Analysis Update – Belfast City Council Area' which states 'HMOs form an important element of the PRS, particularly for younger people on low incomes and for single people, under the age of 35, affected by the limitation of housing benefit to the shared room rate. Anecdotal evidence also indicates that this has been a popular sector with migrant workers.'**
- 3.14 On 28th October 2022, out of 19 premises available for rent within the BT7 area on the website PropertyNews.com there was 1 licensed HMO, which from the information presented on the website, represented 4 bed spaces. The HMO was available for immediate occupation. It should be borne in mind that the peak letting time for HMO accommodation in BT7 is before the commencement of the academic year.**
- 3.15 Anecdotal evidence from conversations with HMO managing agents suggest that there is currently a lack of HMO accommodation available in the locality.**
- 3.16 The fact the use of the property as an HMO is permitted for planning purposes is a relevant consideration in determining whether the grant of this licence will result in overprovision. There is an argument that it may not do so as the premises are already being used as an HMO.**

- 3.17 However, it should be borne in mind that planning permission was granted on the basis that the use had been established for 5 or more years and was therefore immune to enforcement. No assessment of overprovision was made at that time. Given the level of licensed HMO properties in this locality as set out above it would be highly unlikely that a planning application for a new HMO in the area would be successful as the thresholds in the 2015 Plan have been significantly exceeded.
- 3.18 Officers are, therefore, of the opinion that it is too early to tell whether there is a temporary lack of HMO accommodation in the locality or evidence of an emerging long-term supply issue.

Objections

- 3.19 No objections have been received in relation to this application.

Attendance

- 3.20 The applicant and/or their representatives will be available to discuss any matters relating to the licence application should they arise during your meeting.

Suitability of the Premises

- 3.21 The accommodation was certified as complying with the physical standards for an HMO by a technical officer from the NIHMO service on 31st October, 2022

Notice of Proposed Decision

- 3.22 On 28th October 2022, pursuant to Paragraph 9 of Schedule 2 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, Officers issued a Notice of Proposed Decision to the Applicant setting out the terms of the proposed licence. (Appendix 2)
- 3.24 The Notice of Proposed Decision stated that the Council proposed to refuse the licence on the grounds of overprovision. A statement of reasons for the proposal was included in the Notice of Proposed Decision.

Manager's Query further to the Notice of Proposed Decision

- 3.25 On 1st October 2022, Boyle Properties emailed the HMO unit seeking clarity as to why the application was not being considered as a renewal. (Appendix 3).

Officers responded to the query on the same day (Appendix 4)

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.26 None. The cost of assessing the application and officer inspections are provided for within existing budgets.**

Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 3.27 There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report.”**

It was reported that Mr. Hughes, the applicant, Mr. D. Boyle, the Managing Agent and Mr. E. Sloan, the applicant’s legal representative were in attendance and they were welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. Sloan made a representation on behalf of the applicant and stated that they understood and respected the legislative and policy basis which underpinned the HMO Licensing Scheme, and it was Mr. Hughes’ intention and hope to be a responsible and compliant landlord. Mr Sloan informed the Committee that Mr Hughes had agreed to purchase the property at the cost of £185,000 in February 2022 in the knowledge that there was an existing HMO licence in place and intended to continue it and had engaged in significant borrowing for the project. He added that his client had engaged in full due diligence and inspected the existing HMO licence which had been granted in 2019 for a 5-year period until 2024. Mr. Sloan explained that Mr. Hughes understood that the licence did not pass with the property but he had been fastidious in his approach and instructed Mr. Boyle, Managing Agent to assist him with the licence. Mr. Sloan referred to Section 28 and stated that Mr. Hughes followed the correct procedures in relation to the licence application and planning requirements. Mr. Sloan added that procedurally, it was a compliant application and Mr. Hughes was a suitable applicant. He continued that as the report confirmed, the property was deemed suitable after inspection and there had been no objections. Mr. Sloan advised the Committee that Mr. Hughes applied for the licence to be transferred to him on 23rd June and provided a timeline and details of correspondence with the Council which had led Mr. Hughes to have a legitimate expectation that the application would proceed. He added, that at no time were any issues raised nor was there an interrogation of the previous licence.

Mr. Sloan stated that there may be a degree of procedural unfairness which he did not want to labour upon but highlighted a technicality in the report in relation to the previous licence and its invalidation. Mr. Sloan reported that he had looked at the Land Registry details which had uncovered inconsistencies in relation to the property’s previous owner and licence whereby essentially there was a wrong factual basis for unilateral declaration that the licence was invalid. In this regard, he stated he did not want to pursue the technicalities further as it would be disproportionate. Mr. Sloan asked that Mr. Hughes be treated as a compliant and suitable applicant for a new licence and requested a continuation of the status quo in relation to the licence to enable Mr. Hughes to continue to provide housing provision in a responsible manner.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

A Member thanked Mr. Sloan for his detailed representation and that of the Officers and expressed confusion whereby it had appeared that Mr. Sloan had made representations on behalf of the previous owner which would change the conversation in relation to the Committee's decision and asked for further clarification. Mr. Sloan replied that if the previous licence had been valid as it had appeared to be for 5 years with 2 years to run; and had the application been submitted prior to completing the purchase it would have been treated as a deemed transfer even though it was an application for a new licence. He concluded that the issue was that the Council had decided it would not be treated as such as the previous licence was invalid due to a misrepresentation made by the previous owner to which he added was not correct from a factual basis.

The HMO Manager responded to the points made by Mr. Sloan. and set out the process and Council engagement which had taken place with the previous owner. He reported that the previous owner and respective managing agent had been aware of the Council's concerns in relation to the validity of the licence.

A Member acknowledged the diligence with which the HMO Manager and Officers conduct the work carried out and their in-depth policy knowledge. Another Member raised the matter of rebalancing communities like Holylands, Stranmillis and Lisburn Road and stopping the culture of purchasing a property with a HMO licence as long as it was applied for before the property purchase was completed.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services referred to the Subject Plan as only one of a number of considerations which needed to be taken into account. She added that it was an appropriate starting place and the legislation required the Members to look at the issue of need.

Moved by Councillor McCann,
Seconded by Councillor Murray,

That the Committee refuse the application for a new licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation on the basis that to do so would result in overprovision.

The Committee agreed to refuse the application.

Applications approved 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 - Grove Park, Jellicoe Avenue**

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 in respect of Grove Park.**

Area and Location	Ref. No.	Applicant
Grove Park Jellicoe Avenue Belfast, BT15 3FZ	WK/2022/00480	Mr David Sales City and Neighbourhoods Services Department Belfast City Council

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

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Taking into account the information presented and any representations received Members are required to consider the application and to:**

- a) approve the application for the grant of the Seven-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 Seven-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, entertainment may not be provided until any such appeal is determined.**

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

- 3.1 Grove Playing Fields are owned by Belfast City Council and were previously licensed to provide outdoor entertainment until the Licence expired in August 2015.**
- 3.2 A site plan for Grove Playing Fields is attached at Appendix 2.**
- 3.3 Members are advised that, at a meeting of the Licensing Committee on 19th June 2022, you agreed to grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive, to approve the application for the Grant of a Seven-day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for Grove Park, for the events on 8th to 10th July only,**

subject to having been satisfied that all safety and management procedures were in place and consultation had been undertaken with the PSNI and NIFRS.

- 3.4 The licence was subsequently issued for the Dockside Festival on 8-10th July 2022. Outdoor music events were held on 8th July and 10th July and a family fun day was held on 9th July.
- 3.5 This application is being brought back for further consideration to determine if Committee is now minded to grant a licence without restriction on its days of use.

Application and representations

- 3.6 As for all licences associated with the Council's parks, the applicant is the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services.
- 3.7 The standard days and hours for an Outdoor Entertainments Licence are:
- Monday to Sunday: 11.30 am to 11.00 pm.
- 3.8 In addition, Special Conditions are attached to Outdoor Entertainments Licences related to setting limits on maximum numbers and implementing a robust system of dealing with complaints.

Representations

- 3.9 Public notice of the application has been placed and no written representation has been lodged as a result of the advertisement.

PSNI

- 3.10 The Police Service of Northern Ireland has been consulted and has confirmed that it has no objection to the application.
- 3.11 A copy of its correspondence is attached at Appendix 3.

NIFRS

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

Health, Safety and Welfare

- 3.13 Officers from the Service will engage with the applicant and event organisers in the lead up to future events to ensure all documentation and technical information is in place.
- 3.14 Additionally, officers will inspect the site during the build of the event space and following its completion to ensure they are satisfied all safety and management procedures are in place.

Noise

- 3.15 The applicant will be required to provide a Noise Management Plan for future events which will be provided to the Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) for evaluation. Council Officers work with the promoter in order to assess the noise that may be generated from the event and to minimise the potential for noise disturbance.
- 3.16 Members will also recognise that noise generated by outdoor concerts is likely to lead to some level of disturbance for local residents. Even if guideline levels are met there is no guarantee that complaints will not be received. Conversely, if a recommended level is exceeded this may not necessarily lead to complaints as people may be prepared to tolerate the event because it will only last for a limited period of time.
- 3.17 9 noise complaints were received as a result of the dance music event held on 10th July 2022. As a result of these complaints, the Night Time Noise Team carried out noise tests in the vicinity of three of the complainants dwellings. The three noise readings indicated that the noise level was within acceptable limits.

Applicant

- 3.18 The applicant, and/or their representatives, will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to the application.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.19 None.

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

- 3.20 There are no issues associated with this report.”

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

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

Application for the Variation of a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence - Town Square, 12-13 Lower Crescent

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

- “1.1 To consider an application for the variation of a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for the hours during which entertainment may be provided at Town Square, based on the Council's Standard Conditions to provide music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.**

Area and Location	Ref. No.	Applicant
Town Square 12-13 Lower Crescent Belfast BT7 1NR	WK/202200841	Victoria 1 Limited c/o 12-13 Lower Crescent Belfast BT7 1NR

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

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Taking into account the information presented and any representations received Members are required to consider the application and to:**

- a) approve the application for the variation of the Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for permission to provide entertainment to 2.00 am, or**
- b) Approve the application for the variation with special conditions, or**
- c) Refuse the application for the variation of the Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for permission to provide entertainment to 2.00 am.**

- 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, entertainment may not be provided to the later hours until any such appeal is determined.**

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 The areas currently licensed to provide indoor entertainment and their maximum occupancies are:

- Town Square Bar – 180 persons
- Town Square Cafe – 160 persons

3.2 The days and hours during which entertainment may be provided under the terms of the indoor Entertainments Licence are:

- Monday to Saturday: 11.30 am to 1.00 am the following morning,
- Sunday: 12.30 pm to 1.00 am the following morning.

3.3 The variation application relates to a proposed extension to the hours during which entertainment can be provided on Friday and Saturday to 2.00 am the following morning.

3.4 Members are reminded that applications to provide indoor entertainment beyond 1.00 am subject to consideration by the Committee.

3.5 The applicant has stated that the extension of hours to 2.00am is to allow more flexibility to provide late night music entertainment and this will be used in conjunction with the Article 44a extension to Liquor Licensing hours.

Representations

3.6 Public notice of the application has been placed and no written representation has been lodged as a result of the advertisement.

PSNI

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

3.8 A copy of its correspondence is attached at Appendix 2.

NIFRS

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

Health, Safety and Welfare

- 3.10 An inspection has been carried out on the premises within the past 12 months and officers from the Service are satisfied with all safety measures and management procedures.

Noise

- 3.11 One noise complaint has been received in relation to the premises in the last 12-month period. The Night-Time Noise Team visited the area and witnessed no noise whilst outside the complainant's property.
- 3.12 Members are reminded that the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2011 gives the council additional powers in relation to the control of entertainment noise after 11.00 pm.

Applicant

- 3.13 The applicant, and/or their representatives, will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to the application.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.14 None.

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

- 3.15 There are no issues associated with this report."

The Committee approved the application for the Variation of a 7-day Annual Indoor 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 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 objection to the application for the renewal of the Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for St. Malachy's College Old Boys' Association.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

- 1.2** At the meeting on 19th October, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of this report due to a declaration of interest by the Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal Civic Services.

Area and Location	Ref. No.	Applicant
St. Malachy's College Old Boys' Association 442, Antrim Road Belfast BT15 5BG	WK/2020/02479	Mr. Conor Cassidy Club Chairman

- 1.3** 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 renewal of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence, or
- b) approve the application for the renewal with special conditions, or
- c) refuse the application for the renewal of the 7-Day Annual indoor 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.

- 2.3** Should the applicant decide to appeal, the existing Licence will continue with its present conditions until the appeal is determined.

3.0 **Main Report**

Details of the Premises

- 3.1** St. Malachy's Old Boys' Association has held a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence since 1998.

- 3.2** The current days and hours during which entertainment can be provided are:

- Monday to Saturday: 11.30 am to 11.00 pm and
- Sunday: 12.30 pm to 11.00 pm

- 3.3** Under the provisions of the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment Act) (Northern Ireland) 2021, in addition to

the normal hours shown above, the club may apply for up to 104 extensions a year to sell alcohol until 01.00 am on any day of the week. These are authorised at the discretion of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and, if granted, these also enable entertainment to be provided to the end of the drinking up period on those nights. The drinking up period extends to 2.00 am on those nights that an extension licence has been approved by the PSNI.

- 3.4** The areas currently Licensed to provide indoor entertainment and their occupancies are the:
- Ground Floor lounge bar with a maximum capacity of 45 people
 - Ground Floor Main Function Hall with a maximum capacity of 200 people
 - Ground Floor Darts room with a maximum capacity of 38 people
 - First Floor Recreation room with a maximum capacity of 50 people.
- 3.5** The Function Hall is used on an adhoc basis for family parties and charity functions which usually involve a late licence to 1:00am with music provided by a DJ operating via their noise limiting device.
- 3.6** The Club has advised that it has not had entertainment scheduled since before Covid-19.

Licensing History

- 3.7** An application for an Entertainments Licence for this premises was first received in 1997, and, while objections were received for the initial grant and first renewal, the licence was renewed under delegated authority, with no objections having been received, for the years 2000-2008.
- 3.8** In March 2009, an objection to the renewal of the licence was received by the Service. This objection was resolved through a resident meeting with the Club and with special conditions being added to the licence following a special meeting of the Licensing Committee on 29th April 2009. The licence subsequently has been renewed under delegated authority with no objections received on each subsequent year until the present.
- 3.9** At the Licensing Committee in April 2009, the Club agreed to the following special conditions being attached to its licence:

- 1. Bottle bins to be moved to a location away from the wall adjacent to residential property.**
- 2. Fire doors at the rear of the function room to be used only in emergency situations and not to be used at any other time.**
- 3. Smoking area restricted to that part of the alleyway immediately adjacent to the premises.**
- 4. Patrons discouraged from using the rear yard immediately adjacent to residential property.**
- 5. Regular meetings be established between the club committee and officers from the Service in order to deal with any problems which might arise in respect of the licence.**

Representations

Objector's Representation

- 3.10 One written representation was received as a result of the public notices of application from a local resident. This was received within the 28-day statutory period.**
- 3.11 The letter of objection is attached at Appendix 2.**
- 3.12 The objector submitted video clips on two memory sticks to support their objection. The video clips were dated from 2nd July, 2021 to 27th May, 2022. The issues arising from these videos relate to:**
 - Patron conversations in the rear garden**
 - Beer bottle delivery and collections causing noise**
 - Damage to wall at objector's property alleged to be from beer bottle collections**
 - Patrons at rear garden of premises calling objector's name as she videos.**
- 3.13 The Building Control Service sent a letter offering to facilitate a meeting between the objector and applicant, but this offer was not accepted. The Service also offered to meet with the objector independently, but this too has not been accepted.**
- 3.14 The objector's Representation Form is attached as Appendix 3 and it has been provided to the applicant, as required by the protocol.**
- 3.15 In general, the representation relates to concerns as follows:**
 - noise nuisance and abusive behaviour from patrons gathering at the rear of the premises**

- nuisance caused by beer deliveries and collections
- failure to comply with conditions attached to the entertainment licence.

3.16 The objector has been invited to attend your meeting to discuss any matters relating to the objections should they arise.

Applicant's Representation

3.17 The applicant has provided their Representation Form, as required by the Protocol, and a copy of their response along with letters of support is attached as Appendix 4.

3.18 The applicants Representation Form has also been provided to the objector, as required by the protocol.

3.19 A summary of the applicant's representation is as follows:

- They have not been made aware of any complaints about the club and had they been aware of any problems they would have investigated these with a view to taking any reasonable steps to address them.
- They have had no complaints raised with them by either the PSNI or the Council's noise team.
- They are open to discussion on any steps they can take to address the objector's concerns.
- Other residents in the area are supportive of the club and have no complaints.

3.20 The applicant and/or their representatives will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to the application.

Counter Representations

3.21 No counter representations have been received at the time of writing this report. A copy of the report has been provided to the applicant and objector and a verbal update will be provided in respect of any further representations which are received.

PSNI

3.22 The Police Service of Northern Ireland has been consulted and confirmed that it has no objection to the application. A copy of its correspondence is attached at Appendix 5.

NIFRS

- 3.23 The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has been consulted and has confirmed that it has no objection to the application.**

Health, Safety and Welfare

- 3.24 There are no issues relating to health, safety and welfare in relation to this renewal application.**

Noise and Complaints

- 3.25 There have been no complaints communicated to the Environmental Protection Unit's night-time noise team and the Service has no record of any other complaints concerning the premises in the past 12 months.**

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.1 None.**

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

- 5.1 There are no issues associated with this report."**

The Building Control Manager reminded the Committee that the application had been deferred at the previous Licensing Committee on 19th October due to a conflict of interest declared by the Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services.

It was reported that Mr. Shields, the applicant, and Ms. J. Mallon the objector were in attendance and they were welcomed by the Chairperson. The public broadcast was stopped and the Members were shown footage which had been provided by the objector.

The Chairperson invited Ms. J. Mallon, the objector to make her representation.

Ms. Mallon thanked the Committee for hearing her objection to the application and referred to the footage and the behaviour contained therein. She stated that the applicant St Malachy's College Old Boys' Association had been developing a beer garden beside her home without consultation with local residents. She described how she could hear the applicant's patrons from inside her house which she found intolerable. Ms. Mallon described to the Committee how she had been subjected to abusive behaviour and felt intimidated in her home. She asked the Committee why the applicant could serve drink in the beer garden when it was not mentioned on the licence application and accused the applicant of ignoring licence conditions. She stated the situation was intolerable and it was affecting her health. She thanked the Committee.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

A Member asked Ms. Mallon if there was any disturbance at night given that the footage presented was in daylight. Ms. Mallon responded that the footage provided was taken in the evening during summer months.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Shields, the applicant, and invited him to make his representation in response to the footage.

Mr. Shields addressed each of the individual video clips which had been viewed by Committee and referred to the clips which showed footage of deliveries and that of glass disposal. He stated that he was not clear why these had anything to do with the Entertainment Licence and why they were under consideration. He provided timings of the deliveries and stated that none of the 3 other neighbours in Kenbella Parade had an issue with the deliveries which took as long as the weekly refuse collections. Mr. Shields said that it was worth noting, that there was no line of sight from the premises to Kenbella Parade as there was an 8 foot-high fence that prevented it. He added that he would welcome discussion about any abusive behaviour that may have taken place and disciplinary action would be taken. He referred to the instances of the back door to the club being opened without the permission of the staff which would be investigated. Mr. Shields pointed out that the incidents presented in the footage were taken in daylight when no specific entertainment was taking place and no bar staff were in the back hall. He informed the Committee that additional fire door signage and potential fire door alarms were being investigated. With regards, to noise he advised that no noise issues had ever been ever reported to the Council or the PSNI.

Mr. Shields responded to the damage to Ms. Mallon's wall which had never been formally reported. He stated that had it been reported at the time and had the club been responsible it would have rectified the matter without question. Mr. Shields remarked that he would be content to have a face-to-face meeting with Ms. Mallon to discuss the matter further. To mitigate the possibility of any future issues, Mr. Shields informed the Committee that the club proposed to erect a no parking sign against its rear gates which would give clearer access to the delivery lorry during weekly deliveries. Mr. Shields advised that St. Malachy's Old Boys Association would be available at any time to speak to Council Officers or any of the neighbours however, unfortunately Ms. Mallon had refused to meet with them.

A Member referred to the conditions outlined below which had been attached to the previous licence and asked if they would be attached upon renewal of the licence. The Building Control Manager confirmed the conditions would be on the licence renewal unless Committee decided otherwise.

1. Bottle bins to be moved to a location away from the wall adjacent to residential property.
2. Fire doors at the rear of the function room to be used only in emergency situations and not to be used at any other time.
3. Smoking area restricted to that part of the alleyway immediately adjacent to the premises.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

4. Patrons discouraged from using the rear yard immediately adjacent to residential property.
5. Regular meetings be established between the club committee and officers from the Service in order to deal with any problems which might arise in respect of the licence.

The Building Control Manager raised the matter of the beer garden which had been raised by Ms. Mallon and confirmed that the Entertainments Licence did not cover the beer garden and that the provision of alcohol in the area would be a matter falling under the club's Liquor Licence.

Ms. Mallon advised that 2 residents in the Kenbella Parade were members of St. Malachy's Old Boy's Association and it would be unlikely that they would raise any complaints.

The Chairman encouraged dialogue between the parties to resolve matters and stated that the Council would be content to facilitate such meetings.

The Committee approved the application for the renewal of a 7-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence with all existing conditions to remain.

**Application for the Renewal and Variation
of a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments
Licence - Common Market, 16-20 Dunbar Street**

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

- “1.1 To consider an application for the renewal and variation of a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for Common Market, based on the Council's Standard Conditions to provide music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.**

1.2

Premises and Location	Ref. No.	Applicant
Common Market 16-20 Dunbar Street Belfast, BT1 2LH	WK/2022/0950	Ms Alana Fox Carlisle Inns Limited 2-14 Dunbar Street Belfast, BT1 2LH

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

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Taking into account the information presented and any representations received Members are required to consider the application and to:**

- a) approve the application for the renewal of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence; and
- b) approve the application for the variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for permission to provide entertainment to 3.00am; and / or
- c) approve the application for the variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence to increase the occupancy on the ground floor to 1200 persons, or
- d) approve the application for the variation of the Licence with special conditions, or
- e) refuse any or all of the applications.

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, entertainment may not be provided to the later hours and the increase in occupancy will not be permitted until any such appeal is determined.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

Details of the Premises

- 3.1 The applicant, Ms. Alana Fox of Carlisle Inns Ltd., has applied for the renewal and variation of a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence based on the Council's standard conditions to provide indoor music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.
- 3.2 Common Market is in the former Arnott's Fruit Market building and Ms. Fox is also the licensee for the building adjacent to Common Market known as 39 Gordon Street and Lux and situated at 2-16 Dunbar Street.
- 3.3 Mr. Lawrence Bannon, who is consultant and advisor to Carlisle Inns Ltd., has been liaising directly with the Service in relation to the application.
- 3.4 The areas currently licensed to provide indoor entertainment and their maximum occupancies are:
 - Main Area (Ground Floor), with a maximum capacity of 290 persons
 - Mezzanine Floor, with a maximum capacity of 60 persons

- 3.5 The nature of the variation is to increase the occupancy of the Main Area of the ground floor to approximately 1260 persons.**
- 3.6 Although the venue can potentially accommodate approximately 1260 persons, due to limited exit capacity, when the licence was first granted the ground floor area was laid out as a seated area with large picnic tables and the occupancy was restricted to 290 persons.**
- 3.7 Floor plans showing the layout of the premises are attached at Appendix 2.**
- 3.8 The licensee plans to remove the picnic tables when events are to be held, therefore allowing for a significant increase in the occupancy capacity and Mr Bannon is currently negotiating with the Council to acquire permission for an additional emergency exit through the Council Depot on Dunbar Street, which would accommodate the increase in capacity.**
- 3.9 If the Committee is minded to grant the variation to increase the occupancy capacity, it is advised that approval be on the basis that the extra numbers would not be permitted until an agreement is finalised between the Council and the licensee for the use and management of an additional emergency exit which passes through the adjacent Council depot.**
- 3.10 The days and hours during which entertainment may be provided under the terms of the indoor Entertainments Licence are:**
- Monday to Saturday: 12.00 p.m. to 1.00 a.m. the following morning, and**
 - Sunday: 12.00 p.m. to 12.00 a.m.**
- 3.11 The variation application also relates to a proposed extension to the hours during which entertainment can be provided on Monday to Sunday to 3.00 a.m. the following morning.**
- 3.12 Members are reminded that applications to provide indoor entertainment beyond 1.00 a.m. are subject to consideration by Committee.**
- 3.13 The applicant has stated that the extension of hours to 3.00 am is needed to compete with other City centre venues. The applicant's existing premises, 39 Gordon Street and Lux, which adjoins this venue currently holds a 3.00 am entertainments licence and this increase in operating hours**

would allow both venues to operate in harmony, allow the licensee to manage crowd control better and improve their safety management protocols.

Representations

- 3.14 Public notice of the application has been placed and no written representation has been lodged as a result of the advertisement.

PSNI

- 3.15 The PSNI has been consulted and has confirmed that it has no objection to the application.
- 3.16 A copy of its correspondence is attached at Appendix 3.

NIFRS

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

Health, Safety and Welfare Inspections

- 3.18 This building was previously used by Arnott's for fruit and vegetable storage. The use of the building changed in 2021 to an assembly building and a Building Regulations completion certificate for the works was issued by the Service.
- 3.19 A during performance inspection was carried out on the premises by officers from the Service on 3rd October 2022. On this occasion, the licensee was operating his two premises as one 'super-club'. The two premises Common Market and 39 Gordon Street are adjoined. 39 Gordon Street operates as a bar on the ground floor and a nightclub on the first floor. This inspection revealed some operational issues. The management was made aware of these issues and they advised that additional staff training and management procedures would be put in place prior to operating the venue in this manner in the future.
- 3.20 The licensee has confirmed that the proposed increase in occupancy will be implemented incrementally to ensure that adequate management procedures are developed.
- 3.21 The licensee has submitted a management plan for the premises and Officers from the service are liaising with the licensee to ensure that technical requirements and

associated operational and management procedures are satisfactory.

- 3.22 The premises will continue to be inspected as part of our During Performance Inspection regime and will be subject to further monitoring to ensure the applicant adheres to their licence conditions.

Noise Issues

- 3.23 An acoustic report was submitted to the Environmental Protection Unit prior to this Licence being granted in October, 2021. At this time, a noise limiting device was fitted and set at 90dB LAeq,t. The licensee has advised that all music will be played through the existing noise limiting device.
- 3.24 The Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) has been consulted in relation to the application and confirmed that it has received three noise complaints in the past 12 months. These complaints were received on 26th September, 5th October and 2nd November 2022.
- 3.25 The licensee has recently carried out some works to improve the acoustic performance of the building, which includes forming an internal lobby and acoustic curtain to reduce the noise emanating through the large roller shutter door to the front of the premises.
- 3.26 Members are reminded that the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2011 gives the Council additional powers in relation to the control of entertainment noise after 11.00 pm.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.1 None.

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

- 5.1 There are no issues associated with this report.”

Moved by Councillor Magee; and
Seconded by Councillor Bradley,

That the Committee approve the application for the Renewal and Variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence on the basis that variation in relation to the increase in occupancy capacity would not be permitted until such times as a satisfactory agreement is in place between

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

the Council and the licensee for the use and management of the additional emergency exit which passes through the adjacent Council depot.

The Committee agreed to the proposal.

**Review of Pavement Café Licence –
City Picnic, Fountain Street**

The Building Control Manager provided an overview of the review of the Pavement Café Licence and requested that the Members consider representations from DfI-Roads in relation to City Picnic's temporary Pavement Café Licence which had been impacted by the re-opening of Fountain Street at its junction with Castle Street.

The Committee was reminded that the Council, in June 2020, decided to introduce a temporary process for considering pavement café applications to assist the hospitality sector during the pandemic. The temporary Pavement Café Licensing Scheme was extended by the Council in September 2022 and would expire on 30th September 2023.

City Picnic restaurant had been granted a temporary Pavement Café Licence in Fountain Street, close to the junction with Castle Street. When this licence was granted this portion of Fountain Street was closed to vehicular traffic. DfI-Roads had advised the licensee that pavement café space may be available on Castle Street in the portion that would remain closed to traffic and that they would also consider any other proposals for alternative locations to which the café could be relocated.

Council Officers had met with the licensee for City Picnic and had advised him to engage with DfI-Roads about potential options for relocation of his pavement cafe and that revised site plans based on these discussions should then be submitted to the Council for formal consultation with DfI-Roads thereafter.

Mr. Arthur McAnerney the licensee for the Temporary Pavement Café Licence had submitted new plans for the relocation to Castle Street in the remaining closed portion between the junction of Fountain Street and Castle Junction. Mr McAnerney was engaging with DfI and Building Control staff to ensure that all documentation and technical information was in place.

The Building Control Manager advised that should the Committee decide to revoke the licence, the Council was required to notify the licensee of its intention, stating the grounds for doing so and that representations may be made by the licence holder.

It was reported that Mr. D. McFarlane, Divisional Roads Manager and Mr. G. Lawther, Development Control Manager were in attendance on behalf of DfI-Roads, as were Mr. A. McAnerney, the Licensee and his business partner Mr G. Gregg. The Chairman invited DfI to deliver their representation.

Mr. McFarlane provided the Committee with a timeline from 2017 and referred to the situation caused by the Primark fire which had turned Fountain Street into a temporary cul-de-sac. He also referred to the temporary Pavement Café Licence Scheme which arose out of the Covid-19 pandemic in which DfI had been a consultee. He advised that

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

City Picnic and Voodoo had been granted applications on the basis that they were operating not in the middle of public road but on a temporary cul-de-sac. Therefore, Dfl had worked with the Council and the 2 applications had been approved based on the fact that they were temporary, and when Primark reopened it would revert back to being a public road. Mr. McFarlane informed the Committee that he was not aware of any other pavement café in Belfast being located on a public road. He stated that unknown to Dfl the temporary licences were extended by the Council in September this year. He added that when Primark opened on 1st November the hoarding had been removed and the road reverted back to being a live public road. At this point, Council and Dfl met with City Picnic and Voodoo. He explained that Dfl were in a position to offer an alternative arrangement to City Picnic whereby they could move the pavement café to Castle Street. Mr McFarlane stated that it was his understanding that there had been no formal application made for this but Dfl were content to work with City Picnic on the matter. He explained that the issue arising from the pavement cafés not relocating would introduce the need for service vehicles servicing Fountain Street to reverse which would create a significant probability of a serious accident occurring and Dfl could not accept that risk.

A Member asked Dfl if any other businesses in the area had complained in relation to deliveries. Mr. McFarlane replied that there had been no other complaints and reiterated that the current arrangement was dangerous and it was a safety issue caused by the blocking of a public road. Another Member asked if the reverting of this arrangement was to facilitate Primark alone. Mr McFarlane stated that it was a case of returning the road network to pre-Primark fire arrangements. In response to a question from a Member as to which businesses were being serviced by the deliveries, Mr. McFarlane could not confirm but stated he had observed 9 vehicles reversing in one day. He provided details of previous servicing arrangements for deliveries whereby there was no need for vehicles to reverse in that part of Fountain Street. He stated that access to the Norwich Union car park was proving difficult too because of the location of the pavement cafés.

A Member asked Mr. McFarlane if there was vehicular access from Fountain Street to Wellington Place. He confirmed that traffic can reverse from that area as it was wider and was an open public road. Another Member asked if there was data available in relation to increased traffic for the Council to examine. Mr. McFarlane reiterated the fact that large vehicles were reversing in Fountain Street and Dfl would not accept the risk.

A Member voiced concerns in relation to the reversing of the reported 9 vehicles in Fountain Street given the level of footfall in the area and would like to hear the views from other traders in the area before any decision was reached. Mr. McFarlane referred to vacant shop frontages at Norwich Union House which could provide a solution and maintain the safe passage of vehicles.

A Member expressed empathy with City Picnic and Voodoo and recognised the complex situation and asked who would be liable if a pedestrian was hit by a reversing vehicle. The Member referred to stakeholder conversations to date and asked if the objective of the conversations was to find a solution that suited all whilst keeping pedestrians safe. Mr. Lawther responded that good progress had been made to date and

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

reiterated that from a DfI perspective the current Pavement Café Licence arrangement in Fountain Street would never have been acceptable albeit the road was temporarily closed and formalised by DfI to facilitate it, and that Fountain Street now had no need to be closed.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. A. McAnerney and Mr. G. Gregg from City Picnic and invited them to make their representation.

Mr. Gregg welcomed the opportunity to put City Picnic's case across and informed the Committee that the process had been started to move the pavement café from Fountain Street to Castle Street given it was pedestrianised and would bring vibrancy to that area. He stated that they had been coerced and put under pressure to move to Castle Street. Mr. Gregg referred to DfI's position of reverting to the original road network and added that the world had changed over the last 4 years since the Primark fire and the pandemic in terms of looking at pedestrianisation and the vibrancy of the city specifically in relation to Fountain Street. Although he agreed with the safety issues, Mr. Gregg questioned the need to revert to the original road network and suggested arriving at a solution that fits all such as a one-way system. He explained that before the Primark fire he had claimed 6 times for ripped awnings caused by reversing lorries. He referred to the access to the Norwich Union carpark and expressed his concerns about the safety of the building. Mr. Gregg informed the Committee that he would welcome further consultation with DfI and described the matter as a 'knee jerk' reaction to get the road open quickly.

A Member referred to her recent engagement with City Picnic, Voodoo, DfI and with Council Officers as it was of great concern. The Member expressed frustration as to how the matter had been handled by DfI and described how the Department's approach had been unreasonable. The Member asked the Committee to look favourably on City Picnic's new licence application when it came forward as the business needed certainty.

Another Member stated she didn't agree with the licence being revoked as the pavement café had created vibrancy in the area which had helped the business and in turn boosted the economy. The Member stated that if properly managed, the pavement café and the servicing arrangements could operate together safely and agreed with other speakers that there should be more conversations to find an alternative plan.

The Chair stated he agreed with the sentiment of all the speakers and asked City Picnic if they were content to move to Castle Street. Mr. Gregg confirmed he was content to move but needed certainty in relation to whether or not Castle Street would remain pedestrianised or not. Discussion ensued in relation to pedestrianisation, finding a safe and holistic solution and to 'build back better'. A Member referred to the thousands of students that were now in the area which had created a moving population so there was a need to think differently in a more innovative and creative way.

A Member raised the matter of liability which had not been answered. The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services confirmed that ultimately liability would be with the driver.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

A Member referred to the Council's vision for the city and noted the frustration with DfI in this regard. The Member asked if the matter was deferred would the responsibility lie with DfI to look at the safety of pedestrians in that area. Mr. McFarlane replied that it had been looked at and DfI had made the Council aware of the risk and the only safe option was to provide circular movement for vehicles. Mr. Lawther advised that DfI had started to consider the larger picture of pedestrianisation in the city and there was a commitment to discuss this further. He reiterated that his concern was that Fountain Street was a public road and the pavement café licence was sat on a public road and it was not for the Council to decide whether it was closed or not.

The Committee agreed to defer the review of the Pavement Café Licence to enable all stakeholders to discuss the matter further to find a solution and mutual consensus.

**Review of Pavement Café Licence –
Voodoo, Fountain Street**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. C. Smyth, Licensee and invited him to make his representation.

Mr. Smyth clarified that despite being granted a second temporary Pavement Café Licence, he was unable to establish the Santeria cocktail bar, 19 Fountain Street as the land was currently being adversely possessed by the owner of 23 Fountain Street who had taken a legal action to prevent the café being put there. He added that if the land had been the property of the owner of 23 Fountain Street, then he shouldn't have been granted a pavement café licence. Mr. Smyth advised that he had informed DfI of this matter to which DfI had declined interest. He informed the Committee that the only pavement café Voodoo had was the one shared with City Picnic in the middle of Fountain Street. He informed the Committee that the ambition for the area was to create vibrancy with limited investment due to the temporary arrangement which had been recognised by the Committee. He highlighted that energy costs were now more of an issue than Rates costs which had resulted in businesses closing. He stated that it was gracious of the Council to extend the temporary pavement café arrangement. He referred to the 4-day notice from DfI to vacate which had led him to seek political and media support which had bought time. He referred to the option of moving alongside Norwich Union House which was a possibility however, the matter of the demolition of Norwich Union House was live. He advised the Committee that he had had discussions with McAleer and Rushe who had informed him that the demolition of Norwich Union House would not take place for about 4 months due to conservation rules.

Mr. Smyth recognised the safety issues caused by reversing vehicles however, he agreed with a Member's point that the situation needed proper management.

A Member asked Mr. Smyth about the proposal of moving Voodoo's pavement café to Castle Street. He replied that the proposal was never to move to Castle Street as it was too detached from the business. Moving it to Castle Street would create security implications due to removing it from the line of sight especially as Voodoo was largely a night-time business and there were drug and alcohol issues in the area.

Another Member asked if this situation would have an impact on jobs and the business especially on the run up to Christmas. Mr. Smyth stated it would have an impact

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

if the pavement café can't be moved and approved and referred to the current difficulty of hiring staff. Mr. Smyth highlighted the visual improvements to the area which had been created by Voodoo and City Picnic.

Mr. McFarlane asked the Council's legal advisors if the pavement café legislation allowed for a café to be placed on what was technically a public road. He reassured Mr. Smyth that DfI would work with him and reminded the Committee it was DfI that had approached City Picnic in relation to moving to Castle Street. Mr. Lawther added they would continue to work with the licensees to evolve the agreement however, the issue was the occupation of a public road which was open to the public. He asked that these licences be relocated off the public road to a more appropriate space.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services responded to the issues and criticisms raised by DfI. She advised that DfI's decision to re-open the road was in the full knowledge that the pavement café licences would be affected. She referred to the definition of the location for which pavement café licences could be granted; and clarified that pavement café licences may be issued in respect of any public area and was defined by any area the public had access to without payment as of right which includes roads.

A Member expressed that she was glad that the will of the Committee was for deferral and requested more information from DfI in relation to a proper analysis of road safety in the area.

The Committee agreed to defer the review of the Pavement Café Licence to enable all stakeholders to discuss the matter further to find a solution and mutual consensus.

**Application for the Provisional Grant of an
Amusement Permit – Elite Gaming, Little Vegas
(NI) Ltd, 163 Stranmillis Road**

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 make a final determination on an application for the Provisional Grant of an Amusement Permit under the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (the Order).**

Premises and Location	Ref. No	Applicant
Elite Gaming 163 Stranmillis Road Belfast, BT9 5AJ	WK/202002652	Little Vegas (NI) Limited Unit 7 and 8 Ardboe Business Park, Kilmascally Road, Dungannon Co. Tyrone BT71 5BJ

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 In considering the application for the Provisional Grant of an Amusement Permit, the Committee shall have regard to the Order and 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**
- e) Representation, if any, as a result of the public notices of advertisement.**

2.2 The Committee is 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.**

2.3 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.
- 2.4 If, upon hearing the applicant, the Committee is minded to grant the permit provisionally, it is requested to consider delegating authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the City Solicitor, to issue the permit once all necessary technical requirements relating to health, safety, welfare and amenity have been completed to the satisfaction of the Building Control Service.
- 2.5 Should the Committee refuse the application for the Provisional 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**
- 3.1 The Committee, at its meeting on 17th August 2022, agreed, after hearing from the applicant and their representative, that it was minded to refuse the application for the provisional grant of an Amusement Permit for the ground and first floors of 163 Stranmillis Road.
- 3.2 This decision was taken on the basis that the application did not comply with the criterion of the Council's Amusement Permit Policy, in that the first floor of the proposed premises was immediately adjacent to residential use property.
- 3.3 A copy of the minute and the report from 17th August is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.4 The Order requires that the Committee, when minded to refuse an application, 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.
- 3.5 The applicant subsequently confirmed their desire to avail of the opportunity to make further representation and will be

in attendance at your meeting together with their representatives.

4.0 Key Issues

4.1 The Directors of Little Vegas (NI) Limited are Conor Francis Forbes, Aine Forbes, Ciara Anne Forbes and Shea Michael Forbes.

4.2 A statement in support of the application has been provided for consideration and is included at Appendix 2.

4.3 The key matters outlined in the statement are that:

- Planning permission for the amusement premises (covering all floors) was granted in February 2012.
- The Health and Environmental Services Department was consulted on that 2012 permission and considered the proposal acceptable in the express context of the adjoining business and residential uses. Therefore, in the context of the original grant, and the Council's consideration of same, are identical.
- The amusement permit was first granted in 2013. There have been no objections to any of the renewals of the permit since 2013.
- The criterion (d) (ii) guidance cannot be considered as determining, because to do so ignores the same factual context that saw the planning permission granted in 2012.
- A fresh Noise Impact Assessment ('NIA') has been carried out for the proposal, and the expert advice is that there will be no noise disturbance.
- Notwithstanding the findings of the expert noise consultants, as a goodwill gesture, the applicant proposed additional noise attenuation to ensure no adverse impact.

Amusement Permit Policy

4.4 The Belfast City Council Amusement Permit Policy, ratified at 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.

4.5 As outlined at the meeting on 17th August, it was concluded that whilst the location of the permit application satisfies most criteria in the Amusement Permit Policy it is not considered to meet criteria (dii). This criterion relates to the proximity of

proposed premises immediately adjacent to residential use. Having regard to the potential impact on residential amenity, the Permit Policy advises a precautionary approach by discouraging the opening of amusement arcades in such locations.

4.6 In response to the applicant's appeal submission, the following points are made:

- **Unlike planning policy, the Permit Policy places greater emphasis on the nature and operations of an amusement centre. These premises are currently open from 3.00pm until 3.00am Monday to Sunday – as indicated on the premises' front door. Members may wish to consider the practicality of restricting first floor operations to 10.00pm.**
- **Impact on residential amenity does not solely relate to noise levels emanating from inside a property, it also relates to the level of activity generated by a business and, in particular, noise nuisance outside the premises.**

4.7 Notwithstanding the above, the applicant has provided a noise impact assessment which outlines that noise levels are within recognised limits and should not adversely affect the amenity of residents in the adjacent property.

4.8 The Committee is reminded that, in addition to the above legal requirements and assessment criteria, it may take into account any matter which is deemed relevant. The Committee may depart from the Policy where it is appropriate to do so, although it is envisaged that this should only happen in exceptional circumstances.

4.9 A copy of the Council's Amusement Permit Policy is included in the submission from the applicant attached in Appendix 2.

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."

The Building Control Manager reminded the Members that at its meeting on 26th June 2013, it agreed to refuse the granting of an amusement permit to Little Vegas

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

Ltd for the ground and first floors of 163 Stranmillis Road. Subsequently at the Committee's meeting on 21st August 2013 following the hearing of representations, it was agreed to grant an amusement permit for the ground floor of the premises only.

It was reported that Mr. S. Beattie, Kings Counsel (KC), Mr. T. Bell, Planning Consultant and Mr. Forbes, the applicant were in attendance and invited them to make their representation on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Beattie drew the Committee's attention to a specific line in policy criterion 4 on page 9 of the policy and stated the policy did not cater for this scenario and that it was there to deal with renewals or new grants. He added that the policy did not subdivide the property/premises and the factual context of the application made it unique. He made it clear it was not a precedent case and was a case that in 2012, the planning authorities granted planning permission in which the Council was a consultee. He continued that in 2013, the Council granted an amusement permit for the property which had been renewed for 9 years with the exception of one year during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr Beattie informed the Committee that there had been no objection to the renewals which it should take into consideration otherwise it would put the applicant at a disadvantage. Mr. Beattie stated that this was not a new grant on a greenfield site or a previously unlicensed site and that the planning context of the grant and each of the renewals had always been in the context of a mixed-use development which included residential use and nothing had changed. He advised that there was no likely impact upon residential amenity in terms of noise. Mr. Beattie further advised that the applicant had offered to do further noise attenuation on the premises to further guarantee there would be no internal breakout of any possible noise. In terms, of the outside of the premises there had been no objections raised by Officers or by any member of the public in relation to the operation of the premises. Mr. Beattie informed the Committee that the applicant had checked the history of the premises and found one incident of someone having tethered a dog to the fence which had resulted in complaints and the individual concerned had been barred. Mr. Beattie provided the Committee with a summary whereby, the existing premises had operated as a good neighbour for 9 years and it would be wholly inappropriate for the policy to be rewritten to seek to make a subdivision between the ground and first floors and would be kept under scrutiny. He concluded that there would be an economic issue where the Rates would double and there was more than ample factual reasoning why the policy was not applicable and on this occasion should not be applied.

In response to a request from a Member, the Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services provided policy clarification and confirmed that there would be circumstances where it would be appropriate to depart from the policy where factual circumstances warrant it. In response, Mr. Beattie stated that no government agency had set out what exceptional circumstances were. He added that he could not think of any other case where this had happened and asked would this make it exceptional.

For the purpose of clarity, the Building Control Manager advised that the Committee granted the amusement licence for the ground floor some time ago and there was no facility to extend an existing permit so the applicant now had to apply for a permit for the ground and first floors however, if that was refused the applicant would still have the ground floor to operate. He informed the Committee the matter was about whether it was appropriate to depart from the policy based on the exceptional circumstances.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

Discussion ensued around conditions within the application and the fitness of the applicant.

The Committee granted 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.

Non-Delegated Matters

Schedule of Meetings 2023

The following dates had been identified for meetings of the Licensing Committee for the period from January to December, 2023.

- Wednesday, 18th January
- Wednesday, 15th February
- Wednesday, 15th March
- Wednesday, 12th April
- Wednesday, 14th June
- Wednesday, 16th August
- Wednesday, 20th September
- Wednesday, 18th October
- Wednesday, 15th November
- Wednesday, 13th December

(All meetings to commence at 5.00 pm)

The Committee approved the schedule meetings for 2023.

Licence Fees for Sex Establishments

The Building Control Manager reminded the Committee that after reviewing the current fees, as agreed by Committee in November 2021, these were deemed to be proportionate to the cost of the processes associated with administering a Sex Establishment Licence.

It was therefore proposed that the fees set previously remain as shown below.

Application Fee	£3,200
Renewal Fee	£1,430
Transfer Fee	£1,125
Licence Fee	£500

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 16th November, 2022**

The Sex Establishment Licence fees would ensure the cost of the operational and administration processes were proportionate to the licensing scheme.

The Committee agreed that the current fees, reviewed in November 2021, remain unchanged.

**Refusal of an Application for a New
Licence to operate a House in Multiple
Occupation at Flat 2, 26 Lawrence Street –
Update on Legal Proceedings**

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services provided the Committee with an update on a statutory appeal of its decision of 16th June, 2021 to refuse an application for a new HMO licence for a property located at Flat 2, 26 Lawrence Street, Belfast, on the grounds of overprovision. She advised that officers await confirmation as to whether the appellant was to appeal/judicially review the court's decision and would provide the Committee with a further update in due course.

The Committee acknowledged the hard work of the team in defending this appeal. It noted the update on the legal proceedings.

Chairperson

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 15th November, 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, 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. P. Fitzsimons, Principal Planning Officer;
Mr. D. O'Kane, Principal Planning Officer;
Mr. K. Sutherland, Principal Planning Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported for Councillor Garrett.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th October 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 November, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

The Chairperson (Councillor Whyte) declared an interest in relation to item 6a, LA04/2021/2856/O – Proposed mixed use regeneration development on lands surrounding the new Belfast Transport Hub, in that he had a professional relationship with the agent, Juno Planning, and he retired from the meeting.

(Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Maskey, in the Chair)

Withdrawn Items

The Committee noted that the following item had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- LA04/2022/0311/F: Erection of 40 no. residential units and 2 no. commercial units with associated car parking, cycle

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

storage servicing, landscaping with access off Balmoral Avenue. At The King's Hall and RUAS site, south of Upper Lisburn, Road/Balmoral Avenue, west of Harberton Park and north-east of Balmoral Golf Club, Belfast.

Abandonment

Footpath at 312-320 Ormeau Road

The Committee noted the proposed abandonment of footpath at 312-320 Ormeau Road.

Extinguishment

Roumania Rise Street

The Committee noted the Roumania Rise Street Extinguishment Order.

Planning Decisions Issued

The Committee noted the Planning decisions issued between 11th October and 3rd November 2022

Appeals

The Committee noted the Appeals Decisions.

Planning Applications

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

**(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2021/2856/O:
Proposed mixed use regeneration development
comprising office (Class B1), residential
apartments(including affordable), retail (Class A1),
hotel, leisure(Class D2), public realm, active travel
uses, cafes, bars and restaurants, and community
uses (Class D1), on lands surrounding the new Belfast
Transport Hub and over the Transport Hub car park,
to the east and west of Durham St and south of
Grosvenor Rd. At Lands to east of West Link (A12)
and south of Grosvenor Road; Lands at Grosvenor Road
and intersection of Grosvenor Road and Durham Street;**

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

**Lands to the east of Durham Street and north of
Glengall Street; Lands at Glengall Street; Lands
between Glengall Street and Hope Street including
Europa Bus Station, Great Victoria Rail Station
surface car parks at St Andrew's Square; Translink
lands to west of Durham Street, south of BT Exchange
building and north of Murray's Tobacco Works**

The Planning Manager reminded the Committee that, at its meeting in August, it had approved the application, subject to conditions and a Section 76 Planning Agreement, and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and planning agreement.

He explained that the outline planning application had proposed maximum vertical and horizontal parameters, the acceptability of which had been tested through an indicative scheme.

He reported that the Applicant had subsequently requested that draft Condition 4, related to the maximum vertical parameters, be amended to include that the Council would give its prior written consent for any variation, to allow for flexibility in order to allow plant and other structural elements of the rooftop to exceed the maximum height parameters, and that officers recommended that the condition should be amended to the following:

*4. No part of the development, including plant and other structural elements of the rooftop of buildings [emphasis], shall exceed the maximum height parameters as shown on Drawing Number 527-JMP-XX-XX-DR-A-2103 Revision P0X [to be updated] (Parameter Plan – Limits of vertical deviation above ground) uploaded to the Planning Portal on XX 2022, **unless the Council gives its written approval to any variation through determination of application/s for approval of Reserved Matters for that part of the development.***

Reason: To regulate the height and scale of development in the interests of good place making principles and character and appearance of the area.

He further reported that the Applicant had sought a similar amendment to Condition 5, to allow exceedance of the maximum horizontal parameters, however, officers had not considered the argument to be sufficient to permit flexibility, and that, should the applicant wish to exceed the horizontal parameters shown in the approved plans, that it would be more appropriate to apply for a Non-material Change under Section 67 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

The Committee approved the application, including the amendment to draft condition 4 (maximum height parameters), subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement, and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement. Furthermore, delegated authority to

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

explore appropriate restrictions on hours of operation of the restaurants, bars, leisure. food and drink etc.

**LA04/2021/2870/F & LA04/2021/2869/DCA:
Demolition of existing single storey building and
erection of ground and four upper storeys providing
new cafe/restaurant on ground floor and 12no. apartments
on the upper four storeys. Provision of bin storage and
cycle areas. 19-27 Lombard Street, Belfast, BT1 1RB.**

The Planning Manager explained that the application sought full planning permission and Conservation Area Consent to demolish and replace a current single storey commercial building, which had been operating as a coffee shop, with a new five storey building with ground floor restaurant/café, twelve apartments on the upper floor storeys, provision of bin storage and cycle areas.

He advised the Committee that the site fell within the City Centre Conservation Area, but that the existing building had not been considered as having made a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, and that the proposed replacement building would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of the nearby listed buildings. He added that, the proposed development would provide an acceptable level of amenity to prospective occupants and would support City Centre Living.

He outlined the main issues to be considered:

- The principle of the development;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area;
- Impact on the setting of Listed Buildings;
- Impact on amenity of prospective occupiers;
- Access, Movement and Parking;
- Flooding;
- Water/ Sewage and ecological impacts; and
- The application site lies within the settlement limits.

He informed the Committee that no objections had been received from DfI Roads, DfI Rivers or BCC Environmental Health, but that NI Water had objected on the basis of insufficient capacity within wastewater treatment works and the associated network. He reported that, in response to NI Water's objection, officers had further consulted with DAERA and Shared Environmental Services, who had advised that there was no clear evidence of environmental impact, but that a precautionary approach had been advised, with a condition required to prevent commencement of works until agreement had been reached with NI Water with regard to wastewater disposal.

The Planning Manager referred to four late representations which had been received in objection to the application, which cited concerns regarding the historical value of the existing building, that vacant buildings across the city centre should be utilised before demolition is considered, and concerns about the availability of infrastructure to support the

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

proposed development. He informed the Committee that, having considered the comments, there had been no alteration of officers' recommendation for approval.

The Committee approved the applications, subject to the notification of the application for Conservation Area Consent (LA04/2021/2869/DCA) for demolition to the Department for Infrastructure under Section 29 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, with conditions, and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2022/0235/F: 2 Dargan Crescent, Duncrue Road,
Belfast - Retrospective Erection of new tyre depot with
associated parking, site works and new entrance onto
Duncrue Road**

The Planning Manager outlined the application which sought retrospective planning permission for the erection of a new tyre depot with associated parking, site works and new entrance onto Duncrue Road. He highlighted the following key issues:

- Principle of a new depot at this location;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Access, Movement and Parking; and
- Environmental Matters.

He explained that the proposal had been considered acceptable, having regard to the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS), Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP), Draft Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP), Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) and Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4).

He reported that, following consultation, neither DfI Roads, BCC Environmental Health, DAERA, NIEA nor NI Water had offered any objection to the application and that no third party representations had been received.

He stated that the application had been recommended for approval as officers considered that the development would have no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area, or on access, movement or parking.

Following concern raised by a Member with regard to the consideration given to an existing cycle path adjacent to the site, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application and to write to the Department for Infrastructure Roads service to request a report on the impact of the proposal on the cycle path adjacent to the development and inquire as to why it had not been considered, and that the Department for Infrastructure would be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee when the application would next be considered.

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

LA04/2022/1804/F: Floor art installation measuring 600 X 600mm in support of overall Signature Sculpture proposal (signature sculpture proposal is part of a separate application Ref: LA04/2022/1236/F) and all associated works as part of new Forth Meadow Community Greenway project. Lands located approx. 70m south of 5 Riverside Square Belfast BT12 5RJ (along the Forth Meadow Community Greenway).

The Planning Manager outlined the application for a proposed floor art sculpture and associated site works on a grassed area adjacent to the pedestrian footpath, approximately 70m south of 5 Riverside Square.

He provided the Committee with a site location map and site layout imaging, together with a digital image of the proposed floor art sculpture.

He reported that the proposal had been considered to be compliant with relevant policy and guidance and that the sculpture was a well-designed compatible use of the location which would contribute positively to the overall environmental quality of the area.

He informed the Committee that, following advertisement in the local press, no representations had been received, and that DfI Roads had offered no objection to the proposal.

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

LA04/2021/1774/F: Partial demolition of existing buildings to facilitate proposed extension to existing Film Studios & Workshop Facilities to include for Virtual Studios. Development to also include part reclad of existing buildings, retention of lighting columns and boundary fence and all other associated site and access works. At Lands at Loop Studios, 468-476 Castlereagh Road, Belfast.

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the application for partial demolition of existing buildings to facilitate a proposed extension to existing film studios and workshop facilities, to include virtual studios, on a site which had previously been used for industrial processes in the manufacturing and production of soft drinks.

He reported that the site was located within an area of mixed uses which comprised industrial and warehousing uses along the Castlereagh Road and provided the Committee with a site location plan together with aerial and street views of the site.

He explained the following key issues in the assessment of the proposal:

- The principle of extensions at this location;

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

- Design and layout considerations;
- Impact on amenity / character of the area;
- Impact on transport and other infrastructure.
- Impact on natural environment;
- Impact on Built heritage assets; and
- Developer contributions.

He informed the Committee that the proposal included the retention of 3m high fencing and floodlighting, located along the western and northern site boundaries, and that the fencing was not visible from the Castlereagh Road or Orby Close, due to existing boundary structures and landscaping. He stated that, on balance, it was not considered that the fence would adversely impact on existing residents or dwellings in Orby Drive.

He pointed out that no consultees had offered any objections to the application, but that two objections had been received, which raised concern with regard to dominance, visual and amenity impacts, lack of contact from the developer, and disturbance from construction activities. He added that, with regard to the objections raised, it was not considered that the proposal would adversely impact on amenity, disturbance from construction would be for a limited period and would not result in long term or permanent impact on amenity, and that a lack of contact between the developer and third parties was not an issue for Council.

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

LA04/2022/1511/F: Section 54 Application to vary Condition 17 of the previously approved application LA04/2018/1415/F which reads, "The proposed public realm works, as shown on approved plan No. 22, date stamped 27/11/18, shall be carried out prior to the occupation / operation of any part of the development hereby approved." It is proposed to introduce a new landscaping & public realm drawing, accurately reflecting those works carried out on site and in agreement with DfI Roads. Varied wording is proposed to read as "The proposed public realm works, as shown on approved plan No. 6303 L-205 date received 3rd August 2022, shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan." At The Residence (Former Ballynafeigh Police Station), 332 Ormeau Road, Belfast.

The Committee considered a report which outlined the application to vary Condition 17 of previously approved planning permission for the demolition of a derelict, former police station and the erection of a mixed-use development.

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

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

Delegation of Local Applications with NIW Objections

The Planning Manager referred to the Committee's decision taken at its meeting on 27th June, 2022, when it agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control the determination of 97 local applications to which NI Water had offered objections.

He reported that the Council had continued to receive objections from NI Water to a number of local applications and that delegated authority was being sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to determine those applications which would have been delegated, under the Scheme of Delegation, were it not for the objection from NI Water.

He explained that officers had been engaging with NI Water, over the previous months, to resolve those objections, and that NI Water had been actively considering a threshold for the scale and nature of development above which they would request to be consulted on future planning applications. He stated that NI Water had lodged objections to local applications for one or both of the following reasons:

- There was insufficient capacity at the local Waste Water Treatment Plant to support the proposed development; and/or
- There was insufficient network capacity within existing Combined Storm Overflows to support the development.

The Planning Manager pointed out that NI Water had not provided robust evidence to support its objections and that the Committee must be mindful that, were it to refuse planning permission based on an NI Water objection, it would need to provide robust evidence to the Planning Appeals Commission, should an applicant appeal a decision and that, in the absence of robust evidence, it would be unreasonable to refuse planning permission.

The Planning Manager stressed that those Local applications with NI Water objections listed in the report could still be requested to be referred to the Committee for consideration under the Scheme of Delegation for Planning. Furthermore, if it transpired that those applications needed to be referred to the Committee for any other reason under the Scheme of Delegation other than the objection from NI Water, then they would still be reported to the Committee for a decision.

The Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to consider those local planning applications to which NI Water has objected.

Consultation on Permitted Development Rights

The Planning Manager informed the Committee that the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) was undertaking a public consultation on further expansion of permitted development rights, those of which could be carried out without the need to make a planning application to the Council in the following circumstances:

- Installation of domestic microgeneration equipment (heat pumps); and

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

- Installation of reverse vending machines.

He outlined to the Committee those items which constituted microgeneration equipment and DfI's plans for the introduction of reverse vending machines in order to change consumer behaviour, encourage higher levels of drinks container recycling and reduce litter.

He pointed out that, whilst the proposed amendments, as set out in the public consultation were generally considered positive and welcomed, officers had the following concerns with regard to the proposals relating to the reverse vending machines:

- The permitted development rights would allow reverse vending machines up to four metres in height – this would be excessive and a height restriction of two metres would seem more appropriate to human scale;
- The permitted development rights would allow a footprint of up to 80sqm – a huge footprint, which could cause significant visual harm. The footprint limitation should be reduced; and
- The restriction on reverse vending machines in the wall of a shop may refer to machines installed, altered or replaced inside a shop – it should be made clear that works undertaken inside a building would not be development.

He stated that it was recommended that the Council relay the aforementioned concerns in its response to the public consultation in order that DfI consolidate the proposed changes, previous and future changes to the original Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 into a single Order rather than having to cross reference the original 2015 Order with separate new Orders, which may prove confusing for practitioners and customers.

The Committee endorsed the proposed changes to permitted development rights, and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the consultation response.

Miscellaneous Items

Planning Retention and Disposal Schedule

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To update the Committee on amendments to the agreed Retention and Disposal Schedule (the Schedule), which sets out how the council manages physical and digital planning records and information. A copy of the Schedule is provided at Appendix 1.**

2.0 Recommendations

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

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the amended Schedule which has been agreed with all planning authorities.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The new regional Planning IT system is scheduled to 'go live' on 05 December 2022. As part of the preparation work, an amended Retention and disposal Schedule has been agreed by all planning authorities (including Mid Ulster Council, which is not part of the regional IT project).

3.2 The retention periods and disposal actions set out in the Schedule at Appendix 1 apply to all official records in whatever format held, paper and electronic. It provides the planning authorities with clear guidance on how to dispose of records promptly when they cease to be of any continuing administrative/legal value. It also identifies any records which should be transferred to the Public Records Office NI (PRONI) because of their long-term historical/research value.

3.3 The document has been updated to reflect changes to the Council's business requirements. The new Planning IT system includes an integrated Electronic Document Management System and going forward electronic records will be the official record rather than paper records. A module has been included in the new Planning IT system to manage the retention and disposal of electronic records.

3.4 The Public Records Office of NI has approved the Schedule.

3.5 Financial & Resource Implications

None identified.

3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no equality implications with this report."

The Committee noted the amended schedule.

Statutory Consultees Performance

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

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

1.1 The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has published its third annual performance report that highlights the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process.

1.2 The performance report is appended at Appendix 1 and is for notation.

2.0 **Recommendation**

2.1 That the Committee notes this report.

3.0 **Main Report**

Background

3.1 Statutory consultees play an important part in the planning application process by providing the Council with technical advice in specialist areas such as transport, the environment, ecology, historic buildings, waste water infrastructure etc. Their formal engagement in the process is a legislative requirement for certain types of planning application as prescribed by the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

3.2 DfI publishes an annual report on statutory consultee performance. It recently published its performance report for 2021/22, which is reported to the Committee for notation. A copy of the performance report is provided at Appendix 1.

Key information

3.3 The Department's performance report includes a range of statistics and data. Some of the 'highlights' from the 2021/22 report are listed below.

- The total number of consultations issued to statutory consultees across the region rose by 15% between 2020/21 (23,721) and 2021/22 (27,191). Whilst there was a 15% uplift in the number of consultations issued, the number of applications received increased only by 6%, which indicates that the consultation rate per application rose appreciably during this period.
- An average of 69% of statutory consultations were responded to within time within the statutory 21-day period. For Local applications, 70% (78% for Belfast) of responses were received within time, whereas for Major applications it was only 56% (63% for Belfast).
- 95% of consultations were for Local applications (which make up 99% of applications) with 5% consultations on Major applications (1%). Therefore, there is a much high

rate of consultations issued on Major applications than Local applications. This raises the question of whether there is over-consultation on applications for Major development.

- The most often consulted statutory consultee was DfI Roads with nearly 12,000 consultations issued across the region; this was followed by DAERA and NI Water with around 4,000 consultations; DfC/HED with 3,500 consultations and DfI Rivers with just under 3,000 consultations
- Statutory performance by organisation was as follows:
 - DfI Roads – 69%
 - DAERA – 63%
 - NI Water – 97%
 - DfC/HED – 65%
 - DfI Rivers – 40%
 - NIHE – 79%

- 3.4 Officers advise that the performance report published by the Department is useful but would benefit from a much deeper dive of the information. For example, the report should include information around average consultee performance by organisation by council area to assess whether consultees are performing better in some council areas than others. Also, the statutory measure of whether or not consultation responses are received within the statutory 21-day consultation period is binary whereas it would be valuable to know the average length of time taken by consultees to respond, again broken down by council area. Further metrics would help stakeholders better understand the performance of the statutory consultee process and help to identify areas of weakness and improvement.
- 3.5 Officers have raised these issues previously with the Department, notably at the regional *Planning Forum*, which was setup to improve the statutory consultee process. Officers will formally write to DfI to raise these issues again and seek further improvements to the way in which performance is reported. Officers will also continue to seek improvement to the statutory consultee process generally through the regional improvement agenda linked to the recommendations of the NI Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee reports on the NI planning system, published in February and March 2022 respectively.
- 3.6 Issues around the statutory consultee process were highlighted to the Committee at the February Planning Committee, [item 12a](#). The Committee may find it useful to cross-reference the information provided in that previous report.

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

- 4.1 Substandard statutory consultee performance causes delays, inefficiency and increased costs for the Council in processing planning applications. It is essential to an effective and streamlined planning system that the statutory consultee process operates effectively. In this regard, the Department's performance report for 2021/22 is a useful reference, however, it is considered that greater refinement of the reporting framework is required so as to better understand the effectiveness of the system and identify areas for improvement.**

5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

- 5.1 No adverse impacts identified."**

The Committee noted the report.

Housing Land Availability Monitor Report

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the Council's Housing Land Availability Summary Report for the 2021/22 monitoring period.

He explained that the report presented the outcomes of housing land monitoring and provided a snapshot of the amount of land available for new residential development as of 1st April, 2021, that can inform house-builders on the availability of land that may be suitable for housing.

He highlighted the following key points:

- The total number of dwellings completed had increased by 25.0% from 603 in 2020/21 to 754 in the current monitor year;
- The proportion of units completed for the district on both housing or mixed use zoned land had increased from 29.0% in 2020/21 to 36.3% in the current monitor year;
- Sites featured in the annual reports were based on current planning policy designations and planning permissions;
- A number of processes had been undertaken each monitor year in preparing the Housing Land Availability Monitor report, that included updating units completed on sites, use of Building Control non-domestic completion data to remove sites with developed for non-residential use, the addition of new sites to the housing monitor report and updating site statuses;
- The annual Housing Land Availability Monitor Report was published on the Council's website and along with an online map viewer; and
- The SSA online map viewer visually illustrated the distribution throughout the city and provided key details for each site.

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

He stated that the Housing Monitor Report presented factual information and made no recommendations with regard to the future allocation of land for housing.

The Committee noted the outcomes of the annual Housing Monitor Report for 2021/22 and agreed to the publication of the summary document and accompanying online map portal on the Council's website.

Employment Monitor Report

The Principal Planning Officer referred the Committee to the draft Employment Land Monitor Report 2021/22 and explained that the primary purpose of the report was to inform decision making and the ongoing performance of policy in respect of land supply across the city and ensure sufficient employment floorspace would be available for the anticipated demand of 550,000 square metres over the plan period.

He reported that floor space data was gathered from planning approvals and matched with Building Control commencements and completions data. He added that the floorspace figures for vacant employment land had been calculated using a best practice guide of 40% building to plot ratio.

The Principal Planning Officer highlighted the following key issues in the report:

- There had been approximately 27,000 square metres of employment floor space completed in the monitor year 2021/22;
- 5,000 m2 of employment floorspace had been lost to alternative uses in the same year;
- There had been a net change of +22,500 square metres in employment floorspace, factoring in losses of employment floorspace;
- As of 31st March, there were approximately 70,000 square metres of employment floorspace under construction across the city;
- Yield from planning approvals for employment use accounted for approximately 433,000 square metres; and
- Yield from extant planning permissions which result in a loss of employment floorspace was approximately 70,000 square metres.

He stated that an online interactive map portal was being developed to allow customers to view the detail of individual sites across the city, along with other spatial mapping for the Local Development Plan, and that the Employment Land Monitor would allow the Council to determine the amount and location of employment land to be retained or released for other uses, as it progresses towards the next stage of the plan.

The Committee agreed to note the proposed form and content of the draft Employment Land Monitor report for 2021/22.

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

Development Plan Practice Note 11 Response

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) draft Development Practice Note 11 – Receipt of Independent Examination Report and Adoption of a Development Plan Document (DPPN11) on the adoption of Local Development Plan documents and informed the Committee that DfI had requested comments on the draft DPPN.

He informed the Committee that the guidance related to the final stages of the Local Development Plan preparation process and DfI's consideration of the Planning Appeals Commission's report and recommendations.

He pointed out the following issues raised in the proposed Council response:

- 78 recommended amendments, which largely related to minor changes to wording and errors;
- Three of the proposed modifications related to the inclusion of a new strategic policy to address the phasing of development and infrastructure provision;
- Direction from the DfI required further engagement and consultation with regard to the introduction of the new strategic policy, prior to any formal adoption; and
- The Planning Appeals Commission had also recognised the value of the emerging Supplementary Planning Guidance, where it elucidated on the policies in the new plan.

The Committee noted the report and approved the proposed response to DfI.

Schedule of Meetings 2023

The Committee to hold meetings, at 5pm, on the following dates in 2023:

- Tuesday, 17th January;
- Thursday, 19th January (for Workshop);
- Tuesday, 14th February;
- Thursday, 16th February (for Workshop);
- Tuesday, 14th March;
- Tuesday, 16th March (for Workshop)
- Tuesday, 13th April;
- No meetings in May (election)
- Tuesday, 13th June;
- Thursday, 15th June (for Workshop);
- No meetings in July (recess)
- Tuesday, 15th August;
- Thursday, 17th August (for Workshop);
- Tuesday, 19th September;
- Thursday, 21st September (for Workshop);
- Tuesday, 17th October;
- Thursday, 19th October (for Workshop);
- Tuesday, 14th November;

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

- Thursday, 16th November (for Workshop);
- Tuesday, 12th December; and
- Thursday, 14th December (if required).

Restricted Items

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the 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.

Update on the replacement Planning Portal (Verbal Report)

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an update on the project to replace the Planning Portal and the proposed timetable for its implementation.

The Committee noted the update.

Chairperson

Planning Committee

Thursday, 17th November, 2022

SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Whyte (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers;
Councillors Bower, Carson,
Douglas, Groogan,
Hutchinson, Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;
Mr. K. Sutherland, Principal Planning Officer;
Mr. D. O’Kane, Principal Planning Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported for Councillor Garrett.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Item

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the 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.

Draft Strategic Policy SP1A Local Development Plan (LDP)

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 outlined both the Council and Department for Infrastructure’s proposed policy approaches. He further outlined the potential next steps for consideration.

He referred the Committee to the proposed correspondence from the Committee to the Department for Infrastructure, and he agreed to implement a small number of administrative changes to the draft, as suggested by the Chairperson.

**Special Meeting of Planning Committee,
Thursday, 17th November, 2022**

The Committee:

- noted the information in respect of the past engagement with the DfI and the iterations of policy as set out in the October Committee Report;
- noted the presentation and additional briefing information; and
- endorsed the revised draft of the letter to the DfI that included the proposed Policy SP1A and the detail in respect of the justification and amplification to supporting policy wording.

Chairperson

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

Monday, 14th November, 2022

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT

Members present: Councillor Maghie (Chairperson);
Alderman Haire; and Councillors Bradley, Cobain, Flynn,
Howard, Magee, McAteer, McCann, Newton and Smyth.

In attendance: Mr. I. Bell, Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate
Services, ICC Belfast (Belfast Waterfront and Ulster
Hall Ltd.);
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Mr. M. Whitmore, AGRS Manager;
Mr. A. McKinley, Internal Auditor;
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 20th June 2022 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 July.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

The information contained in the reports associated with the following six 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 item as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee
Monday, 14th November, 2022

Internal Audit Report For Year Ended
31 March 2022

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) Manager presented the Committee with an update on the outcome of an internal audit which had been undertaken at the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall (BWUH) Ltd from February to April 2022.

The AGRS Manager explained that a 3-year Internal Audit Plan for 2021/2022 – 2023/2024 was agreed at the BWUH Ltd Audit and Risk Committee in December 2021. He outlined that the audit plan for 2021/2022 had planned to cover cyber security and data protection, as they were two key risks for the company, and it was critical that there were adequate controls in place to mitigate them. However, due to a long-term absence and a vacant post, it was agreed with management that the planned audits of cyber-security and data protection would be deferred. These areas were now scheduled to be audited as part of the 2022-2023 audit plan. The AGRS Manager highlighted that AGRS had seen evidence that management and the Board of the company had undertaken a lot of work to address issues previously raised in relation to IT Security. He said that the 2022/2023 audit would allow AGRS to validate the implementation of those actions and assess the extent to which risks were now managed.

The 2021/2022 audit was carried out from February to April 2022 and covered Finance, Risk, Performance Management and Property Maintenance. The audit report was agreed with the BWUH Ltd Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Systems, and the Executive Summary was presented to the BWUH Ltd Audit Committee in September 2022. The report would be presented to the Council's Audit and Risk Panel in December 2022.

The AGRS Manager advised the Committee that the audit had found that there were "some improvement needed" for the areas reviewed with some minor issues in relation to risk management and performance management. He reported that evidence had been found of good control in relation to financial and property maintenance processes, and further explained that management had agreed all the recommendations and had put in place an action plan for implementation by the end of October 2022. The implementation of these actions would be followed up as part of the 2022/2023 audit plan. AGRS had agreed with BWUH management to complete the planned audit for 2022/2023 in two parts. The first would commence in November 2022 and would cover performance, risk, and sales and marketing. The second was due to begin in January 2023 and would include IT security, data protection and finance. The AGRS Manager advised that the audit outcomes would be presented to the Members in due course.

A Member commented that it was disappointing that the cyber security audit could not go ahead as planned but acknowledged the impact of Covid-19 and resource issues. The Member added that the internal audit had been robust and provided opportunities for learning.

The Members noted the information which had been provided.

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee
Monday, 14th November, 2022

Annual Report and Financial Statement
for Year Ended 31 March 2022

The Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services provided the Members with the BWUH Ltd Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2022. He explained how the venues had been closed until the end of September 2021, and how revenue had been curtailed due to Covid-19 restrictions in January 2022 as well as infections amongst the pantomime crew which had an impact on the shows.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Performance Report Q1 2022/23

The Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services provided the Committee with an update on Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.'s (BWUH Ltd.) performance and financial highlights for Q1 YTD covering the period 1st April 2022 to 30th June 2022.

The Committee was reminded that the venues reopened fully from 1st October 2021. The first quarter of 2022/2023 had been exceptionally busy which was in no small part due to the efforts of the team during the closedown to ensure as many events as possible were deferred rather than cancelled.

A number of high-profile events had taken place in the venues since the beginning of April, including the World Irish Dance Championships, Microbiology Society Conference, International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, the Harkin summit and the first All-Ireland Sustainability Summit hosted by ICC Belfast.

The Members noted the contents of the report and information provided.

Building and Maintenance Update

The Director of Physical Programmes provided the Committee with an update on capital and maintenance works at the ICC Waterfront and Ulster Hall.

The Members were reminded of major capital projects which had been identified at the Waterfront and were provided with a progress update.

- Escalator Replacement

The six new escalators had been installed, commissioned, and were operational.

- Replacement of the Chiller Units

A report had been commissioned to examine technical solutions for the replacement of the chiller units serving the Waterfront. The report made a series of recommendations with one option considered the most viable. In addition, further financing had been secured to install solar film to the glazing in the bar areas. Design work was due to commence on this shortly and, following a public

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee
Monday, 14th November, 2022

tender exercise, it was hoped that a contractor would be appointed in late January 2023, with a view to having the works completed by the end of March 2023.

- Works to the Roof

Works to repair leaks in the roof were carried out while the new escalators were being installed. To date there had been no further leaks and this would be kept under review.

- Refurbishment of Toilet Facilities

As part of the overall refurbishment of the toilets in the Waterfront Hall, a new changing places facility had been provided and the works completed. The Director of Physical Programmes advised that designs were currently underway for the remaining toilet facilities, and she expected that these would be completed and agreed by the end of November, followed by a public tender exercise. She added the aim was to appoint a contractor by the end of February 2023.

The Members reviewed and noted the updates presented.

Sustainability Report

The Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services presented to the Committee an overview of the company's sustainability strategy, progress and ambitious plans to accelerate sustainable practices in BWUH.

The Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services explained that BWUH Ltd would be working to achieve the Green Tourism Gold award, and would be researching EarthCheck accreditation opportunities and benefits, whilst also reviewing and updating the sustainability policy, and rolling out sustainability awareness to the team. In addition, Hospitality Belfast was working towards their own Green Tourism accreditation and ISO 20121. He reiterated that ICC Belfast, Waterfront Hall and Ulster Hall recognised the impact that these iconic venues had in Belfast and Northern Ireland. Delivering world-class business and entertainment events benefits everyone – socially, culturally and economically.

The Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services reported that BWUH Ltd was in a good position from a sustainability perspective and progress had been made over the last 12 months. During the period of closure due to Covid-19, the Executive Leadership Team and Board took time to reflect on best practice and how the company could contribute further to a more sustainable Belfast which resulted in being awarded the silver accreditation in December 2021 for ICC Belfast. Further initiatives were developed, and the silver award accreditation was awarded to the Ulster Hall in August 2022.

The Members were advised that to add additional support and to offer an opportunity to a student in this field, a Sustainability Placement Student started in April 2022 to complete necessary research for BWUH which was added to their strategic project for their Masters qualification. In addition to this, a Green Team was developed

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee
Monday, 14th November, 2022

with members of all departments in BWUH, with the first meeting held in July 2022. This would serve as a platform to gather feedback but to also embed sustainable practices in all areas of BWUH.

A Member asked if BWUH had an ethical procurement policy and the Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services replied that it did and he would forward this to the Member for information.

A Member commended the sustainability progress and added that it was positive and moving in the right direction.

The Members noted the information provided.

Merchandising Report

The Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services reminded the Members that Belfast was awarded UNESCO City of Music status in November 2021. As two of Belfast's most iconic music venues, BWUH needed to ensure that the company was supporting the local music industry and homegrown talent.

Due to feedback from the NI Music Awards in November 2021, the company decided to review the merchandise process with a view to better support local/upcoming artists in relation to merchandise sales. He provided the Committee with details of the new merchandising commission tier process and reported positive feedback from Chief Executive Officer of the Oh Yeah Centre in this regard.

The Members commended BWUH for supporting local artists and noted the information provided.

Board Members Update

The Director of Economic Development requested that the Committee note an extension to the contracts for three of the existing directors of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd until 31 March 2023. The extension was to accommodate the original pause in the recruitment process caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent new appointment of the BWUH Chair in November 2022.

The Committee noted the extension of ICC BWUH Director's contracts to the 31st March 2023.

BWUH Shareholders' Committee
Meeting Dates 2023

The Committee agreed to hold meetings, at 5.15pm, on the following dates in 2023:

- Monday 16th January;
- Monday 13th March;
- Monday 12th June;

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee
Monday, 14th November, 2022

- Monday 14th August;
- Monday 11th September; and
- Monday 13th November.

Chairperson

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 10th November, 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, Maghie, McCabe, McCann, McKeown,
McLaughlin, Murray, Sandford, Smyth, Spratt
and Thompson.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr. P. Gribben, Head of Digital Services;
Mr. K. Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti Poverty;
Ms. A. Diver, Climate Programme Manager
Mr. J. McKearney, Project Support Assistant;
Mr. R. McLernon, Climate Programme Manager;
Ms. C. Young, Marketing and Communications Coordinator;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for an inability to attend were received from Alderman Haire and Councillor Newton.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th October 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 November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

Schedule of Meetings 2023

The schedule of meetings for 2023 was agreed as follows:

- Thursday 12th January at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 9th February at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 9th March at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 6th April at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 8th June at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 10th August at 5.15 pm

**Climate and City Resilience Committee,
Thursday, 10th November, 2022**

- Thursday 14th September at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 12th October at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 9th November at 5.15 pm
- Thursday 7th December at 5.15 pm

**Cyber Security Risk update –
Presentation, Mr. Paul Gribben**

The Chair welcomed Mr. Paul Gribben, Head of Digital Services to the Committee. The Head of Digital Services opened his presentation by giving the Committee the background to cyber risk. He said that BCC was facing a growing cyber threat that would have severe organisational impacts. Due to fast changing network architectures, rise in flexible working, many more devices connecting outside corporate network, growing use of personal devices, growing use of Cloud services, increase in data sharing with other organisations, huge jumps in the number of phishing attempts and concentrated scans of our network. He explained that cyber security was the Council's most critical risk. Consequently they had to become much more rigorous about the security controls they applied and there would be a greater role for Chief Officers and Elected Members around the ownership and accountability of this risk.

He went on to outline a number of alarming facts as detailed below:

1. The average time to identify a breach in 2020 was **207 days**
2. And the average lifecycle of a breach was **280 days** from identification to containment – (*Hackney Council - £12M – Data Leaked*)
3. The main attacks were – Ransomware; Phishing, 3rd Party Account Compromise, Denial of Service and mis-configuration
4. Human intelligence was the best defence against phishing attacks
5. 95% of cybersecurity breaches were due to human error
6. **Over 77% of organisations didn't have a Cyber Security Incident Response plan**
7. ***Total cost for cybercrime committed globally - \$6 trillion 2021

The Head of Digital Services went on to outline to the Committee the Cyber Security Strategy and approach in Belfast City Council and detailed the key controls used to mitigate the cyber risk. He detailed the change that would be needed, the security decisions and actions and the security programme that would be undertaken in the coming years. The Committee noted the contents of the presentation.

Chairperson

H56

Standards and Business Committee

Thursday, 24th November, 2022

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Hanvey (Chairperson);
Councillors Canavan, Corr, de Faoite, Duffy,
Flynn, Gormley, T. Kelly, Long, Lyons, McAteer,
McCabe, McCullough, 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. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies for the inability to attend were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 25th October 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 November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Motions

The Committee considered a report in relation to Notices of Motion which had been received for consideration by the Council at its meeting on 1st December.

The Committee considered each motion in turn and agreed the following:

Belfast Cycle Network

That the motion in relation to Belfast Cycle Network be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

Translink - Night-time Provision of services

That the motion in relation to Translink – Night-time Provision of services be referred to the Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

That the motion in relation to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods be adopted:

***Moved by Councillor McDonough-Brown,
Seconded by Councillor Murray,***

“Belfast City Council agrees to explore how Low Traffic Neighbourhoods can be delivered in Belfast, in conjunction with the Department for Infrastructure and other external stakeholders. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are being rolled out across the UK and Ireland and reduce rat runs and increase residential amenity.”

Corey Jack Aughey Memorial Park

That the motion in relation to Corey Jack Aughey Memorial Park be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

Parental Alienation

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

Inclusive Leisure Services

That the motion in relation to Inclusive Leisure Services be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

Imagination Library

That the motion in relation to Imagination Library be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

Committee Schedule 2023

The Committee approved the schedule of meetings for 2023 as follows:

- Thursday, 5th January at 5.30 pm;
- Thursday, 24th January at 5.30 pm;
- Tuesday, 21st February at 5.30 pm;
- Tuesday, 28th March at 5.30 pm;
- Tuesday, 18th April at 5.30 pm;
- Tuesday, 27th June at 5.30 pm;

**Standards and Business Committee,
Thursday, 24th November, 2022**

- Tuesday, 29th August at 5.30 pm;
- Tuesday, 26th September at 5.30 pm;
- Tuesday, 24th October at 5.30 pm; and
- Tuesday, 28th November at 5.30 pm.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

Translink – Night-time Provision of Services

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

Proposer: Councillor Lyons

Seconder: Councillor De Faoite

This page is intentionally left blank

Parental Alienation

“For Belfast City Council to recognise that Domestic Abuse can take many forms. To recognise that Parental Alienation can be captured as a form of Domestic Abuse as it is accepted as a group of behaviours.

To recognise that Belfast City Council has a duty to support the protection of children affected by all forms abuse to ensure a better future for children and family life.

To recognise that Belfast City Council acknowledge that more needs to be done to include training and education within the area of parental alienation, so that professionals are trained to meet the ongoing needs of families in the Belfast City Council area and throughout Northern Ireland.”

Proposer: Councillor Tracy Kelly

Seconder: Alderman George Dorrian

This page is intentionally left blank