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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

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

Notice is hereby given that the monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Monday, 4th July, 2022 at 6.00 p.m., for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Council (Pages 1 - 10)
5. Official Announcements
6. Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies
7. Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 11 - 64)
8. Minutes of People and Communities Committee (Pages 65 - 112)
 - a) Minute of the Meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 11th January - Erection of Dual Language Street Sign at Clifton Street (Pages 113 - 126)

To consider further the minute of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 11th January, under the heading "Erection of Dual Language Street Sign at Clifton Street", which was previously called in and for which a legal opinion has now been received (minute and legal opinion attached)

9. Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 127 - 172)
10. Minutes of Licensing Committee (Pages 173 - 190)
11. Minutes of Planning Committee (Pages 191 - 202)
12. Minutes of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee (Pages 203 - 206)
13. Minutes of Climate and City Resilience Committee (Pages 207 - 210)
14. Minutes of Standards and Business Committee (Pages 211 - 214)

15. Motion - Continuance of Hybrid Meetings

To be proposed by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor M. Kelly,
To be seconded by Councillor Bower,

“This Council supports taking measures to encourage a broader demographic to stand for, become elected and remain as local Councillors.

It recognises that hybrid meetings enable easier participation from those with young families and caring responsibilities and disabled people, amongst others, therefore, they are more likely to consider elected roles.

The Council, therefore, supports maintaining a mixture of online and in-person access to meetings.

Notwithstanding the outcome of the recent call for evidence from the Department of Communities on Remote/Hybrid meetings, the Council will write to that Department expressing its desire for the ability to continue to hold both full Council and Committee meetings in hybrid form.”

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. M. Kelly', written in a cursive style.

Chief Executive

Council

ANNUAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Wednesday, 1st June, 2022 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor; (Councillor Long) (Chairperson)
The Deputy Lord Mayor, (Alderman Haire)
The High Sheriff, (Councillor Hussey);
Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Beattie, Black, Bradley, Bower, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Donnelly, Duffy, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCullough, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Murphy, Murray, Newton, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Smyth, Spratt, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Cobain, Ferguson and T. Kelly.

Declarations of Interest

Alderman Copeland declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the heading "Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme", in that her daughter was a Director of an organisation that had received funding from the programme;

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to an item contained within the minutes of the People and Communities Committee, under the heading "DfC Community Support Programme Letter of Offer 2022-2024", in that he was employed by Blackie River Community Group;

Councillor Black declared an interest in relation to an item contained within the minutes of the People and Communities Committee, under the heading "DfC Community Support Programme Letter of Offer 2022-2024", in that she had been engaged with the Grosvenor Community Centre;

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in relation to items contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the headings "Summer

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Community Diversionary Festivals Programme” and “Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme” in that, she was a member of a Community Group which had received funding from both programmes;

Councillor Corr declared an interest in relation to an item contained within the minutes of the People and Communities Committee, under the heading “DfC Community Support Programme Letter of Offer 2022-2024”, in that he worked for an organisation that had received funding from the programme;

Councillor McCullough declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the heading “Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme”, in that he associated with an organisation which had applied for funding.

Councillor Verner declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the heading “Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme”, in that she associated with an organisation which had applied for funding; and

Councillors Beattie, Lyons, O’Hara and McDonough-Brown declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, under the heading “Freeport/Innovation Zones”, in that, they were on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, and left the meeting whilst the matter was under consideration.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Long),
Seconded by Councillor Magee and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 9th May be taken as read and signed as correct.

Disclosure of Family Relationship

The Chief Executive informed the Council that, in accordance with Section 30 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, he had been advised by Councillor McCabe that, her husband, Mr. Jim Girvan, had been offered an appointment as a Lead Officer within the Council.

Official Announcements

Welcome

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long) welcomed Councillors Bower, Duffy, Maghie, Murray and Nelson to their first meeting of Council and wished them well in their tenure.

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Congratulations

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long) offered congratulations to former Councillor Nicholl and her family, on the recent birth of her daughter, Étaín Evelyn.

Councillor Bunting offered congratulations to the Queen, on her Platinum Jubilee, the Lord Mayor concurred, and extended his congratulations to the Queen on the momentous occasion.

Condolences

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long), on behalf of the Council, offered condolences to the Chief Executive on the recent death of his Father-in-law.

Alderman Sandford extended his condolences to the family of 10-year-old Poppy Ogle, who had passed away following a year-long battle with cancer. He commended the people of the Cregagh estate for their support to Poppy's family and he thanked Lord Mayor for wearing a yellow ribbon, representing Poppy's favourite colour, in her memory.

Councillor Howard requested that, the Council pass its condolences to the Hastings family, on death of Lady Joy Hastings. The Lord Mayor agreed to write to the family on behalf of the Council.

Thanks

Councillor Duffy thanked former Councillor Baker for his work in office and stated that he would continue that work with the same determination and vigour.

Positions of Responsibility 2022/23 (Year 4)

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that, at the Annual Council meeting on 21st May, 2019, the Council decided on the political parties that would be entitled to hold the Positions of Responsibility for each year of the 4-year Term and that Year 4 of the Council Term was to commence forthwith.

He recommended that the Council appoint the nominated Members, as identified by the Nominating Officers of the political parties concerned, to the Positions of Responsibility for Year 4 of the Council Term as outlined below:

Civic Dignitaries

Lord Mayor	Councillor Black
Deputy Lord Mayor	Councillor M. Kelly

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Chairperson	Councillor McDonough-Brown
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Heading

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Murphy
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Spratt

People and Communities Committee

Chairperson	Councillor McMullan
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Bunting

Licensing Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Matt Collins
Deputy Chairperson	Alderman McCullough

Planning Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Whyte
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Maskey

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Walsh
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor McKeown

Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Maghie
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Newton

Standards and Business Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Hanvey
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor de Faoite

The Council agreed to appoint the Positions of Responsibility for Year 4 of the Council term, as set out above.

Request to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive reported that requests to film or photograph the installation of the Lord Mayor and the Deputy Lord Mayor had been received from a number of media outlets.

The Council agreed to accede to those requests.

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Installation of the Lord Mayor

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that it had, earlier in the meeting, approved the Positions of Responsibility for 2022/2023 and that Councillor Black had been nominated to serve as Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor Black was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2023 and she subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Black thanked her Political Party for nominating her to serve as Lord Mayor, she outlined her main priorities for the forthcoming year and paid tribute to the previous Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor for the manner in which they had carried out their duties.

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

Installation of the Deputy Lord Mayor

The Council was again reminded that, earlier in the meeting, Councillor M. Kelly had, under the Positions of Responsibility for 2022/2023, been nominated to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor M. Kelly was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2023 and she subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor M. Kelly paid tribute to the previous Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, thanked her Political Party for nominating her to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor and outlined her main objectives for her term in office.

(The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor M. Kelly, in the Chair.)

Committee Membership 2022/23 - Selection of Remaining Places

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that, at its meeting on 29th April, 2019, the Council agreed the Governance arrangements for the current Council term 2019 - 2023, which had included an annual review of Committee membership, with Members to be appointed for one-year terms and reappointed at each Annual Meeting.

He advised the Council that the membership of all Standing Committees would cease on the date of the Annual meeting and that Year 4 of the Term would commence on the same date.

He reported that, a meeting of the party Nominating Officers had been held on 26th May at which the remaining Committee places were to be selected, however, as not all Parties had been represented, the process was unable to proceed and that, before

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nominated Members could be appointed to the Standing Committees for 2022/23, Nominating Officers would need to select the remaining Committee places.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

Resolved - That the Council meeting be adjourned briefly, to allow the party Nominating Officers to meet and make the selection of the remaining Committee places.

Upon resumption of the meeting, the Chief Executive informed the Council that, the remaining Committee places had been selected and Party membership was as set out below and that, the names of the Committee membership for Year 4 would be circulated to the Council in due course.

Party	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	City Growth and Regeneration Committee	People and Communities Committee	Licensing Committee	Planning Committee	Climate and City Resilience Committee	Standards and Business Committee	Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Shareholders' Committee
SF	6	6	6	6	4	6	6	4
DUP	6	5	5	5	3	5	5	3
ALL	4	4	4	3	2	3	3	2
SDLP	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	1
GREEN	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
PBPA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
UUP	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
PUP	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	20	20	20	20	14	20	20	14

Change of Membership on Outside Bodies

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the following Political Parties of a change to membership of Outside Bodies:

Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Murray to replace former Councillor Mulholland - Alliance
- Councillor McKeown to replace Councillor Heading - SDLP
- Councillor Newton to replace Councillor Bunting -DUP

North Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Nelson to replace former Councillor McAllister - Alliance

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East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Newton to replace Alderman Sandford - DUP

West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Murray to replace Councillor Long - Alliance

The Council approved the changes.

Minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 13th and 20th May, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Quarterly Update on Motions

At the request of Councillor Heading, and with the agreement of the Lord Mayor, the Council agreed that, with regard to the Motion under the heading 'Closure of Ulster Bank', the Lord Mayor would convene a meeting with representatives from each of the political parties, representatives from The Financial Services Union, staff representatives and the NI Chamber of Commerce, to discuss the closure of branches, and that, the meeting would take place within the following three weeks.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 13th and 20th May, 2022, were approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Bunting,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 10th May, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Presentation – Organiser of Bright Lights Event

At the request of Councillor Groogan, Councillor Bunting (Deputy Chairperson of People and Communities Committee), agreed, with the consent of the Council, that,

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representatives from the local area would be invited to the next meeting of the Committee to raise their concerns with regard to the event taking place.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 10th May were thereupon approved and adopted.

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 11th May, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

(Councillors Beattie, Lyons, McDonough-Brown and O'Hara left the meeting while the proposal was under consideration)

Freeport/Innovation Zones

Moved by Alderman Dorrian,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting,

That the decision of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th May, under the heading "Freeport/Innovation Zones", be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees that officers would continue to explore the potential for a Freeport, as part of a Northern Ireland Innovation Zone.

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

<u>For 22</u>	<u>Against 26</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); The High Sheriff (Councillor Hussey); Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, Haire, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and Councillors Bower, Bunting, Hanvey, Howard, Kyle, Long, Maghie, McCullough, Murray, Nelson, Newton, Pankhurst, Spratt and Verner.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black); Councillors Bradley, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Donnelly, Duffy, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Heading, Magee, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCusker, McKeown, McLaughlin, Murphy Smyth, Walsh and Whyte.

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Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th May were thereupon approved and adopted.

(Councillors Beattie, Lyons, McDonough-Brown and
O'Hara returned to the meeting)

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Whyte,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

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

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 12th May, 2022, be approved and adopted.

Standards and Business

Moved by Councillor Hanvey,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

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

Motion to be debated by Council

**Northern Ireland Troubles
(Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill**

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

“This council, noting the UK government’s introduction of the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill, believes that the proposals within this Bill fail to honour the UK’s obligation under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to carry out proper investigations into deaths and serious injuries that occurred during the NI conflict. This council also recognises this bill is a unilateral move by the UK

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government to abandon its commitment to the Stormont House Agreement, again demonstrating contempt for agreements made with international partners.

Furthermore, this Council echoes fears made by civil society and victims organisations that, under these proposals, the Secretary of State may in practice decide who gets immunity from prosecution.

Accordingly, this Council calls on the UK government to abandon this Bill and return to the already agreed structures as outlined in the Stormont House Agreement and to recognise to state or non-state actor should have control over how a victim seeks truth and justice.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lyons.

The motion was put to the meeting and passed.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 17th June, 2022

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

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

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

Apologies

An apology was recorded on behalf of Councillor McMullan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th and 20th May 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 June, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Long declared an interest in respect of item 7b - Requests for the use of the City Hall, in that he was a member of the British Dental Association. However, as the item did not become a matter of debate, he was not required to leave the meeting.

Restricted Items

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

B4099

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Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following twelve 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.

Year-End Finance Report 2021-22

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report on the year-end financial position for 2021/22. He provided financial performance of the council in the context of the agreed finance strategy which was put in place to manage the financial impact of Covid-19. He also highlighted those balances which would be available for re-allocation on a non-recurrent basis.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee:

- note the report and agree the 2021/22 balances;
- agree to the year-end surplus of £10.6m being made available for re-allocation for non-recurrent purposes; and
- note the Year-End Treasury Management Report 2021-22.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Non-Recurrent Re-allocations

The Director of Finance and Resources reminded the Committee that it had, during discussion on the previous item, agreed that the year-end surplus of £10.6m for 2021/22 be made available for re-allocation, to progress emerging projects and essential projects which did not have a recurring budget.

Accordingly, he submitted for the Members' approval the following proposals and confirmed that, if approved, specified reserves would be set aside to ensure that the funds were available for each proposal and would be managed by the relevant Responsible Officer:

Proposal	Amount
Off Street Car Parking Pay and Display upgrade	£102,000
Kerbside Collection	£143,957
Full Shift Cover project	£259,000
Planning consultants	£100,000
Tribunal Service	£177,273
Sanitary Waste Product	£40,000
Waste Strategy	£500,000
Port Health risk	£663,000
CNS Department	£1,985,230
Vacancy Grants Programme	£300,000

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Temporary Use of 2 Royal Avenue	£500,000
Establish regeneration programme of work	£200,000
Continuation of the Business Cluster & Community Grant Scheme	£600,000
PE Department	£1,600,000
Recruitment backlog and BSC recruitment	£140,000
Local Area Energy Plan	£60,000
Programme Coordinator for the Belfast Business Promise / City Charter	£58,711
COS Department	£258,711
Support for the roll-out of the Asset Management System	£200,000
NRF Programme and project resourcing	£400,000
Roll forward Non-Recurrent Capital	£500,000
Capital contract construction cost rise risk	£500,000
PP Department	£1,600,000
Insurance reserve	£200,000
Cyber Security Reserve	£550,000
PSTN lines	£70,000
Fin Res Department	£820,000
Total	£6,263,941

The Director advised that the City and Neighbourhood Services Department was undergoing significant change and permission was also being requested to set up a transformation reserve. He explained that the departmental underspends in 2022/23 could be transferred to that reserve, subject to approval by the Director of Finance and Resources. This would enable the realignment of existing resources to fund service transformation across the department.

After discussion, the Committee

- agreed to reallocate £6.3m of the year end surplus to Departmental proposals as set out above;
- agreed to reallocate £2m of the remaining balance of £4.3m to the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund and to distribute it within the Fund on the same basis as was used for the original allocation;
- agreed to defer the allocation of the remaining £2.3m until a future date; and
- agreed to the establishment of a Transformation and Improvement Reserve in City and Neighbourhood Services Department.

Kerbside Recycling Economic appraisal and next steps

The Committee was reminded that it had requested, previously, the commissioning of an independent, economic appraisal on the future of kerbside recycling collections for Belfast. The economic appraisal was completed by the consultants (Jettora) in

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October 2021. Subsequently, the findings of the report had been presented to the Waste Programme Board (November 2021), at Party Group Briefings (February 2022) and at the Party Group Leaders Forum (May 2022).

The Operations Director Resources and Fleet outlined that the recommendations of the economic appraisal were a two-phased approach to outsourcing the implementation of the Wheelie-box model across the city. This approach was deemed as the most economically advantageous and least risk option for the Council and would be as follows

Phase 1: Implement Option 2 in the Inner City

- Council acquisition and delivery of new containers (Wheelie-boxes and 180 litre residual bins) to inner city households.
- Procurement of a new collection service contract for the inner city (includes new Resource Recovery Vehicles).
- Close monitoring of contract performance against objectives.

Phase 2: Extend the above approach to the Outer City

- Formal review of phase 1 against objectives, prior to contract expiry.
- If formal review is positive, acquisition of Wheelie-boxes and 180 litre residual bins for the outer city.
- Procurement of a contract to deliver services across the city.

Feedback from Member briefings indicated there was a general desire by Members to work towards the in-housing of the service and a more bold and ambitious approach in delivering recycling services across the city.

Accordingly, following the presentation of the findings to the Members, the Committee was being asked to adopt the following recommendations:

- agree the commencement of a procurement exercise for external expertise to assist in producing a report on the potential “in-housing” of the inner-city kerbside sort recycling contract;
- agree the commencement of a procurement exercise as outlined, for the provision of an interim, kerbside sort recycling service in the inner-city, in order to ensure service continuity upon current contract expiry in August 2023; and
- note the potential to implement glass collection to the remainder of Belfast as an interim measure and in advance of the full Kerbside Collection deployment. This would be subject to agreed funding by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee through the rate setting process.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

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**City Hall: Proposed recovery plan –
update on progress**

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

**Dual Language Street Signs Policy
Public Consultation and EQIA**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the results of the public consultation to the proposed changes to the council's Dual Language Street Signs Policy and the conclusions reached in the accompanying Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). A report on the consultation and the EQIA final decision report had been appended to the report.

The Chief Executive reported that the public consultation had opened online on the Your Say Belfast platform on 22nd November 2021 and had closed on 28th February 2022. The survey was available in both the English and Irish languages.

There was a total of 4.4k visits to the consultation page and 1,078 written responses (785 in the English language version and 293 in the Irish language version). Officers had arranged four online public information sessions, which had a total of 4 attendees and each political party on the Council had been offered a briefing session. Information sessions had also been held for stakeholder groups, which included Irish language groups and academia, the Ulster Scots Agency and the Council's Equality Forum, Migrant Forum and Disability Advisory Panel.

The consultation survey had focused on five proposed changes to the Dual Language Street Signs policy. For four of the five questions, respondents had been asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposed changes, and they could comment if they wished. For the remaining proposed change relating to the operation of the Council's residual discretion, respondents were asked to comment. Respondents were also asked to comment on any aspect of the proposed policy that had not been addressed by the preceding questions.

The survey also gave respondents the option to comment on the draft Equality Impact Assessment running concurrently with the consultation and on the draft Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

After discussion, the Committee:

- (i) noted the results of the public consultation and the EQIA; and
- (ii) agreed that the revised Dual Language Streets Signs Policy be implemented following ratification by the Council at its meeting on 4th July.

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Cyber Update

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 20th August 2021, it had considered a cyber security update. At that meeting, Digital Services had been asked to provide further information on 3 key areas of cyber incident response:

1. The decision to pay a ransom (or not) in the event of a Ransomware attack.
2. Cyber insurance.
3. The order in which critical services will be recovered after an attack.

The Director Finance and Resources reported that the requested information had now been provided in the report. In addition, Digital Services had also been working closely with colleagues in Audit, Governance and Risk Services and Emergency Planning to seek updates to the business continuity plans of the Council's critical services. The report also contained a recommendation from that work.

The Committee approved the recommendations as set out below:

- The Council should not pay a ransom following a cyber-attack;
- To the procurement of an Incident Response Retainer service as an alternative to Cyber insurance;
- Approval of a cyber security reserve of £550,000.
- Sign-off of a prioritised list for service recovery as set outlined Appendix 1 to the report; and
- That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Finance and Resources to permit the use of personal equipment and email/messaging accounts (with consent) in the event of a significant cyber-attack.

Employees on Temporary Contracts

The Committee noted a report which provided an update on the number of employees on temporary contracts, outlined the steps taken to reduce the reliance on temporary contracts and also provided information on agency assignees engaged by the Council.

Update on the New Regional Planning IT System

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided information on the progress of the implementation of the new regional Planning IT System to be shared by Belfast City Council, 9 other councils and the Department for Infrastructure. The report also included an update on the "Intelligent Client Function", which was the contract management of the new system to be undertaken by Council on behalf of the 11 participating Planning Authorities.

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Asset Management

The Committee –

- i) **Beechvale Farm– Disposal of c108 acres of agricultural land** – in line with the Committee decision of October 2021, approved the disposal of c108 acres of agricultural land to SH Long Produce Limited for the consideration of £2,000,000.
- ii) **Dunbar Link Depot – Proposed licence to Carlisle Inns Ltd for emergency escape** - Approved a licence to Carlisle Inns Ltd for a period of 18 months for use of Council lands at Dunbar Link Depot to facilitate an emergency escape.

**Levelling Up Fund Round 2 - BCC application update
and requests for support and endorsement, Shared Island
Funding and Community Ownership Funding updates**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which provided an update on the proposal to develop an application for Levelling Up Round 2 Funding (LUF) in respect of 2 Royal Avenue. The report also set out requests received from local organisations for the Council to act as a lead applicant and/or delivery agent, or to provide a letter of support, for LUF Round 2 applications.

Subsequently, information had been received on 14 June 2022 from DLUHC providing clarification on the issue of public bodies taking on the role of a lead applicant and delivery agent for applications by a non-public sector organisation that do not have experience of delivering two capital projects of similar scale in the previous five years.

The report also provided an update on Shared Island Funding and applications for the recently closed Local Authority Development Funding programme in which the Council was partnered in several projects.

The Committee;

- noted the further information provided on the LUF Round 2 application being developed by officers in relation to the future use of 2 Royal Avenue, including the planned consultation approach;
- agreed that correspondence be sent from the Chief Executive to all Belfast MPs and MLAs requesting their endorsement for the 2 Royal Avenue application;
- Requests for Council to act as delivery agent – noted the requests which had received and that, given the resource impact and lack of clarity on the financial implications for the Council, agreed that it does not accede to any requests at this time in terms of becoming delivery agent/lead partner for projects, with the exception being where the Council was already significantly funding a project and had already agreed to be the delivery agent and on that basis agreed to support the request by the Stand Arts Centre; but agreed to provide a letter of

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support in event that the Groups still wish to pursue their own application;

- Letters of support – considered the requests received from organisations as outlined in 3.17 and Table 2 of the report and agreed to endorse those through a Letter of Support;
- noted the update in relation to the Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme and the applications submitted to which Belfast City Council was a project partner;
- provided retrospective approval for a funding contribution agreed at meeting of the Corporate Management Team on 31st May 2022, on the basis that the timeframe did not permit this to be brought before this Committee;
- agreed that a future report on the wider opportunities from the Shared Island Initiative be presented to a future meeting as part of the wider report on funding opportunities which the Committee has previously agreed to receive; and
- noted the update in relation to the Community Ownership Fund.

Review of Bonfires in 2021 - presentation

The Committee received from Mr. Jonny Byrne a presentation in relation to the review of bonfires in 2021. He outlined the review of the governance framework; discussions with officers and statutory partners; feedback from communities; observations; and potential actions.

The Committee noted the presentation.

Use of the Council's Contractor

Arising out of discussion, the Chief Executive advised the Committee that a request had been received from the Department of Communities to use the Council's contractor to remove bonfire materials from a bonfire site in Derry/Londonderry.

The Committee agreed to accede to the request.

Minutes of Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Working Group of 23rd May.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

City Region Growth Deal – update

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 This report is to provide an update to Committee on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD). Including an**

update on the Funding & Governance arrangements for Belfast City Council as the Lead Authority and Accountable Body for the Deal.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the update on the role for Belfast City Council as the Accountable body and approve the creation of a post of Project Accountant to support the financial and budget management arrangements and processes at no additional cost to the Council.
- Note the update in relation to the key financial arrangements for the next phase of the deal, including the Financial Agreement (Appendix 2) with the Treasury and Department of Finance.
- Approve the Memorandum of Understanding (attached at Appendix 1).
- Note the programme overview.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Members will be aware that following the signing of the deal, Belfast City Council (BCC) took on the role of the Accountable Body ensuring that the partnership makes decisions in accordance with all legal, financial, and administrative requirements. This includes the need to put in place the financial and budget management arrangements and processes to ensure the BRCD funding is managed and accounted for appropriately. The Programme Management Office (PMO) have therefore been working with partners to formalise permanent structures and resources for the delivery of the deal and to allow BCC to carry out its role as lead authority and accountable body.

3.2 In addition, the PMO has been finalising key documents with government departments which underpin the overarching signed deal document, including the development of Contracts for Funding which will be required for each of the capital projects delivered through the Deal. An update on the development of these key funding and governance arrangements is set out below.

Memorandum of Understanding

3.3 Members were previously updated on the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which was developed to

reflect partners' commitments to invest collectively and work collaboratively to achieve the ambitions for inclusive growth through delivery of the Deal.

- 3.4 Importantly the MoU commits each partner that will be a recipient of the capital funding provided through the deal to jointly fund the central team in BCC to carry out the functions required of the accountable body and lead authority, as well as additional external expertise that may be required to deliver the programme.
- 3.5 It also details how the partners will work collaboratively to identify and respond to the skills needs that city deal investment will create and to address the barriers to employment that might hinder ambitions for greater inclusion.
- 3.5 The final Memorandum of Understanding, which will sit alongside the formal deal documentation is attached at Appendix 1 for approval.

Contracts for Funding

- 3.7 Before funding can flow directly to projects Contracts for Funding (previously referred to as Letters of Offer) need to be agreed between departments and the Accountable Body and between the Accountable Body and Project Sponsors. Intensive work has been ongoing over a considerable period with departments and partners, including significant input from BCC legal team, to develop the overarching Contract for Funding which will form the framework for individual funding agreements. The BCC legal team has also drafted the first individual funding agreement which will be with Queen's University for the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) project. Once all final clauses are agreed, and approvals are in place, back to back letters will be signed between Department of the Economy (DfE) and BCC as the Accountable Body and then BCC (as accountable body) with Queen's University. Subsequent Contracts for Funding for further projects will be developed using the same framework and agreed clauses.

Implementation Plan and Financial Plan

- 3.8 The overarching deal document is supported by both an Implementation Plan and Financial Plan. The Financial Plan sets out the proposed spending profile for all the projects and the overall financial framework including stewardship, protocols and controls. The Implementation Plan provides

detailed information on the projects, including key milestones, financial information and funding flows, risks and outcomes. It also forms the basis of the monitoring and reporting information required for each project. Members should note that the Department of Finance (DoF) has now approved these Plans.

Financial Agreement

- 3.9 The tripartite Financial Agreement between BCC, DoF and HM Treasury sets out the financial commitments and protocols in relation to funding the BRCD. The agreement formalises arrangements between the governments and the Accountable Body that have been set-out in other deal documentation. This document, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 2 has now also been finalised and issued to DoF and UK government.

Governance and Assurance

- 3.10 The PMO, with the support of colleagues in Finance and the Audit, Governance and Risk Service, has been developing a Governance & Assurance Framework which incorporates the governance structures which have worked well to date, but also builds in best practice from other deals in relation to programme management and assurance which are appropriate for this new phase of delivery. This includes monitoring and reporting arrangements required by the Accountable Body to facilitate signing of the Contracts for Funding and Payment of Claims.
- 3.11 Given the scale of the investment and the financial management required to fulfil its role as the accountable body the team will need to recruit a dedicated Project Accountant to support the financial and budget management arrangements to ensure that BRCD funding is managed and accounted for appropriately. This will include the receipt and administration of grant funding including the establishment of appropriate accounting and reporting arrangements. This post will be funded through contributions, as committed to in the MoU, and will be of no additional cost to the organisation.

Investment Priorities

Innovation

- 3.12 Following Ministerial and DoF approval for Outline Business Cases (OBCs) the Universities have been moving projects to the next stages of delivery. To maintain momentum and avoid

the potential for delays it is vital that contracts for funding are now therefore finalised and agreed for the most advanced projects.

- 3.13 The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre and Global Innovation Institute have been focused on detailed design as their projects reach the end of RIBA Stage 2 as well as initiating operational workstreams. The Institute of Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare project is also undertaking detailed design as it moves through RIBA Stage 2 and has undertaken significant stakeholder engagement, including in relation to site specific constraints. All project governance structures are now operational, including external stakeholders on project-level implementation groups and further pump-prime recruitment is well underway.
- 3.14 The Studio Ulster project continues to progress through the procurement process for a works contractor, with competitive dialogue agreed as preferred way forward. Pre-Market Engagement has been completed including meetings with major film studios with NI Screen and Belfast Harbour in Los Angeles.
- 3.15 The Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology has now received DoF approval for its OBC. Ulster University are progressing a feasibility study to consider potential alternatives to the demolition of Northland House (driven by cost and net zero carbon agenda). Stakeholder engagement continues and discussions with Royal Victoria hospital continue to finalise equipment specifications in relation to the Living Lab element of the project.

Digital

- 3.16 The i4c Innovation Centre project, led by Mid & East Antrim Borough Council attended Casework Committee in early March and received approval from the Economy Minister during April. The project is currently addressing feedback as it seeks DoF approval.
- 3.17 Information in relation to the Advanced Wireless and Challenge Fund projects, led by Belfast City Council on behalf of the BRCD partners, is included in the SMART Belfast report

Tourism and Regeneration

- 3.18 As previously reported the four projects with approval for OBCs, Carrickfergus, Newry Regeneration, Bangor Waterfront

and Mourne Mountain Gateway, have continued development of their projects. Engagement with the Department for Communities and the Carrickfergus project team has been ongoing to agree the project specific governance document for inclusion within the Contract for Funding.

- 3.19 The Gobbins has been recommended for approval following Casework in February 2022 and DfE and DoF Ministerial approval is awaited. The revised Destination Royal Hillsborough OBC is currently progressing through the OBC review process and Belfast Stories will now progress design to RIBA 2 to enable a full OBC to be developed, working towards Casework review in summer 2023.

Infrastructure

- 3.20 Departmental officials have commenced preparations for 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.
- 3.21 Work on the Public Consultation Report for Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 is approaching final draft stage. Further development of the Outline Business Case, which will help inform selection of the preferred route, is also well advanced. DfI officials are continuing to explore potential options for funding.
- 3.22 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. Consultation with Dept. for Communities Historic Environment Division regarding the type of bridge over the shipping canal continues and the timing of a decision on the bridge type will impact the project milestones

Employability and Skills (E&S)

- 3.23 Recruitment has been taking place to form an E&S Project team, supported through the investment of BRCD partners, to support the programme going forward. The first successful candidate recruited by Queen's University, is expected to take up post at the end of June.

3.24 Work has also continued on the delivery of the E&S Action Plan. Key areas of update include:

- **Funding Opportunities Working Group:** The group has been tasked with beginning to identify potential collaborative projects to support the skills needs in areas aligned to the city deal investment.
- **Skills Assessments – Construction:** A task and finish group has been established to undertake a skills assessment of the construction opportunities arising through BRCD capital investment to determine if and where skills challenges may exist.
- **Social Value Procurement:** The social value approach for BRCD projects will follow the Strategic Investment Board new 'points-based model'. To support the integration of this requirement within relevant contracts training sessions have been delivered with Project Sponsors with nearly 50 individuals completing the training to date. Guidance material is also being developed to support contractors during the construction phase as they deliver employability and skills related social value activity.
- **Digital Transformation Flexible Fund:** a business case has been developed to create an NI wide capital fund which will provide financial assistance to small businesses to invest in 'advanced' digital transformation. The business case is based upon an overall funding pot comprising £6m of funding ring fenced through the City & Growth Deal Complementary Fund (CF) for a cross deal digital transformation project and £1.1m of funding from DAERA earmarked to support digital transformation amongst rural businesses. If the business case is approved it is estimated that 600 businesses will be supported, accessing grant support between £5-£20k, aligned to a specific digital transformation project.
- To support the delivery of the project revenue funding is required from council partners to centrally manage the delivery of the fund. The cost implication for Belfast City Council is estimated at approximately £55k per annum, the cost of which has been accounted for within existing city deal budgets. The preferred delivery model for the operation of this fund would be via an existing digital partnership (Full Fibre NI Consortium) led by Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, through which a governance model and project management team are

already in place, enabling the fund to be mobilised quickly.

- The draft business case has been issued to Council partners for feedback, as well as informally through Invest NI and government departments. Following consideration of feedback and the necessary agreement of partners the business case will be submitted to Invest NI for formal consideration.

Financial & Resource Implications

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

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.26 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:

- noted the update on the role for Belfast City Council as the Accountable body and approved the creation of a post of Project Accountant to support the financial and budget management arrangements and processes at no additional cost to the Council and delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Resources to formalise permanent structures and resources for the delivery of the deal and to allow the Council to carry out its role as lead authority and accountable body.;
- noted the update in relation to the key financial arrangements for the next phase of the deal, including the Financial Agreement (at appendix 2 of the report) with the Treasury and Department of Finance;
- approved the Memorandum of Understanding (attached at appendix 1 of the report); and
- noted the programme overview.

Employability Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The Council’s commitments to Inclusive Growth were published in March 2020. The document contained actions that Belfast City Council would progress over the next two years, including actions relating to the role of the Council as an employer. We recognise that as a civic leader and large employer in Belfast we can and should set a strong example for others in driving best practice around employment.
- 1.2 Through the Inclusive Growth Strategy, the Council is committed to providing inclusive recruitment opportunities and to improving participation in employment for under-represented groups by breaking down barriers to employment. This report provides an update on progress to date to support the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the progress to date in relation to the employment commitments in the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

3.0 Main report

To meet our employment commitments in the Inclusive Growth Strategy we have completed the following key actions.

- We have reviewed our employability and skills community outreach and engagement work in conjunction with key partner organisations and made recommendations to focus resources on agreed inclusive growth cohorts;
 - Residents not in employment
 - Residents with low skills levels
 - Young people not in education, employment or training,
 - In work low earning individuals
- We have identified a number of planned recruitment campaigns which support our Inclusive Growth aims.

- We have committed to ring fencing suitable entry level positions, to the four inclusive growth cohorts and providing additional support through pre-recruitment training programmes.

Job Start Scheme

- 3.2 At its meeting on 5 October 2021, CMT agreed the Council's participation in the DfC funded Job Start Scheme. The scheme is designed to support young people facing additional employment challenges due to the impact of Covid-19. It has helped to create job opportunities for 16–24-year-olds by funding positions with employers across all sectors, for a period of six months, increasing to nine months for those who meet additional criteria (i.e., young people facing multiple barriers).
- 3.3 Corporate HR along with colleagues in Employability and Skills worked together on this project to recruit and appoint nine young people to temporary roles on 28 March 2022 across the following Council departments:
- City and Organisational Strategy
 - The Office of the Chief Executive
 - Place and Economy Department
 - Legal and Civic Services.
- 3.4 Four of the young people face multiple barriers to employment and secured a 9-month placement. All are progressing well and while there have been some 'settling in' issues, line managers, Corporate HR and the Employability and Skills team continue to work with these young people to ensure ongoing support, encouragement and skills development. One young person has already gone on to secure permanent employment. Staff and residents will be able to read about the success of this project in the June edition of City Matters.
- 3.5 It has been agreed with DfC that four more young people who were reserve candidates can be offered temporary roles at Belfast Zoo. It is anticipated that these young people, if still available, will start their employment by mid-June.
- 3.6 Under the Job Start Scheme, DfC fund participating organisations for 25 hours per week at the national minimum wage. Within BCC Job Start participants are paid the actual rate for the job role and this is funded by the employing departments.

Ring fencing of vacancies to the long term unemployed.

General Operative

- 3.7 In previous years when recruiting for generic roles with multiple vacancies, a number of vacancies have been ring fenced to the long term employed and potential applicants provided with support and guidance to prepare for the application process through a pre- recruitment and training programme.
- 3.8 In April with support from the Employability and Skills Unit and Workforce Training (one of the organisations contracted to deliver employment academies on behalf of the Council), a number of general operative posts were ringfenced to the long term unemployed. A pre- recruitment and training programme to support applicants facing particular barriers to employment was delivered and there was extensive engagement with employability organisations across the city and in particular with disability organisations and the women's sector.
- 3.9 Seven participants successfully completed the programme and have been recommended for appointment. Pre employment checks are underway, with appointments to be made as soon as these have been completed.

Business Support Clerks

- 3.10 A recruitment campaign for Business Support Clerks is imminent and 25% of the permanent Business Support Clerk (BSC) vacancies (approximately 10) will be ring fenced to the long term unemployed. A two week pre-recruitment and training programme will be delivered to around 20 participants nominated from employment organisations across the city. An extensive engagement exercise with employability organisations across the city is planned and in particular with disability organisations and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) organisations.

Other employment academies

- 3.11 Employability & Skills have also been working with HR colleagues in CNS to deliver the following Employment and Upskilling Academies for BCC as an employer:
- Community Services Employment Academy to encourage and support people to apply for hard-to-fill community centre posts, with 16 people currently

completing this academy in preparation for recruitment timeframes.

- Transport Upskilling Academy for 20 OSS staff to gain their Category C (lorry driving) licence with the aim of gaining a better job. The plan here is to support an additional 20 staff.
- Scoping and planning other academies for hard-to-fill posts such as Category C and Category C+E.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.12 There are no financial implications to this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.13 Corporate HR will work closely with external employability organisations and other partners including the ECNI, to ensure equality of opportunity and alignment to our inclusive growth aspirations. Employability outreach will be targeted at people who face multiple barriers to employment.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Delivering the Smart Belfast urban innovation framework

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To provide Members with feedback on the public consultation on the new Smart Belfast urban innovation framework (2022 to 2025); and to set out the key actions in the first year delivery plan 2022/2023.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked:

1. Note the consultation feedback on the Smart Belfast urban innovation framework.
2. Note the main actions for Year 1 (2022 to 2023).
3. Approve the procurement of the pilot citizen capacity building programme (CODI).
4. Agree the development of the ‘Augment the City’ challenge programme

5. Note the ongoing Advanced Wireless Innovation programme
6. Note progress on the Belfast Region Innovation Challenge Fund programme
7. Note progress on the Urban Data programme

3.0 Main report

Consulting on the Smart Belfast urban innovation framework

- 3.1 Following approval by Members at December's SPR committee meeting, the City Innovation Team have been publicly consulting on the draft 'Smart Belfast' urban innovation framework.
- 3.2 The framework sets out a number of actions, enablers and activities which together are designed to make it easier for the city to exploit digital technologies to better address major urban challenges while at the same time supporting innovation by our SME community. The framework also seeks to maximise forthcoming funding opportunities, including the Belfast Region City Deal investments.
- 3.3 The framework identifies the Belfast 'Smart District' (covering the city centre area) as key to this approach. It will act as a place where the Council and its partners can directly develop and test real-world innovative policies, interventions and new commercial models in a supportive environment.
- 3.4 The public consultation ran from 18 January to 15 March 2022. It included presentations to over 150 people across sectors, and an online survey on the Council's 'Your Say' platform promoted via the media and other communication channels. The consultation web page received 837 visitors and 37 people completed the survey. 78% of responses were submitted by individuals and 22% by organisations.
- 3.5 The majority of responses supported the core elements of the framework:
 - 65% definitely agreed or somewhat agreed with the eight supporting pillars of Belfast's urban innovation ecosystem.
 - 60% definitely agreed or somewhat agreed with the seven key enablers for the successful delivery of the Belfast Smart District.
 - 60% definitely agreed or somewhat agreed with the Smart District project criteria.

- 63% definitely agreed or somewhat agreed with the seven challenge focus areas in the Smart District.
- 3.6 A significant minority of respondents disagreed with the use of digital technology in general in the city and view it as intrusive. They have concerns around data privacy, surveillance, cybersecurity and whether digital infrastructure in general is safe. This may reflect a lack of knowledge and an uncertainty in wider society about the speed and ubiquity of new technologies impacting our lives and our city. As a civic leader this is something the Council and its partners need to engage on proactively with residents and communities.
- 3.7 Other respondents noted the excellent opportunities that exist to harness urban innovation in Belfast and its potential to transform our economy and to also contribute to the city's wider ambition over the coming decade. A number pointed out that digital disruption was already being felt in the city and that leaders and institutions had an important role to play in responding proactively to digital challenges and opportunities.
- 3.8 Feedback from Elected Members was very supportive of the aims of the framework, and the plans for the 'Smart District' as a catalyst for urban innovation and for economic transformation. Members did note the need to ensure close links between the work taking place in the Smart District and its impact on communities and businesses elsewhere in the city particularly those living close to the centre.
- 3.9 The three-month public consultation phase was the culmination of a twelve-month phase of extensive engagement with local businesses, government bodies, academic institutions, charities and other city stakeholders, supported by BABLE, Fraunhofer IAO, Fraunhofer FOKUS, and Eindhoven Brainport. This wider engagement activity included five workshops with 176 participants and detailed interviews with 120 stakeholders.
- 3.10 Officers are now working to incorporate the findings from the consultation, and from further engagement with Elected Members and across council departments, to complete a final published version of the framework. This will be presented at the September SP&R Committee meeting prior to a public launch.

The Smart District project portfolio for 2022/2023

- 3.11 Projects and activities for the first year of the framework have been developed within the context of the Smart District and are designed to stimulate collaborative innovation activity with

public and private investment that can stimulate new ideas and solutions for the city's core challenges. Challenge areas where the District can make a significant contribution include:

- Re-imagining the future of our 'high street'
- Supporting the visitor and tourism experience
- Supporting healthy urban neighbourhoods
- Contributing to sustainable multi-modal travel and supporting the energy transition to zero carbon
- Building citizen/community capacity and skills to navigate the opportunities and challenges of our data-driven society and economy.
- Generating opportunities for our SME community to invest in R&D and innovation opportunities
- Supporting research excellence in our universities by providing greater opportunities for social impact.

The key project priorities for the first year are:

Citizen Office for Digital Innovation

- 3.12 Based on the experience of delivering 'Smart Belfast' and learning from other places (such as Dublin, Barcelona, and Portland) the team have identified the importance of proactive engagement and capacity-building with city residents, community groups, officials and elected members on the impact of digital innovation. This is also something confirmed during the engagement phase on the current framework particularly in the relation to the Smart District.
- 3.13 With the right support in place citizens are better able to collaborate with researchers, public officials, and private sector innovators on the co-design of projects that exploit innovative digital technologies to address important urban challenges. Conversely, cities that do not put this foundational work are finding it increasingly difficult to build the necessary understanding and trust amongst citizens to deliver innovative solutions. There is strong evidence¹ that scepticism of digital tech is having an impact on its use in supporting new solutions in health care, mobility, and urban design - and that this scepticism has to be actively challenged.

¹ <https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/when-billboards-stare-back-how-cities-can-reclaim-the-digital-public-space/>
<https://dtp.helphfulplaces.com>
<https://digitalrightsbarcelona.org>

- 3.14 The 'Citizen Office for Digital Innovation' (CODI) is a capacity building programme designed to support the citizen in a digitally enabled world – with an initial focus on the implementation of the Smart District. This support would range from supporting people to engage in data projects to improve health outcomes, through to understanding how Internet of Things and sensors can better understand local air quality or manage traffic problems.
- 3.15 CODI will be part of the city's wider 'skills escalator' offering those who participate not only the chance to shape Smart District project, but also encouraging interested individuals into more formal skills and training programmes.
- 3.16 The City Innovation team plan to work with local delivery partners to design and test a pilot version of the capacity programme with local communities starting in autumn 2022 and completing by the end of March 2023. The learning from the pilot would then shape the content of a future 'open source' capacity programme; test its core modules; and help establish a commissioning model. The results would also be used to inform future business cases for a more ambition programme.
- 3.17 Running alongside this pilot will be a strand of work focused primarily on public sector officials aimed at supporting the greater adoption of digital across government. Innovation often involves a degree of risk-taking and experimentation – something that can be difficult to manage within a public organisation.
- 3.18 Members are asked to approve £70,000 procurement for the design and delivery of the CODI citizen capacity building programme. The design of the programme would go out the public tender with bids being particularly welcome from local organisations with strong innovation and community capacity experience. (This falls within current City Innovation budget.)

'Augment the City' challenge competition for SMEs

- 3.19 As noted above, one of the early priorities of the Smart District is a focus on the visitor and tourist experience in our city centre and the 'high street'. Digital technology has already proved disruptive to city tourism offerings and, as various technologies reach maturity (such as AR/VR/5G/AI), this disruption is only likely to increase. With a large number of city and neighbourhood visitor investments planned or already underway, it is important for Belfast's partners to explore just

how such technologies are likely to shape the city's unique offering.

- 3.20 Working with the Council's Enterprise & Business Growth unit, the Belfast Stories team, Ulster University, the Digital Catapult NI and others, the City Innovation team is designing an 'Augment the City' challenge programme to commence later in 2022. The challenge programme would encourage our SMEs and innovators to harness immersive technologies to showcase innovative ways for communities and visitors to explore our city and its stories. It would complement a proposed capacity building programme being designed by the Enterprise & Business Growth unit for the local immersive SME sector (a sector that has been receiving international attention for its creativity).
- 3.21 An associated challenge 'competition' in the smart district will allow our creative sector to invest further in immersive R&D, while at the same time supporting city organisations, such as Belfast Stories, to gain insights into how immersive tech can shape the future of Belfast's visitor experience.
- 3.22 The proposal has received strong interest from a number of global platform and technology infrastructure providers with several million pounds of co-investment funding potentially being made available. Engagement is also under way with Digital Catapult UK, which is currently planning a major Immersive XR programme with cities, to consider how the two programmes could complement each other – and potentially attract further opportunities for our local creative SMEs.
- 3.23 Members are asked to note the development of 'Augment the City'; following a range of planned cross sector workshops an update will be brought to committee later in the summer detailing options for industry co-investment opportunities.

Smart District and advanced wireless innovation

- 3.24 Broadband fibre is currently the connectivity 'backbone' of the modern digital economy. However, the coming decade will see the rise of advanced wireless networks as the underlying infrastructure for connecting businesses, services, and new technologies. It's a technology that will allow many millions of devices to work together simultaneously across a city. It will be the basis on which 'Industry 4.0 Factories of the Future' and 'connected health environment' will be established.

- 3.25 Other UK cities are already vying to be first in the queue to deploy advanced wireless networks to support local innovation and research in areas such as connected health, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, tourism and logistics. DCMS have awarded over £250 million to UK cities and regions to trial advanced wireless and to address barriers to its deployment – and have plans to invest similar sums over the next period. Cities such as Liverpool, Manchester, Sunderland and Dublin are already investing many millions of pounds to make sure they are early adopters.
- 3.26 Belfast, and in particular the Smart District, is well-placed to be the home for wireless innovation. Both our universities have enviable track records in this space, and their planned City Deal Investment in Centres of Excellence will all have research strands that seek to exploit advanced wireless. Across our businesses and in our advanced manufacturing sector in particular, advanced wireless innovation is growing, with companies not only innovating in the wireless network service ecosystem, but also harnessing the technologies to transform their traditional products and processes. Belfast Harbour are currently exploring the use of 5G private networks to transform the management of Port operations. And public sector agencies are beginning to recognise the need to think about the opportunity that wireless represents.
- 3.27 The ambition of the Smart District is to make Belfast the natural home for the development of new commercial models for wireless services, and a place where researchers and innovators can develop new solutions. The Belfast Advanced Wireless programme is seeking to do this in four main ways:
1. Developing and managing a set of shared physical assets that can be made readily available to the mobile industry in a single, coherent and low-cost manner.
 2. Removing unnecessary barriers to investment by creating a shared approach to engaging with industry.
 3. Making a small number of capital investments in core telecoms infrastructure at key locations in the city which can be made available to any wireless provider in a coherent, low-cost manner.
 4. Stimulating demand for wireless services by aggregating existing and future demand with key partners including our universities, businesses and public agencies. And working together to bid for new funding and investment.

- 3.28 The City Innovation team have been working with industry experts and UK Government advisors, Real Wireless, to design a scalable and replicable model that can be harnessed by any council in Northern Ireland. The team are also working on a £30 million City Deal business case to fund item (3) above. A first draft of the business case for investment was recently completed, and over the coming months the city will be engaging with industry, NI Government Departments and UK Government departments towards developing agreement for funding.
- 3.29 The Smart District programme is also about stimulating and aggregating demand for advanced wireless services (item 4 above) and we are currently engaging with a wide range of partners including a number of the large mobile network operators, a large cloud platform provider, Digital Catapult UK, and others to create collaborative innovation projects for the city.

Challenge Funds for Innovation

- 3.30 The City Innovation team have recently appointed two Challenge Fund managers who are working with regional partners to develop a major funding programme to support digital innovation across the private and public sectors. This £54 million regional programme, funded via the Belfast Region City Deal, will have a number of investment mechanisms – each designed to achieve complementary outcomes.
- 3.31 The design of the mechanisms is at an early stage – however, early concepts include an evergreen ‘Digital Innovation Venture Fund’ which would invest in a small number of exciting, high potential/high growth companies in the region. In parallel an ‘Innovation for Societal Impact’ fund would seek to encourage greater investment by SMEs in R&D while at the same time working directly with these SMEs to harness their innovation for wider societal impact. This is aimed at providing a stimulus in the Smart District as well as across the region.
- 3.32 The Challenge Fund managers have commenced work on the individual business cases with the expectation that open calls for first phase one of more of the funds could be announced early in 2024. (Members should also note that the learning from the ‘Augment the City’ competition proposed above will provide early practical learning in the design and operation of these funds.)

Data, Insights and Impact

- 3.33 A key asset of the modern economy is data. Data is the most important part of the innovation economy and the fuel for digital innovation. This is widely recognised in the private sector with the most successful companies putting in place sophisticated strategies to capture, manage and interpret data for more effective decision-making. Data is also key for the effective management of the modern city and public services. While a number of public organisations have sought to develop data strategies, there is still substantial work to be done – particularly at the integrated level of a city – in order to become a truly data-driven city. The Smart District programme seeks to encourage city partners to push the boundaries in relation to data-informed decision making. The use of real-time Internet of Things sensors, Machine Learning, cloud computing and urban digital twins together offer opportunities for Belfast to think differently about complex challenges, and the capabilities to build much more responsive and bespoke solutions.
- 3.34 The City Innovation Team recently completed a data maturity project to pinpoint where Belfast City Council has to build internal capabilities to lead a data-enabled city. And our work with European Data experts, Fraunhofer FOKUS have identified the frameworks, policies and infrastructure that needs to be in place to harness data to better manage mobility solutions, climate monitoring, etc.
- 3.35 As part of the Digital Pillar of the Belfast Region City Deal, partners have identified a potential £5 million investment in a shared urban platform that can begin to make this ambition a reality. The City Innovation team will be developing its approach over the summer months to the completion of a feasibility study on a data platform and hub for the smart district and its supporting architecture.
- 3.36 Running alongside this work, the team's Impact and Insights officer has begun work on a digital twin of the Smart District. This data-rich representation of the city centre will begin to bring together fine-grain detail on the physical, social, and investment characteristics of the area – providing decision-makers with the detail to inform planning and investment decisions.
- 3.37 **Financial & Resource Implications**
- Proposed projects have been identified in the existing City Innovation team budget.

- **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

3.38 An equality screening was carried out as part of the consultation programme.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Council Improvement Plan for 2022-23

The Committee was reminded that the Council had a statutory duty to agree improvement objectives and produce an annual improvement plan by 30th June each year. The Improvement Plan did not include everything that the Council plans to do that year, but instead focused on a smaller set of key improvement priorities, as informed by resident priorities and evidenced by need. In February, the Committee had approved draft improvement objectives, which were then issued for public consultation:

- Our services - We will continue to adapt and improve our services;
- Our communities - We will work to support our communities, helping them to become stronger, healthier and more resilient;
- Our economy - We will work collaboratively to support businesses, jobs and inclusive growth;
- Our environment - We will champion climate action; protect the environment and improve the sustainability of Belfast; and
- Our city - We will continue to support our city to recover and innovate in a safe, inclusive and sustainable way

The consultation had ran for a period of 10 weeks and was hosted on our Your say Belfast engagement platform and promoted through the council's social media channels. A total of 35 responses were received, with the majority of those responding to the consultation supporting the proposed improvement objectives.

Respondents were also given the opportunity to make comments, provide ideas or to suggest other areas that they felt should be included as improvement objectives. Around half of all respondents submitted comments, which related in general to:

- Revitalising the city centre;
- Climate change and the environment;
- Improving public transport, cycling provision and parking;
- Enhancing green spaces and improving safety and wellbeing;
- Improving cleanliness and addressing dog fouling; and
- Internal council processes (including comments about the survey)

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The final improvement plan included actions that reflect the commentary above, such as the city centre 'Vacant to Vibrant' scheme, digital enhancements to improve customer interactions, improvements to pest control and various environmental enhancements to our parks and open spaces, which should help the Council deliver the broad improvements that respondents wished to see. The written comments from the consultation had been forwarded to the relevant services for information and, where applicable, had been fed into the ongoing review of the Belfast Agenda. Some of the issues raised are not the responsibility of Council.

Given the high levels of support, as evidenced by the consultation, it was not felt necessary to make changes to the proposed improvement objectives. However, feedback from the consultation was shared with services to help them develop their improvement tasks and milestones. As required by the legislation, a detailed Improvement Plan has been drafted that sets out our improvement actions and targets.

The Committee approved the draft 2022-23 Council Improvement Plan attached at appendix 1 to the report. As the Council was legally required to publish its improvement plan by 30th June, the Committee also authorised its publication on the Council's website, subject to formal ratification by Council on 1st July.

**Access to Council Leisure Facilities
for Asylum Seekers**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To present proposals for asylum seekers in Belfast to access Council leisure facilities.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is requested to consider:

- **The proposal below to grant registered asylum seekers access to Council leisure facilities free of charge or at a substantially reduced rate.**
- **The rationale presented in support of the unique restrictions and hardships associated with living under asylum seeker status.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

In recent years, resulting from conflicts around the world, we have experienced an increase in the number of asylum seekers arriving in Belfast. The relatively small but steady stream has

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accelerated during high profile conflicts/migrations in for example, Syria, Afghanistan and more recently Ukraine.

Asylum seekers experience a unique set of hardships while waiting for government determinations on their asylum seeker status.

City and Neighbourhood Services has received a number of requests seeking free of charge or substantially reduced rates for asylum seekers to access our leisure facilities.

- 3.2 Offering concessions solely to asylum seekers does present equity dilemmas, however it should be acknowledged that the situation for asylum seekers is slightly different for the following reasons.

Asylum seekers experience a greater level of hardship as:

- a) they cannot access the labour market.
- b) they cannot open a bank account.
- c) many do not have a residential address (as most are accommodated in hotels).
- d) their allowance of £39 per week is about half of what others on benefits would receive.
- e) they are extremely isolated and many are suffering from the trauma of the refugee journey.
- f) mental ill-health is particularly high.
- g) they are not able to work and don't have established family networks here, leading to extreme isolation which hampers their sense of integration and inclusion in Belfast.

The Home Office does not produce exact figures for asylum seekers. However, the total for Northern Ireland is believed to be circa 2,500. The proposal below would only apply to asylum seekers housed in Belfast accommodation.

- 3.3 Most asylum seekers are assessed within a few months but unfortunately in some cases there are long delays and in extreme cases they can remain as asylum seekers for in excess of twelve months.

Following assessment asylum seekers are either deported, where their application is rejected, or granted 'refugee' status, if their application is upheld. When an asylum seeker is reclassified as a refugee, they immediately have access to housing, the labour market, banking services, health care and

income support. Essentially the same rights as any other citizen.

- 3.4 Leisure provision can be key to asylum seekers' long-term integration but moreover, in the short term, an essential means of alleviating isolation, mental health issues and the trauma associated with the refugee experience.

£39 per week is already a struggle for people paying for food, mobile data to communicate with family, buying clothes to suit local weather conditions, toiletries, bus passes, etc. plus children's essentials from nappies to schooling items.

Our current concession rate for Health & Fitness Membership is £18.30 per month (£36.55 full price). The concession rate would put membership of our leisure centres beyond the reach of asylum seekers living on £39 per week. A Health and Fitness Membership package includes access to all centres for gyms, pools and classes plus some facility bookings.

Attached at Appendix 1 is a Briefing paper produced by the Law Centre which supports this initiative.

3.5 Proposal

That members consider:

- a) Free of charge Health and Fitness Membership for asylum seekers for a period of 3 months, and
- b) A reduced rate of £5 per month, for subsequent 3 month blocks, for Health and Fitness Membership for the duration of their asylum seekers' status (to be renewed every 3 months).

- 3.6 GLL have confirmed that they are in agreement with the above proposal and the resulting processing implications.

Summary

Members are asked to consider the background information provided and the special circumstances associated with being an asylum seeker. In particular the specific restrictions set out above at 3.2.

Members are further requested to consider the free of charge and reduced rate proposal set out above at 3.5.

Communications & Public Relations

3.7 None

Financial & Resource Implications

3.8 There would be no additional expenditure associated with the above proposal for BCC or GLL.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

3.9 This report has been prepared in consultation with officers from the Council's Equality and Good Relations unit and in full acknowledgement of the equity considerations involved."

After discussion The Committee agreed:

- to grant newly arrived Ukrainian refugees, refugees and registered asylum seekers access to Council leisure facilities free of charge until status was granted, with a further report to be brought back to the Committee on how this could be extended to destitute asylum seekers;
- noted the rationale presented in support of the unique restrictions and hardships associated with living under asylum seeker status;
- noted that the Chief Executive would undertake to convene a meeting of relevant stakeholders to see what further actions the Council could take to help asylum seekers within the city; and
- that a report be brought back to the Committee outlining any means by which the Council or GLL could potentially reduce the admission and/or membership fees for leisure centres for Belfast ratepayers.

Freedom of the City – Frontline Workers and COVID Response

The Chief Executive submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out:

- An update for Members on a public facing event to recognise the work of the city's frontline during the COVID19 pandemic.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of the report including the outline of the event to take place on 25th August 2022.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1** At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 22nd May 2020 it was agreed to award the Freedom of the City to healthcare workers and all those working tirelessly on the frontline to care for vulnerable citizens during the COVID pandemic, with Members agreeing that a report outlining proposed arrangements for this to be submitted in due course. A further report was submitted to committee on 23 April 2021 which agreed a proposed programme, to include both a reflective event of commemoration as well as a citywide recognition event with community participation.

Participative Programme aligned to UNESCO City of Music - completed

- 3.2** From September 2021 to March 2022 Council delivered a participative music programme with a variety of groups across Belfast to explore their experiences of pandemic via musicians in residence programme. This programme has resulted in each of the groups working with a local musician to compose a new piece of music. The creative outputs of this programme will now be showcased through:

- Celebratory event at 2 Royal Avenue
- An exhibition of the project to be toured to locations across the city including local festivals
- A documentary capturing personal stories of life through the pandemic
- An album of the music recordings

- 3.3** There will also be an opportunity for some of these elements to form part of the Belfast Stories project.

Honouring the contribution of city's frontline workers and communities Waterfront Hall, 25 August 2022

- 3.4** A concert will take place at the Belfast Waterfront on Thursday, 25 August 2022 to include a ceremonial element marking Freedom of the City. Council officers have been working in partnership with BBC NI on this project. Music has played an important part in people overcoming the challenges of COVID-19 and creatively it is the ideal artform to signal the city's ongoing recovery. This also celebrates Belfast achievement in becoming a UNESCO City of Music in November 2021.

- 3.5 The official Freedom of the City ceremony will take place as part of this music event commemorating this unique project. This main stage event will include profiled acts, breakthrough artists, the Ulster Orchestra and live performance of the songs produced with the participants of the musician in residence programme. There will also be involvement from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust choir. The full artist line-up for the event is being finalised and will be released in due course.
- 3.6 The concept for the evening is to focus on songs that have a particular meaning to the city and associated with the city's Covid response. These songs will form a Belfast Mixtape and have been selected by frontline workers and community participants.
- 3.7 In addition, there will be a screening of a specially commissioned film that captures the city's response to COVID and personal stories through this unique project.
- 3.8 The final outputs from the overall programme include:
- Direct Community Participants: 60 participants across 6 groups over 6 months of workshops and engagement
 - 3 Story-gathering facilitators aligned to Belfast Stories
 - Core musician team of 5, with a lead Music Director
 - Ulster Orchestra and headline music acts for the closing event at Waterfront Hall
 - Film produced capturing the individual 'Belfast Stories' of COVID
 - Broadcast of event with BBC NI
 - Podcast and ancillary content
 - Immersive and commemorative exhibition about the project and stories
- 3.9 This special Freedom of the City project seeks to reflect the remarkable efforts of the city throughout the pandemic and has at its core an ethos of being both a caring and a creative city.

Event Delivery:

- 3.10 Given that the event marks the conferment of the Freedom of the City. It is proposed that the process is as follows:
- The wording of the Notice of Motion will provide the context for organisation to be awarded tickets.

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- It is proposed that partner organisations, including Belfast City Council, receive an allocation of tickets to the concert.
- Each organisation will be responsible for managing their own allocation directly with the Waterfront Box Office, with tickets made available online or hardcopy and dispersed as appropriate by each organisation.
- It will be up to each organisation to decide on their own criteria for which staff members can access tickets.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.11 No additional resources are required. The programme costs will be met from within existing budgets due to existing plans for a city event to mark the bid for UNESCO designation.**

Equality & Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.12 The overall programme of events include elements that have been open to all and as such has the potential to promote good relations and equality by bringing together people from a wide range of backgrounds. City of Music Events are part of the cultural strategy for Belfast that has been subject to EQIA.”**

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Area Working Update

The Committee:

- Approved and adopted the most recent Area Working Group minutes (*South – 23 May, North – 25 May, West – 26 May and East – 31 May*) attached at appendix 1 to the report.
- Physical Programme – Agreed the recommendations in respect of Local Investment Fund (LIF) projects and reallocations from the East Area Working Group as set below:
 - £70,000 to Cycling Ireland towards the Henry Jones BMX/ cycle track project (ELIF29);
 - £70,000 to the Cregagh Sports Club (ELIF30);
 - £30,000 to provide storage facilities for Bloomfield Football Club, Clonduff Football Club, East Belfast Football Club and Glentoran Academy (ELIF31); and that the remainder of the funding be ringfenced for the Bloomfield
 - Community Association (approx. £60,009).

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Finance, Procurement and Performance

Procurement Policy

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of report or summary of main issues

- 1.1 The Commercial & Procurement Service (CPS) presented its 3 year Transformational Strategy to Chief Officers in September 2020.
- 1.2 To support this, the Procurement Development Team within the CPS has developed a corporate-wide Procurement Policy to establish the legal authority of the procurement function within the Council and to simplify, clarify and reflect legislation governing procurement.
- 1.3 The Procurement Policy is important as it sets out the method and the governance arrangements (i.e. approvals required) associated with any money spent by the Council on the goods, services and works that are required to enable it to deliver its services. It details what the Council expects from its officers in terms of behaviour, actions taken, and the processes to be followed for all procurement activity.
- 1.4 This Policy will apply to all Council Officers involved in the execution of works, supply of products or the provision of service contracts. We recognise that procurement is cross-cutting throughout the organisation and therefore, the policy has been designed to also act as a critical link to other relevant existing (and any future) Council policies and procedures that involve procurement activities e.g. those relating to social value and sustainability.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
 - 1. Approve the Procurement Policy; and
 - 2. Approve the approach to adopting and implementing the Policy.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1** The overarching aim of the Procurement Policy is to establish the delegated authority of the procurement function within the Council and to simplify, clarify and reflect legislation governing procurement. Primarily, the Policy brings together existing legislative and policy requirements, as set out in the Council's constitution, and introduces best practice relating to procurement activity e.g. new mandatory training and a revised documented approach for all officers to adhere to when evaluating tenders.
- 3.2** This Policy will be important for Council Officers and suppliers as it sets out the method and the governance arrangements (i.e. approvals required) associated with any money spent by the Council on the goods, services and works that are required to enable it to deliver its services. It will act as a 'golden thread' between the Transformation Strategy and day-to-day procurement operations. It details what the Council expects from its officers in terms of behaviour, actions taken, and processes followed for all procurement activity.
- 3.3** This Policy will apply to all Council Officers involved in the execution of works, supply of products or the provision of service contracts. We recognise that procurement is cross-cutting throughout the organisation and therefore, the policy has been designed to also act as a critical link to other relevant existing (and any future) Council policies and procedures that involve procurement activities e.g. those relating to social value and sustainability.
- 3.4** To support the implementation of our Procurement Policy, we have taken a 'bottom-up' approach which involved the following initial steps:
- 1.** Developing, implementing, and monitoring processes and procedures for end-to-end procurement activity at all values and for each procurement method, including:
 - a.** Quotation and tender competitions;
 - b.** Use of framework agreements; and
 - c.** Use of Single Tender Action process.
 - 2.** Introducing supporting documentation such as template forms, process checklists and guidance.
 - 3.** Introducing the requisite levels of approval, in line with the Council's constitution.

4. Ensuring staff are equipped with the right skills to enable us to adopt best practice and to conduct legislatively compliant processes and procedures. Training is available on a regular schedule.
 5. Ensuring staff are guided to relevant existing (and any future) Council policies and procedures (as appropriate) e.g. those relating to social value and sustainability.
 6. Introducing a culture of continuous improvement through regularly seeking feedback on the processes, support, guidance and training available.
- 3.5 In terms of monitoring the performance of the processes and procedures documented within the Policy, CPS will report annually to the Commercial & Procurement Panel, Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the Strategic Policy & Resources (SP&R) Committee (as appropriate) on procurement activities. Monitoring will also continue to evolve in line with the introduction of enhanced reporting functionality through the Council's new finance system ('go-live' planned for April 2023).
- 3.6 The next phase of policy implementation will include the development of a communication and engagement plan to ensure Officers are equipped with the requisite skills to comply with the policy. The individual tasks related to this phase will be captured in the CPS annual Roadmap which is monitored via the Commercial and Procurement Panel.

Financial & Resource implications

- 3.7 This programme of work will be managed as part of the CPS's annual revenue budget.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.8 No implications at this stage."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Contracts Update

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in appendix 1 (Table 1);

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- approved the award of Single Tender Actions (STAs) in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in appendix 1 (Table 2);
- noted the award of retrospective STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in appendix 1 (Table 3);
- noted the award of contracts by Arc 21 on behalf the Council (Table 4); and
- approved the verbal request by the Director of Finance and Resources to tender for the supply of natural gas should the Council's current supplier, Go Power, be unwilling/unable to continue to offer the Council suitable terms to extend the contract:

Appendix 1

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Home safety equipment – supplied to families following a home safety assessment. Funded by Public Health Agency	Up to 4 years	£200,000	S Toland	A new regional tender for home safety equipment is being set up by AND Borough Council – BCC is named on this tender.
CPD Contract for Procurement cards for use throughout the organisation	Up to 3 years	£180,000	R Cregan	Used for expenditure that cannot be procured through SRM ordering processes. Contract generates 1% payback on expenditure. Utilising CPDs contract (BCC contract ref T2088).
Procurement of an operator for the two-year temporary Active Travel Hub at Cathedral Gardens Fully Funded	Up to 2 years	£35,000	C Reynolds	BCC has received an offer of funding from PHA and Ulster University to fund an operator for the Active Travel Hub in Cathedral Gardens, that will be responsible for providing active travel information, programming and training from the Hub.
Collection and Treatment/Recycling of Mixed Materials from Recycling Centres	Up to 4 years	£2,000,000	C Matthews	Current contract is ending and a new procurement process is required. Supports the Council with

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				its waste management operations.
Provision of Kitchen Canopy Assessment /Cleaning for Cooking Protection at various Council Properties	Up to 4 years	£200,000	S Grimes	Service required to ensure than all kitchen canopies in Council property have an assessment and clean carried out by a competent contractor.
A grants management system providing online application and management of grants streams	Up to 4 years	£95,500	R Cregan	Current contract expires August 2022. Continuity of service required to support grant applications process.
Develop and pilot a bespoke capacity building programme and toolkit that will enable citizens and communities to fully engage and collaborate in digital innovation	Up to 7 months	£70,000	J Tully	There is currently no provision in place to support the participation of citizens and communities in digital innovation. Support is needed to enhance public understanding of data and digital technologies in the public realm.
Procurement of consultancy team to develop an Outline Business Case for the Innovation for Societal Impact Challenge Fund under the Belfast Region City Deal's Digital Pillar	Up to 6 months	£100,000	J Tully	An Innovation for Societal Impact fund is a key element of the overall suite of BRCD (City Deal) Innovation Challenge Funds as outlined in the digital pillar Programme Business Case.
Develop an Outline Business Case (OBC) for a £20m risk capital, Venture Fund, funded by the Belfast City Region Deal	3 months	£50,000	J Tully	An equity debt fund is a key element of the innovation Challenge Fund as outlined in the digital pillar Programme Business Case.
Further develop a suitable governance structure for the future management of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway Peace IV	Up to 9 months	£60,000	S Toland/ R Crozier	This will be a key step in the Greenway's development and the applicant will need to further engage with all the relevant community stakeholders and with the co-designed, together with those who will be involved and affected.

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Supply and installation of wet pour safety surfacing repairs	Up to 4 years	£400,000	S Toland/ R Crozier	Repairs to safety surfacing – Council playgrounds
Supply and delivery of cleaning materials for BCC stores	Up to 5 years	£360,000	S Grimes	BCC stores manage the purchasing and disbursal of these items to facilitate departmental requisitions

Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
To procure Scarab Truck Mounted Road Sweepers Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs ensuring they are safe and road worthy as part of Council fleet	Up to 3 years	£135,000	S Toland/ R Crozier	To ensure that the OEM approved engineering parts and components are replaced and fitted to Scarab Truck Mounted Road Sweepers in keeping with the manufacturer warranty, operational safety terms and conditions.	McCreath Taylor NI Ltd
Renewal of support and maintenance for MapInfo mapping software *Previously approved CMT Feb 2022 & SP&R Mar 2022 for £57,000	Up to 3 years	£75,000	R Cregan	MapInfo has 130+ users across the council and is used to provide council-wide mapping functionality. Significant investment has been made in user training and existing knowledge. The platform has been extensively used to provide developed functionality and projects.	CDR Group

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Temporary experienced accountant required in Finance to support the implementation of the new finance system	Up to 18 months	£100,000	R Cregan	The existing contracted provider for T1792 Provision of Temporary Agency Resources: Matrix SCM have confirmed they are unable to fulfil the required role of Temporary Accountant within the contractually agreed time period to find a suitable candidate.	VanRath
To procure Iveco Trucks Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) genuine approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs ensuring they are safe and road worthy as part of Council fleet	Up to 3 years	£135,000	C Matthews	To ensure that the OEM approved engineering parts and components are replaced and fitted to Iveco Vehicles in keeping with the manufacturer warranty, operational safety terms and conditions.	NI Trucks
To procure DAF Trucks Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) genuine approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs ensuring they are safe and road worthy as part of Council fleet	Up to 3 years	£120,000	C Matthews	To ensure that the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) genuine approved parts and components are fitted to DAF Trucks in keeping with the manufacturer warranty terms and conditions.	TBF Thompson Ltd
Development of PEACEPLUS	Up to 4 years	£48,500	R Crozier	There has been 2 failed procurement attempts through	Blu Zebra and Locus Management

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Local Community Action Plan				quotation and tender exercise. Blu Zebra and Locus Management (consortium bid) have been identified as the most appropriate contractor for this piece of work.	
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Table 3: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Requirement for Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and Technical Support Officers (TSOs) are required for 24hr shift rota cover for essential service delivery within the Port Health service Fully funded	Up to 6 months	£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 roles of Environmental Health Officer (Port Health) and Technical Support Officers within the contractually agreed time period.	MCS Group

Table 4: Contracts awarded by Arc 21 on behalf of the Council

Contract Title	Duration	SRO
Municipal Waste Disposal Contract – Lot 2	Extend for 3 months until 31st October 2022	Cathy Matthews

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**Audit Risk Panel Annual Report including
Annual Governance Statement**

The Committee:

- noted the summary of the work of the Audit and Risk Panel during 2021/22;
- approved the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 at appendix A to the report and, in particular, the disclosure of the significant governance issues contained in the statement; and
- approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel on 7th June 2022 at appendix B to the report.

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 6th June, including the recommendations set out below:

PEACE IV

Shared Spaces & Services

- To agree in principle the FMCG Governance Model Interim Report (April 2022);
- To agree the procurement of a suitable contractor to implement the Governance model; and
- To agree the Narratives for the Information Panels on Section 3 (Whiterock/Falls).

Building Positive Relations

BPR 3 Transform for Change

- Agree the allocation of the £1500 available per project to engage local communities on the project concept is realigned to enable post evaluation and showcase the project.

BPR 4 Centenaries

- Agree the request for a direct award payment to BATW providers, Corrymeela to take forward facilitation of the EU/NI study visits.

BPR6 St. Comgall's

- To note approval of the modification to amend a case study trip from NI to ROI (Monaghan) and an external best practice visit from Wolverhampton to Bellaghy.

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Good Relations

BCC7 Interfaces

- Belfast Interface Project to be awarded £3,407 towards the Shared Futures Project taking place between July 2022 and March 2023.
- TAMHI to be awarded £3,900 towards the Golf for Wellbeing project taking place between July and October 2022.
- Intercomm/ DCP to be awarded £15,000 towards Peace in the Park event, Alexandra Park on 10th September 2022.
- Westland Shared Space Project - £1,500 to be awarded towards good relations workshops and signage to promote and encourage shared use of space.
- Blackmountain Shared Space Project to be awarded funding of £2,000 towards a Youth Leadership Development Programme to take place later in the financial year
- Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum to be awarded £5,626 to work in partnership with Limestone United to deliver facilitated cross community training/educational sessions for young people in the Manor Street/Cliftonpark and the Oldpark areas.

Update on Action Plan Activities to support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inclusion

- To grant authority for the funding of £12,000, as identified in the action plan, to be used to support the Roma Community to provide outreach through the Roma Hub and engagement activities over the Summer and Autumn months
- To agree that, following the lack of submissions for the Leadership Development of Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Other Young people Programme, the funding assigned to this programme be reassigned to the Ukraine Advice Hub initiative.

Diversity Action Plans

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To agree the budget and appropriate resources for the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and LGBT+ Action Plan Year 2 activities.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- **Agree the proposed diversity action plans and associated year 2 costs.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Our Equality and Diversity Framework outlines how we will tackle inequalities and promote diversity in our city. It is built around four key priorities:

- A. Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment**
- B. Understanding our communities through data and consultation**
- C. Delivering services accessible to all**
- D. Developing a skilled and diverse workforce**

3.2 The Framework includes a series of actions to be delivered to help achieve these priorities and under Priority A, Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment, the Council has committed to developing and delivering a Gender Action Plan, LGBT+ Action Plan and a Race Action Plan.

3.3 At its meeting on 10 May 2021, Women's Steering Group agreed a three-year GAP for delivery between April 2021 to March 2024. Year 2 of the current GAP has been costed and is being presented to Committee for approval. In addition, HR has developed a three-year LGBT+ Action Plan for 2021-24, in collaboration with the LGBT+ staff network and this is also being presented, with costs for year 2, for approval.

Gender Action Plan (GAP)

3.4 Gender inequalities are deeply embedded in our social, economic and cultural systems. There is overwhelming evidence that women disproportionately experience disadvantage and discrimination, a reflection of historical unaddressed inequality, but also that inequalities have been exacerbated by austerity, welfare reform and by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistics affirm the persistence of gendered inequalities, which continue to inhibit women's life opportunities in Northern Ireland. Men will benefit from gender equality as they too face gender-specific issues such as lower life expectancy, bad health, lower education levels and are impacted negatively by rigid gender norms.

3.5 The GAP (21-24) was agreed by the Council in July 21 following consultation with Women's Steering Group (WSG) the Women's Network and the wider group of staff that attended a Gender Inequalities workshop in January 2021.

3.6 Year 1 achievements / projects delivered include:

- Delivering of various virtual development and awareness raising events and workshops to mark and celebrate International Women's Day
- Funding provided for external International Women's Day event in city centre
- Participation in the NI Gender Diversity Charter assessment- first public sector organisation in NI to achieve Silver level accreditation
- Gender Identity and Expression Guidance developed and implemented
- Developed a Menopause Policy and Guidance
- Onus Domestic Violence Charter (employer award) – retained Platinum level
- Onus Safe City Accreditation - retained
- Ongoing support for the Raise Your Voice Project to help address misogyny, sexual harassment and violence

3.7 Our joint elected member and senior officer Women Leaders' Programme is also due to commence in June, continuing to October 2022.

LGBT+ Action Plan

3.8 The LGBT+ Action Plan (21-24) was agreed by the Council in July 21 following consultation with the Proud Staff Network and senior LGBT+ champions. The plan for year 2 (attached at Appendix Two) sets out our proposed activity and costs. It has been developed to ensure that our organisational culture and working environment allows staff to feel comfortable to be their whole selves at work and that policies and practices empower talent development at all levels and the removal of any form of discrimination. It also aims to increase the understanding of the wider workforce of issues facing the LGBT+ communities.

3.9 Year 1 achievements / projects delivered include:

- LGBT+ inclusion and awareness training
- Specific LGBT+ awareness training for senior leaders
- Trans awareness training
- Bi identity awareness training
- Mental Health First Aid for Proud network members
- Development and implementation of Gender Identity and Expression Guidance

- Continued promotion, visibility and growth of staff network
- New senior champion identified– profiled on staff intranet
- Staff and family Pride Walk
- The display of Rainbow and Trans flags and lighting up of City Hall.
- Achieved Gold Award in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index

Disability Action Plan

- 3.10 CMT should also note that the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ('DDA') Section 49 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons, and to the need to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life. The Equality and Diversity Unit is in the process of reviewing and revising the Disability Action Plan.

Race Action Plan

- 3.11 It was recently agreed to appoint the Director of City & Organisational Strategy as a Race Champion to lead a Race Equality and Diversity Action Group and oversee the development of a Race Action Plan. This work will review how we deliver our services and actions that we can take as an employer to create a more diverse workforce, and as a city leader, to influence and bring about change.
- 3.12 It has also been agreed that the Council signs up to the Business in the Community initiative 'Race at Work Charter' to learn from best practice and gain support in developing our approach, agreeing actions and setting achievable goals and targets. The first meeting of the Race Equality and Diversity Action Group will take place in the coming weeks.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.13 The cost of delivery of the proposed Gender Action Plan year 2 activities is estimated at £48 000. Please note this includes previously approved activity carried over from 2021/22 which could not be progressed because of the pandemic. The cost of delivery of the LGBT+ Action Plan year 2 is estimated at £9700. Both plans will be met from the existing Organisational Development budget.

- 3.14 The plan also identifies the role that individual business units and departments have in delivery of the plan.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.15 The delivery of the Gender and the LGBT+ Action Plans will result in positive outcomes. The promotion of equality and diversity entails more than the elimination of discrimination, it requires proactive action. The actions contained within both plans will not only impact on internal operations but also have a positive impact externally on women and men and the LGBT+ community in our city.”**

The Committee approved the diversity action plans and associated year 2 costs.

**Request made by Councillor McMullan at
Council Meeting on 1st June 2021 – Sign Language**

The Committee was reminded that, at the request of Councillor McMullan, the Council on 1st June 2020 had agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the potential to work with deaf people and the Department for Communities to promote and roll out classes or training to local community and voluntary groups. However, due to an administrative error, this was only passed to the Equality and Diversity Unit in December.

The Chief Executive reported that the Council had launched its Language Strategy in April 2018. The Strategy committed to establishing a transparent set of principles for promoting, protecting and enhancing the linguistic diversity of the city. There were five language strands within the Strategy, including Sign Languages. The Council also had a Disability Action Plan (2019-2022) which consisted of action measures related to Sign Languages.

Work to date in relation to Sign Languages

British Sign Language and Irish Sign Language Charter

In March 2019, the Council signed up to the British Deaf Association’s British Sign Language and Irish Sign Language Charter and one of the pledges which was made was to ensure Council staff working with Deaf people could communicate effectively using British Sign Language and/or Irish Sign Language.

Sign Language Users’ Forum

A Sign Language Users’ Forum consisting of local Sign Language users was established in June 2019 and meets twice a year to advise, guide and support the Council to respond better to the needs of Sign Language Users in Belfast.

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Staff training

In the current Language Strategy Action Plan and the Disability Action Plan, a number of action measures were listed to support Sign Language users, including the delivery of Sign Language courses for Council staff and providing guidance on how to communicate with a Sign Language user.

A pilot Sign Language course for a pool of front-line Council staff was completed in October 2019. Additional courses were put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic and feedback indicated that the course was best delivered in a face-to-face setting.

Department for Communities

The Department for Communities (DfC) provides funding to a number of Deaf organisations who are members of their Sign Language Partnership Group to deliver Sign Language projects, including classes and courses for local communities. Further information on this can be found at [Sign language | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk).

Council officers had recently met with the Head of Sign Language Policy at the DfC Language Branch. The Language Branch was currently reviewing membership of its Sign Language Partnership Group and a new sub-group consisting of public authorities, including local Councils was being considered. This would enable Belfast City Council and the Department for Communities to potentially work together to identify initiatives, including funding to support voluntary groups and businesses to provide Sign Language courses. Any related actions would be considered by the Language Strategy Working Group and members would be kept updated.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Operational Issues

**Minutes of Party Group Leaders’
Consultative Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders’ Consultative Forum of 9th June.

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

The Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 3rd June, as set out below:

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2022 EVENTS						
British Council	16 Nov 2022	Mock COP27 – The debate engages students (aged 16-18) from approx. 30 schools in Northern Ireland to debate live and topical COP27 issues through a climate negotiation simulation. Numbers attending; 130	D	No (Reg. Charity)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
2023 EVENTS						
JoinHer Network CIC	3 March 2023	International Women's Day 2023 Dinner Event – A event to encourage women to celebrate diversity, inclusion, equity and equality in a safe environment to share and support, network and raise awareness of topical issues.	D	No (Not For Profit)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

B4149

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		Numbers attending; 80				
British Dental Association NI Branch	7 October 2023	British Dental Association NI Branch Centenary Dinner – Gala Dinner with speeches and after dinner entertainment. Numbers attending; 300	C	No (Not For Profit)	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No charge Wine Reception <i>or</i> £500 given <i>to their chosen caterer for wine on tables</i>

Minutes of the Meeting of the Active Belfast Board Limited

The Committee noted the minutes of the Active Belfast Board Limited of 6th June.

Minutes of 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 31st May.

Minutes of the Language Strategy Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Language Strategy Working Group of 10th June, subject to the amendment of the minute in relation to the 'Proposals in the draft action plan, to provide that, rather than a report on the potential to create a sign language forum, the Committee agrees to establish a Sign Language Forum.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

City Cemetery - Bi-lingual Signage – Councillor Beattie to raise

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Beattie raised the issue of the lack of bi-lingual signage at the new visitor centre at and throughout the City Cemetery, with English only and no Irish having been used at a site located within the Gaeltacht Quarter. Accordingly, he requested that this be rectified, with interim measures being put in place prior to something more permanent.

B4150

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The Committee agreed that, in the interim, the use of bi-lingual signage at new developments be brought to the Committee for consideration until a policy had been established and, in addition, agreed that dual language signage be installed at the City Cemetery and interim measures be adopted to facilitate this for the opening.

Chairperson

B4151

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 7th June, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

Also attended: Councillors Beattie and Smyth.

In attendance: Mr. R. Crozier, Interim Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer;
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were recorded on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey and Councillor Cobain.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th May 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 June.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Newton declared an interest in agenda item 5 (b) Food Service Delivery Plan 2022-2023, he advised that a Company by which he was employed did work with the Food Standards Agency, as there was no discussion on the item he did not leave the meeting.

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in agenda item 5 (i) Commonwealth Games Support, she advised that she had a relative who had been selected to compete in the Northern Ireland Team and she left the meeting whilst the matter was under consideration.

Condolences

The Chairman extended condolences to former Councillor Stephen Magennis and his family on the recent passing of his wife Tricia and advised that he would forward a letter of sympathy on behalf of the Committee.

Retirement - Mrs. R. Crozier

The Members were informed that this would be the last meeting of the People and Communities Committee which would be attended by Mrs. Rose Crozier, who had held the position of Interim Director of Neighbourhood Services since April. The Members noted that she would be retiring from the Council after almost 42 years' service.

The Chairperson and several other Members thanked the Director for her valuable contribution during her time with the Council and wished her a long and happy retirement.

The Director thanked the Members for their kind remarks.

Presentations

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting, Ms. C. Higgs, representing Rainbow Alley in East Belfast, and Ms. P. Mkomera, representing North Belfast Woman's Initiative Support Programme (NBWISP).

The representatives commenced by providing an overview of the work undertaken by each organisation within their respective communities, detailing the importance of this work particularly during the recent lockdowns.

Ms. Mkomera advised that there was an interest and need within the wider community for safe places to connect and for people to share a common interest. With this in mind, since September/October 2021, approximately 32 different community groups had come together to create a community network, known as the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, with its creation having helped to form a space for people to connect through growing. She explained that the network had enabled visits to other community gardens for participants to share knowledge and resources, for example, plants, tools, and paving. The representative highlighted the inclusivity of the participating groups and their desire to promote the diversity of their respective communities, not just in terms of mental health but also class, religion, gender, sexual identity, race and age.

The representatives concluded by reemphasising the benefits of both alleyways and community gardens within their respective communities, highlighting their desire to work with the Council to explore options as to how this initiative could be further enhanced and promoted to help meet the objectives of the Belfast Agenda, in terms of making Belfast a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable City.

Several of the Members welcomed the work being undertaken by this network and indeed all those involved in similar programmes throughout the City. The Members noted that

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they would be keen to see a scoping exercise undertaken to identify all similar projects throughout the City, with a view to establishing how the Council could best support the networks to flourish.

Following discussion, it was agreed that officers would undertake a scoping exercise to identify community garden and alleyway initiatives throughout the City with a report to be submitted to a future meeting. It was further agreed that a site visit would be arranged to enable the Members to view some of the schemes.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their informative presentation and they left the meeting.

Representatives from PlayBoard NI and Mae Murray Foundation
RE: Inclusive Parks Notice of Motion referred from Standards
and Business Committee

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Ms. A. Stallard, representing Playboard NI, and Ms. A. Crawford, representing the Mae Murray Foundation.

The representatives thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present and commenced by providing the Members with an overview of the role of their respective organisations.

Ms. Stallard advised that Playboard NI and the Mae Murray Foundation had been working collaboratively on several pieces of work over the past number of years to find solutions and develop partnerships to promote inclusivity. She advised that this work was underpinned by the work of the UNCRC, in particular, Article 31.

The representative advised that over the last year-and-a-half both organisations had undertaken an extensive piece of work entitled, 'Let Me Play' Inclusive Play Park Study, this had looked at the provision of playparks for children with physical, learning, sensory or complex needs who faced exclusion from play parks in Northern Ireland. The results had been launched in March 2022, reporting on the outcomes of the regional online survey, focus groups and play participation sessions that had been undertaken as part of the study.

The Members were advised that from 500 respondents:

- 57% of families had reported that they were unable to use a play park as often as they would like;
- 56% had to travel long distances to access a play park that would meet their play needs; and
- 40% had rated their play park experience as poor or very poor.

Ms. Crawford stated that unfortunately these figures highlighted that many children continued to be excluded from play parks and were not having their play needs met and she then drew the Members' attention to the six common barriers faced by families:

- Getting to the Play Park;
- Play Park Site Facilities;

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- Access to Play;
- Participation in Play;
- Communication; and
- Attitudes.

The representative advised that the need for the provision of changing places facilities was one repetitive barrier, amongst others, that had been highlighted as an ongoing concern.

The representatives referred the Members to the 4 Nations and Play Industry Statement. They detailed that the proposed next steps, over the next twelve months, was to build on the 'Let Me Play' and PSF Statement. This would involve both organisations working to develop guidance for play providers, aiming to provide the information and guidance needed to enhance both accessible and inclusive play provision, building an Inclusive Play Park model of best practice and working with families, young people, landscape designers and Councils to ensure the co-design of any future schemes.

In terms of the 'ask' from the Council, the Members were asked to:

- adopt the 'Let Me Play' findings and to apply the recommendations into the park and play park planning processes;
- adopt the terminology, definitions and recommendations from the UK statement – 'Including Disabled Children in Play Provision';
- embed participative processes in play park design – involving families and communities throughout the design process;
- undertake a review of the current play park portfolio to ensure all were accessible; and
- build on the above, to initiate a plan to deliver inclusive play parks at strategically placed sites to ensure that children could access inclusive play within a reasonable distance from their home.

Several of the Members commended the valuable work of both organisations undertaken through the 'Let Me Play' Inclusive Play Park Study.

During discussion, there was a consensus from the Members that they would be keen to ensure that all children would have access to inclusive and accessible play facilities within a reasonable distance from their home, along with a desire to ensure that the necessary infrastructure was incorporated into any new Council schemes.

Following a suggestion from a Member that the City Centre would make an excellent location for such a play facility. Ms. Crawford advised that the Mae Murray Foundation and Play Board NI intended, in the future, to build a playpark that would be their 'model of excellence', she stated that they would be looking at suitable locations throughout Northern Ireland for it to be sited and would be keen to liaise with the Council in this regard.

The Members noted that, as item 4 (b) was a Notice of Motion in relation to Inclusive Play Parks, further discussion would take place regarding the suggestions at this stage in proceedings.

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

Noted.

Deputation in Relation to Bright Lights

The Chairperson welcome Ms. L. Thompson to the meeting.

Ms. Thompson commenced by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to address the Members to detail her concerns in relation to the Bright Lights event.

Ms. Thompson advised that within the area there was much opposition to the event. She explained that, following last year's event, residents had been left disappointment and bewildered by numerous factors, including lack of consultation, the length of time the park had been disrupted, vehicles having been permitted to access the park which had made it unsafe, the noise from generators and glare of lights late at night whilst people were trying to sleep. She also highlighted that, unlike with other events, various parts of the park had been inaccessible to the public for a prolonged period of time and also expressed dismay at the cost of the tickets.

She concluded by stating that residents were not opposed to the gardens being used for events but stressed the need for consultation and for the Council to retain control over its parks.

Following a number of questions and brief discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representative for her input, and she left the meeting.

Noted.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 4 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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

Bright Lights Event at Botanic Gardens

The Members considered a report which detailed the additional information in respect of the Bright Lights event.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Corr, seconded by Councillor Donnelly and agreed that discussion be deferred for a report to be submitted to the special

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People and Communities Committee on 21st June, to enable further advice and information to be sought in relation to declarations of interest.

Events in Parks and Open Spaces

The Members considered a report which provided an update to the Committee on the mitigation arrangements in place to permit Aiken Promotions Limited to conduct 'load out' up until 3.00 a.m. after each of their concerts in Botanic Park in June 2022.

The report also provided detail in regard to the current assessment arrangements for applications from third party promoters to use council parks and open space for large scale events.

It was noted that, as previously agreed, authority had been granted based on a number of mitigations having been put in place in order to limit the disruption to local residents. As part of these mitigations, the promotor would be required to liaise and seek advice from the Council's environmental noise team. The Committee further noted that satisfactory terms and conditions would be agreed and included as clauses within the overall licence agreement for use of the site, which would include communication and engagement with local residents. Council officers with Regulatory Services had also agreed a number of recommendations that should limit the disruption to residents, as detailed:

- use of silent generators;
- use of a particular entrance to the park furthest from the residential areas;
and
- soundproof screening to be erected around the concert area fencing which would also limit the light pollution shining at residential areas.

The Committee noted the update report.

**Request for the use of Parks including those
supported by the Summer Community Diversionary
Festivals Programme 2022**

The Committee were advised of the details of a number of requests that had been received from organisers seeking to host events in various Belfast park locations during the coming months, including those that had received funding via the Summer Community Diversionary festival fund, as agreed at the May 2022 meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Members of the Committee agreed to grant authority to each of the applicants for the following proposed events:

July Programme

- **Twaddell and Woodvale Residents Association - Events in Woodvale Park and other local venues from 27th June – 11th July.** To include a community cultural activity programme, diversionary youth work and two large scale musical events on 8th and 9th July;

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- **EastSide Partnership (Eastival) - Programme of music and community events 7th – 9th July.** To include a 'Fifes and Fusion' event, large-scale community event at the CS Lewis and Ballymacarrett walkway;
- **Ballymac Friendship Trust - Urban/ Street Festival 7th – 11th July.** To include outreach work, community events live music performances and animation between CS Lewis Square and Pitt Park;
- **Charter NI - Youth work, community, cultural, creative art and sporting events 4th – 12th July.** To promote heritage, educate on a broader cultural context, and showcase local artists.
- **The Hubb Community Resource Centre - Diversionary and Cultural workshops from 27th June – 12th July.** To include music and community festival events in Grove Park;
- **Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT) over July and August to coordinate a programme of cultural, community and diversionary events.** To work with community partners and include trips across South Belfast.

August Programme

- **Feile (Feile August Diversionary Dance Night) in Falls Park on the 8th August.** To enable the delivery of a free dance music event as part of Feile and ongoing targeted outreach work in partnership with local community groups across Belfast. A community event to also take place in Distillery Street;
- **Feile (South and East Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme) community festival along the Lagan Walkway on 6th and 7th August and a music event in St Georges Market.** To enable to delivery of outreach and diversionary work during the summer, in the lead up to the 8th August;
- **Feile (North Belfast Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme) –** To enable to delivery of a number of diversionary outreach activities and community and sporting events (including a boxing event) in the lead up to the 8th August;
- **Combat Laser – Cave Hill Country Park – July and August -** The organiser to pay the Council an appropriate fee for use of the park. Forest Fitness NI to use a secluded forest area within Cave Hill Country Park with little disruption to other park users.

It was further agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to ensure the following:

- 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
- to 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;

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

Feasibility Report on Kerbside Glass Expansion

(Mr. B. Murray, Waste Manager, attended in connection with this item).

The Committee considered a report which provided a summary of the findings of the feasibility report into the expansion of the kerbside collection scheme, along with detail regarding the capital costs that would be associated with any potential expansion to the scheme.

Several Members welcomed and commended the report.

The Committee noted the feasibility report on Kerbside Glass Expansion and that it would be submitted to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for its consideration regarding the potential impact on the capital programme, revenue estimates and the rates setting process.

**Update on Strategic Cemeteries and
Crematorium Development Working Group**

The Director of City Services drew the Members' attention to the minutes of the Strategic Cemeteries and Development Working Group and provided a brief update in regard to the matters that had been considered, as follows:

- Update on City Cemetery Project;
- Update on Bereavement Services – Operational;
- Update on the Crematorium Development; and
- Update on new Cemetery Provision

The Committee was advised that the Planning Application in respect of the proposed new Crematorium Development was scheduled to be submitted by 17th June.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, asked that the Committee's thanked be extended to Mr Jim Parker, Crematorium Officer, who was leaving the Council after almost 29 years of service and wished him well in his new role with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

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The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group meeting held on 26th May, 2022.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

**Notice of Motion - Cleansing Task Force Motion
referred from Standards and Business Committee**

The Committee was advised that the following Motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor McLaughlin, had been referred to the Committee for consideration by the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 24th May.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor Beattie, proposer of the Motion, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the motion.

“This Council will establish a Cleansing Task Force, to address the escalating problem of street cleanliness in both neighbourhoods and the City Centre, and the service delivery of bin collection.

Having clean neighbourhoods is a necessity for our ratepayers and this council must do everything in our power to address this issue.

Regular bin collections are vitally important to the health and wellbeing of our citizens, however, large numbers of streets are being missed on a weekly basis.

The Cleansing Task Force will consist of elected members from each party, senior management, cleansing management and convened by the Lord Mayor (Ard-Mhéara).

We must use everything at our disposal to resolve this problem, such as and not exclusively, improved service delivery structures, street inspectors, increased staffing and better communication with citizens.”

Several Members addressed the Committee and outlined their concerns regarding the cleanliness of the City.

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed to establish a Cleansing Task Force made up of Elected Members from each Political Party and Council officers. It was agreed that officers would ascertain the party nominees and liaise with the Lord Mayor’s office to set up the first meeting of the Task Force, in the coming weeks, with an update report to be submitted to the August meeting of the People and Communities Committee detailing recommendations as to how the proposed works would be facilitated, resourced and managed.

**Notice of Motion – Belfast City Council –
Inclusive Playparks referred from
Standards and Business Committee**

Following on from the presentation earlier in the meeting, the Chairperson drew the Members' attention to the following motion which he had proposed and had been seconded by Councillor McKeown. He informed the Members that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 24th May, had referred the motion to the People and Communities Committee for its consideration:

“This council believes every child has the right to play but recognises not every child in Belfast has realised this right.

It notes the findings and recommendations of the [‘Let Me Play: Inclusive play park study 2022’](#) report undertaken by Play Board NI and the Mae Murray Foundation and the [recent statement](#) (and [Appendix](#)) from UK Play Safety Forum and Children’s Play Policy Forum – which has endorsed the ‘Let Me Play’ report and published definitions for ‘accessible’ and ‘inclusive’.

The report found compelling evidence that children and families are facing exclusion from play park environments in Northern Ireland from experience across the following areas: Wider infrastructure surrounding play parks; Play Park site facilities; Access; Participation; Communication; and Attitudes.

The UK Play Safety Forum and Children’s Play Policy Forum statement defines accessible and inclusive play spaces as follows:

An Accessible Play Space is a space which is barrier-free, allows users access to move around the space and offers participation opportunities for a range of differing abilities. Not every child of every ability will be able to actively use everything within an accessible play space.

An Inclusive Play Space provides a barrier-free environment, with supporting infrastructure, which meets the wide and varying play needs of every child. Disabled children and non-disabled children will enjoy high levels of participation opportunities, equally rich in play value.

This council will adopt the full findings from both the ‘Let Me Play’ report and the UK Play Safety Forum and Children’s Play Policy Forum statement into its park and play park planning processes.

In doing so it will also conduct a review of our full estate and make strategic decisions on where to plan to specifically build or upgrade to ‘inclusive’ status to deliver accessible and inclusive play parks within reasonable distances in each quarter (North/South/East/West) for all children to play together.

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As the delivery of 'accessible and inclusive' play parks will also require linkage with surrounding infrastructure and public transport services, we will also work with the Department for Infrastructure, Translink and other stakeholders."

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

Notices of Motion – Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To provide an update to People and Communities Committee on Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance by Members.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that People and Communities Committee:

- Notes the updates to all Notices of Motion / Issues Raised in Advance that the Committee is responsible for as referenced in Appendix 1; and
- Agree to the closure of Issue Raised in Advance, as referenced in Appendix 1 and noted in paragraph 3.5 below.

3.0 Main report

Background

3.1 Members will recall that the previous Notices of Motion update was presented to People and Communities Committee in December 2021. At this meeting, Committee agreed that the Notices of Motion update could move from a quarterly to a six-monthly update due to workload pressures on Council staff.

3.2 This report provides an overview of the progress on those Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance which remained open following the December 2021 update.

Notice of Motion Updates

3.3 There are currently 26 active Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance which the People and Communities Committee is responsible for. An update on those Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance which remain active on the live database is attached at Appendix 1.

Closure of Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance

3.4 At SP&R Committee on 20th November 2020, it was agreed that Notices of Motion could be closed for one of two reasons:

- **Category 1 - Notices of Motion which contained an action that has been completed. All Notices of Motion within this category contained a specific task that has since been complete. It is worth noting that, when Committee agree to action a Notice of Motion, there are sometimes additional actions agreed alongside the Notice of Motion. As these are not technically part of the Notice of Motion, they are taken forward through normal committee decision making processes. The Notice of Motion can therefore be closed, but additional actions related to it will continue to be progressed and reported to the committee. These additional actions are not contained in this report, but will be noted in the live database moving forward.**
- **Category 2 - Notices of Motion have become Council policy or absorbed in to a strategic programme of work. These Notices of Motion did not contain a specific task that could be complete. Instead, they were more strategic in nature and required changes in Council policy and/ or strategy for long term outcomes. Those listed within this category have all been agreed by Committee and are now either Council policy or are currently being implemented through a Council strategy that is managed by a Standing Committee through the corporate planning process.**

3.5 Following an update of those Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance on the live database, it is recommended that Members approve the following Motions/Issues for closure.

Category 1 Recommended Closures:

3.6 Nutrition Support for Children in Out of Hours School Clubs (Ref no 33) – as noted in Appendix 1, an update report on this Motion was presented to People and Communities Committee in May 2022 which noted that promotion of physical activity and nutrition is an ongoing priority work area within the Belfast Agenda, and staff within BHDU will be able to continue to provide support and advice in relation to taking agreed work forward in partnership with Council community services staff. It is therefore recommended that this Motion is closed as the request specified within has now been addressed.

- 3.7 Request to present - Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (Ref no 241) - Members are due to receive a presentation from this group at the June meeting of People and Communities Committee, therefore this Issue can be closed.**

Category 2 Recommended Closures:

- 3.8 Irish Language Street Signage Policy (Ref no 47) – as noted in Appendix 1, the public consultation on the dual language section of the Street Naming Policy, and the subsequent Equality Impact Assessment have now been completed. Officers are now preparing a report for SP&R Committee with findings from both and to outline the proposed next steps towards implementation of this policy therefore it is recommended that this Motion is now closed.**
- 3.9 Tsar for the Holylands area (Ref no 205) – as detailed in Appendix 1, an Intervention Manager has been appointed, funded by BCC, DfC, PHA and DoJ (PCSP). This post will carry out the function of the Tsar as intended by the Motion, therefore it is recommended that this Motion is now closed.**

Financial & Resource Implications

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

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

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

A Member sought an update in relation to the following two matters, Lighting of City Parks (Ref no 12) and Future Use of former Horticultural Training Site (Ref no 89). The Director undertook investigate the status of both and to update the Member directly. The City Services Director also advised that, whilst many of the motions had not progressed given resource pressure and covid recovery, there has been work carried out internally with the Core Improvement Team and discussed with the Chief Executive for the opportunity to create a performance and improvement unit within existing resources which, as part of their work, would help to progress some of the matters. It was noted this will take some time to establish.

The Committee noted the update report and agreed to the closure of the following 4 Notices of Motion / Issues Raised in Advance:

- Nutrition Support for Children in Out of Hours School Clubs (Ref no 33);
- Request to present - Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (Ref no 241);

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- Irish Language Street Signage Policy (Ref no 47); and
- Tsar for the Holylands area (Ref no 205).

Committee/Strategic Issues

People and Communities Committee Plan 2022/23

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 This report provides a draft People & Communities Committee Plan summarising the committee’s key priorities for 2022-23 developed from the refreshed Corporate Plan. This has been informed by the commitments that are in place and the ongoing work that the committee has oversight for in the delivery of the Belfast Agenda.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to**

- Agree the draft Committee Plan priorities for 2022-23.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 At the SP&R Committee on 25th March 2022 the Corporate Annual Delivery Plan 2022-23 setting out the in-year deliverables against the priorities were agreed as part of the four-year corporate plan, plus some additional priorities that have arisen in response to the pandemic.**
- 3.2 These priorities were discussed with Party Group Leaders at a joint PGL / CMT workshop on 12th January and updated to reflect the comments received.**
- 3.3 The structure of the delivery plan is themed under the following groupings:**
- Our Services;
 - Economic Recovery;
 - Community Recovery;
 - Environmental Recovery;
 - Strategic Planning Frameworks; and
 - Organisational Foundations.

- 3.4 A series of priorities fall under each theme, each with a number of committed deliverables for 2022-23**
- 3.5 Due to the operational pressures from the pandemic a councillor workshop has not been planned. However, it is proposed that taking into account the feedback from the Belfast Agenda update workshop and the relevant priorities from within the draft Corporate Plan the committee plan is presented for consideration.**
- 3.6 Members will recall that the People and Communities Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects aimed at improving life at a local level in the context of the outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy. This includes:**
- Developing and delivering programmes, events and activities to promote health, safety and well-being at a local level**
 - Administering and enforcing the Council's powers and duties under the Public Health Acts and all environmental health and building related legislation and regulations**
 - Securing and providing adequate provision for the recycling, treatment and disposal of commercial and domestic waste including bulky waste and the collection and disposal of abandoned motor vehicles.**
 - Exercising the Council's powers for improving local environmental quality in relation to housing legislation, managing controlled waste, emergency planning and community safety and anti-social behaviour, clean neighbourhoods and other environmental or regulatory issues not falling within the remit of any other Committee.**
 - Managing, maintaining and maximising the benefit of the Council's parks, pitches, playgrounds and other public spaces as well as community centres and other indoor facilities**
 - Developing and implementing activities to ensure the delivery of corporate strategies and initiatives in respect of the promotion of health and physical activity, environmental protection, community safety and other such areas under the domain of this Committee**
 - Overseeing the delivery of the Council's frontline services and associated community assets including: Environmental Services; Cleansing; Waste Management; Parks and Cemeteries service, Neighbourhood and Development Services; Community Services, Community Safety and Emergency Planning.**

3.7 Summary of Committee Plan Priorities

- The draft Committee Plan priorities have been summarised into a 'plan on page' (see Appendix 1) to identify key areas of focus for Committee in 2022-23. The plan locates priorities within the framework of the relevant Belfast Agenda themes (Our Services; Economic Recovery; Community Recovery; Environmental Recovery; Strategic Planning Frameworks; and Organisational Foundations) and the CNS Departmental key priority areas (Open Spaces & Streetscene; Community Provision; City Protection and Bereavement; and Resources & Fleet). The plan identifies the following key areas of focus:
 - Neighbourhood working & regeneration
 - Improve our open spaces
 - Implementation of Biodiversity duty
 - Improve our community provision
 - Work in partnership to address health priorities
 - Enhance the delivery of council's sport & leisure provision
 - Supporting Children & Young People
 - Good relations & Community Safety
 - Enhance the management & utilisation of CNS assets
 - Improve our City Protection services
 - Improve urban air quality
 - Port Health improvements
 - Improve and extend recycling opportunities
 - Improve our Resources & Fleet service

3.8 It is likely many of these areas of focus will take several years to deliver. The draft plan includes and outlines the key deliverables for 2022-23. Appendix 2 sets out the key deliverables against the 2021/22 period.

3.9 It is proposed that Committee receive a 6 monthly progress update regarding the priorities. This will be in addition to usual reports that will be brought to Committee regarding individual priorities & deliverables.

3.10 Committee will be aware of the current resource and capacity and resilience pressures previously discussed since summer 2020 on the City and Neighbourhood Services department with continued recovery impacts falling short of service delivery expectations. This is compounded by some hotspot areas of high vacancy levels due to a variety of recruitment, retention and supply issues and ongoing sickness absence affecting some of these areas. The department is currently working on a transformation and

improvement programme which began several years ago with different services being at different stages in the process.

- 3.11 The departmental Business Plan on which the committee plan is based reflects that the department is continuing to focus on the delivery of business-as-usual services while progressing the transformation and improvement agenda while recovery from the pandemic.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.12 The Committee Plan and annual programme of work will align with the budget agreed by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee through the rate setting process in January for 2022-23 for the People and Communities Committee of £87.418m.

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

- 3.13 There are no implications directly relating to this report however individual strategies and plans will be subject to the council's equality, good relations and rural needs requirements."

The Committee agreed the draft Committee Plan 2022-23.

Food Service Delivery Plan 2022-2023

The Committee considered the following report.

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The Food Standards Agency, in their monitoring and oversight role, require all NI District Councils to prepare an annual Food Service Delivery Plan which sets out the Council's key functions and planned activities for delivery of food hygiene, food standards and other food safety related responsibilities.
- 1.2 This report presents Belfast City Council's draft Food Service Delivery Plan for the 2022/23 year and seeks Committee approval of the draft plan so that it can be submitted to the Food Standards Agency for review.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to:
- Approve The draft Belfast City Council Food Service Delivery Plan 2022-2023

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1** The Council's Food Safety Unit works with local businesses to build compliance with Food Law and to ensure that food produced and sold in Belfast is safe and can be trusted. This not only protects the consumer it also protects and enhances the reputation of the City, our local businesses and their competitiveness.
- 3.2** Food related illness costs the local economy, individual businesses and the consumer. It is estimated (based on N.I. Department of Health statistics) that in Belfast around 11,200 people may suffer from food poisoning and food related illness annually, potentially resulting in 104 hospital admissions, 5 deaths and costing the Belfast economy in the region of £19 million.
- 3.3** A reputation for good food hygiene standards can support economic growth. The Food Hygiene Rating Act (NI) 2016 requires businesses to display their food hygiene rating, improving the opportunities for consumers to make informed choices and encouraging improved compliance. It is expected that this enhances the reputation of Belfast as a safe place to visit with at least 95% of food businesses rated as 3, 4 or 5 (broadly compliant or better). (See Appendix 2 for ratings breakdown).
- 3.4** It is estimated that around 2 million people living in the UK have a food allergy and officers work to ensure food businesses provide the required (allergen) information to enable consumers to make informed choices. However recent cases of severe allergic reactions, including the tragic death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse after eating a Pret a Manger sandwich, have highlighted concerns regarding the adequacy of labelling requirements for food that is prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) i.e. food that has been packed on the same premises from which it is being sold. New labelling legislation that came into force on 1st October 2021 requires any business that produces PPDS food to label it with the name of the food and a full ingredients list with allergenic ingredients emphasised within the list. These additional legal requirements will require officer time to support, monitor and ensure compliance. It is likely this work will impact significantly on the unit.
- 3.5** The UK's exit from the European Union continues to pose challenges for the Council's imported food control function this year. Ongoing uncertainty arising from extended UK/EU discussions on the NI Protocol, and extension of grace periods, means that final arrangements are yet to be identified. Work to finalise processes, infrastructure and a longer term sustainable

resourcing model for these services will continue to require input from the Port Health service in the 2022/23 year. We are working closely with the Food Standards Agency, DAERA, government departments, local businesses and other stakeholders to ensure adequate arrangements are in place to facilitate trade and protect consumers.

- 3.6 Each year, the Council produces a Food Service Delivery Plan which sets out the activities, techniques and approaches to be taken during the year to support businesses in ensuring food safety, food standards and to promote informed healthy choices. The Plan provides the basis on which the Council's regulatory activities are monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency and it is a requirement that it is presented to the Council for approval.
- 3.7 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has a key role in overseeing local authority regulatory activities to ensure that official controls are delivered. Powers to enable the FSA to monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999. A detailed Framework Agreement on local food law enforcement has been produced by the Agency, in conjunction with local authority representative bodies, to provide guidance on how regulatory service plans should be structured and what they should contain. Service plans developed under these arrangements provide the basis on which local authorities are monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency.

Key Issues

- 3.8 The Framework Agreement as described above requires that Food Service Delivery Plans should be submitted to the relevant Member forum, in this case the People and Communities Committee, for approval. This is to ensure local transparency and accountability.
- 3.9 A summary of the key work activities completed in the last year and profiling the work of the unit is included for information in Appendix 1. A summary of current food hygiene ratings is included in Appendix 2. The Food Service Delivery Plan for 2022-2023 is included in Appendix 3.
- 3.10 Members should note that during the Covid pandemic, food hygiene and food standards inspection programmes were significantly impacted, as visits were paused due to business closures during periods of lock down, and subsequent restrictions on social distancing etc. The FSA has been working with Local Authorities across England, Wales and Northern Ireland during 2021/22 to develop recovery plans for food safety services – the

FSA have identified priorities for service recovery during 2022/23 as part of its recovery roadmap.

- 3.11 Belfast City Council's Food Service Delivery Plan for 2022/23 reflects these priorities identified by FSA for service recovery and our Plan sets out the Councils delivery arrangements to meet the appropriate targets.**

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.12 The resources required for this core service have been included in the City and Neighbourhood Services Revenue Estimates for the year and no additional resources are anticipated.**

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

- 3.13 None"**

The Committee adopted the Food Services Delivery Plan 2022-2023.

Boxing Strategy Quarterly Update

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to provide £200,000 in funding to the Irish Athletic Boxing Association Ulster Branch (IABA) in the current financial year for delivery of an agreed action plan which supported the Belfast Boxing Strategy and she then provided an update on progress on implementation for January to March 2022 (Quarter 4).

She explained that, in line with the Council's objectives, the Belfast Boxing Strategy Steering Group had met quarterly with the most recent meetings having been held online due to Covid-19 and the associated regulations. The Steering Group had been chaired by the Director of Neighbourhood Services, with Council Officers, IABA Officers and Officials and County Antrim Board Officials attending. It was noted that small variations had been agreed to the budget spend across the six areas to assist prioritization, in line with the agreed annual action plan.

The Committee was reminded that the Council had previously agreed a total of 37 Indicators with the IABA to monitor delivery of the programmes. The Director reported that the IABA had been compliant with all the reporting matters. She highlighted that achievement of targets had continued to be significantly impacted by Covid-19 regulations and restrictions as imposed by NI Executive, however, as Covid Restrictions had eased many previously deferred programmes had been able to be held within Quarter 4. IABA had provided narrative against each of the KPIs to describe progress against each indicator and had noted that Covid restrictions had impacted on the realising of some of the targets at year end. It was also highlighted that, since the pandemic, the focus in terms of method of delivery had changed to online delivery.

The Committee noted the Quarter 4 progress update report and the impacts of Covid-19 restrictions on the agreed KPIs.

Stadia Community Benefits Initiative Update

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To advise Committee of progress with the Stadia Community Benefits Initiative (SCBI) for year 2021/22 and update on the action plan for year 2022/23.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Note progress to date and content of programme for 2022/2023**

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 The Council has been undertaking the Leisure Transformation Programme to renew its Leisure facilities across the City. This Programme has been influenced by the Partnership opportunities presented by the NI Executive Stadia Programme.**

- 3.2 The Council, Department for Communities (DfC) and the Irish Football Association (IFA) have recognised the opportunities presented by the Stadia Programme, have committed to work together to maximise these benefits, and have agreed to establish a Stadium Community Benefits Initiative as part of the Belfast Community Benefits Initiative (‘the Project’) to implement and deliver agreed objectives including promoting equality, tackling poverty, and tackling social exclusion within the Belfast area.**

- 3.3 In March 2016 the Council, DfC and IFA signed an agreement which sets out their respective commitments to the project. As other major stadia are developed in Belfast it is anticipated that other sports governing bodies shall become parties to the agreement. At its April 2018 meeting, People and Communities committee agreed that Council would work with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) within the Stadia Community Benefits Initiative and recognised their significant planned investment in Gaelic Games in the city to support their Gaelfast strategy. GAA activities became fully incorporated into the action plan at the start of financial year 2019-2020, with Gaelfast staff imbedded into the governance structure at Communications Board, Delivery Board, Policy and Performance Board.**

- 3.4 The agreement is for a period of ten years with financial commitment from Council and IFA in place to the end of March 2026. Delivery is managed through monthly meetings of the Delivery Board, which reports quarterly to the Policy and Performance Board. Financial and performance reports will be presented to Council and other partners' Boards as necessary. Formal review of the agreement will be carried out in this financial year in accordance with the requirements to review at years 5 and 10. The interim review which has recently been completed has been attached (Appendix 1). The report highlights the intermediate benefits and gives a full assessment of the outcomes delivered by the programme over the first 5 years of delivery. The report summarises in detail delivery year by year as well as examining governance practice, key conclusions to date and highlighting issues for consideration regarding the next stage of the SCBI programme.**

The report highlights that many of the projects delivered to date have further potential and could provide even further benefits in phase 2, these include:

- 1) Provision of high quality coaching;**
- 2) Safeguarding training;**
- 3) Further development of volunteer skills;**
- 4) Further increase in female participation and development of female clubs;**
- 5) Shared Education;**
- 6) Mental Health First Aid;**
- 7) Promotion of the SCBI Nutrition Resource**
- 8) Opportunities to monetarise some of the SCBI projects to other sporting codes.**

- 3.5 The Policy & Performance Group is responsible for agreeing the Benefits Realisation Plan and associated annual targets. Work was undertaken to ensure the end benefits/outcomes are aligned to partners' strategies. To measure the progress of this the Council and the IFA have developed a range of indicators/intermediate benefits which are monitored through programme delivery:**

- a. Number of coaching sessions provided**
- b. Number of coaches engaged in delivering coaching**
- c. Number of sessions improving club governance**
- d. Number of volunteering opportunities**
- e. Participation opportunities for under 16s**
- f. Female participation rates**
- g. Number of people completing skills development programme**
- h. Number of sessions for under-represented groups**

- i. Number of sessions for school and youth groups
- j. Community group usage of stadia
- k. Number of clubs attaining club-mark
- l. Educational opportunities
- m. Number of programmes targeting ASB
- n. Improved collaborative working
- o. Number of disabled participants
- p. Number of older people participating

- 3.6 Following the completion of a baseline assessment in early 2017, annual workplans are developed each year. The 2021-2022 action plan was developed, taking into consideration Covid restrictions, with a view to delivering a majority of activities using online methods in Q1 and Q2 with some wider face-to-face engagement if possible commencing in Q3 and Q4. The work programme was successfully tailored as Covid restrictions eased and details are noted in relation to the outcomes below within section 3.7 of this report. The Action Plan for 2022-2023 has been formulated by the partners and includes a mixture of sports specific programmes (e.g. National Governing Body specific coach education) and some joint collaborative initiatives delivered by both sporting codes such as information webinars which proved highly successful within the previous Covid environment which restricted in-person workshops. The 2022-2023 Action Plan has also been attached (Appendix 2).

Performance

- 3.7 Programme delivery to date in year 5 (financial year 2021/2022) despite challenges due to Covid restrictions has been successful. Effective advance planning has mitigated covid restrictions and no planned initiatives were postponed during Q1 & Q2. Relaxations in the Covid restrictions enabled broader engagement in Q3 & Q4 with a range of activities such as collaborative engagement in schools alongside online learning webinars boosting engagement opportunities. Highlights in relation to SCBI programme performance 2021/22 have been;
- Number of volunteering opportunities generated – 259 opportunities
 - Participation opportunities via activity programmes – 26,175 participants
 - Female participation across the programme – 9,817 participants
 - Number of sessions for school and youth groups – 1206 activity sessions
 - Educational opportunities / information distributed to publics – 2500 upskilling opps

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.8 In accordance with the Council's obligations under its DfC Funding Agreement for the Olympia Regeneration Project, the Council has committed a sum of £100,000 per annum for a minimum of ten years, so that a minimum of £1,000,000 is contributed in total to the Project. In relation to 2021/22 spend partners have reported a slight underspend of the budget across both joint and individual work programmes. The impact of the Covid pandemic has been highlighted as a key factor in this underspend, yet it should be noted that the Joint programme underspend will be carried forward into the next financial year. The following table highlights partner spend in 2021/22;

Organisation	IFA Programme Spend	GAA Programme Spend	Joint Initiatives Spend
Spend	£89,855.22	£48,717.14	£11,240.00
Available	£90,000.00	£50,000.00	£15,850.00
Variance	-£44.78	-£1,282.86	-£4,610.00

As noted, Action Plans have been submitted following joint partner planning for the 2022/23 financial year in respect of work programmes and associated budgets and engagement targets. It is hoped that as Covid restrictions ease further a full annual programme can again be delivered with associated benefits.

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

- 3.9 There are no additional impacts related to this report.”

The Committee noted the progress to date and the content of the programme for 2022/2023

Plastic Promise and BCC Single Use Plastic Policy

The Committee considered a request from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) seeking the Council to sign up to the Live Here Love Here – ‘Plastic Promise’ campaign.

The Operations Director, Resources and Fleet advised the Members that KNIB had approached the Council asking it to make a commitment to reduce its plastic footprint by signing up to the Plastic Promise. She reported that all other councils in Northern Ireland had agreed to sign up to the pledge and to outline their commitments to reduce unnecessary plastic - in particular single-use plastic (SUP). The Members noted that this information would be shared on the Live Here Love Here website and also promoted through KNIB's public media campaigns.

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The Director detailed that KNIB had proposed a press launch, it would take place over the summer to promote the Northern Ireland wide Council support of the Plastic Promise.

The Members' attention was drawn to the draft declaration of the work available [here](#) which detailed the work that the Council was already involved with, along with details in respect of its quest to reduce single use plastic across the Council. It also outlined the Council's commitment to further reducing its single use items and unnecessary plastic. The Members were asked to review and agree the commitment as outlined within the draft declaration of work.

The Chairperson welcomed the document but suggested that wording be added which would adequately reflect the Council's concern at the long-term environmental damage being caused by single use plastics.

A Member concurred and raised concern about the volume of soft plastics and lack of accessibility to recycle them.

The Director advised that, in parallel to the Plastic Promise, the Council had also applied to the Council's Climate Fund to help produce a Single-Use Plastic Policy for the Council. A Strategic Outline Case was currently being developed which would summarise the approach and funding request. She highlighted that this approach supported previous Notices of Motions and Committee reports on the issue of single-use items.

Several Members welcomed the launch of the Climate Fund and the opportunity to apply to the programme to progress the Council's proposals relating to single-use plastic and other single-use items.

The Committee:

- approved the request for Belfast City Council to sign up to *the Live Here Love Here* 'Plastic Promise';
- endorsed the Council's commitment to reducing the use of single use plastic across the Council as detailed in its 'Plastic Promise', subject to wording being added to reflect the Council's concern at the environmental damage being caused by single use plastics; and
- noted the funding application to develop a Single-Use Plastic Policy for Belfast City Council.

Belfast Healthy Cities - Proposed Contract Arrangements 2022-2026

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 progress to date since the last report was presented to People & Communities Committee in November 2021. It outlines the context, reminds members of the findings and recommendations of the VfM Review,**

sets out the proposed arrangements for governance and oversight, and outlines the agreed priorities and emerging actions in support of Phase VII and community planning under health inequalities. It also seeks approval from members to provide Belfast Healthy Cities with a longer-term commitment (in terms of contract and finance) to end of March 2026.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Given the recent positive conclusions of the Value for Money Review completed in 2021, alongside the recent redesignation of Healthy Cities status for Belfast from 2021 to 2026, and the role that BHC will play in addressing identified health inequalities priorities and actions agreed under the Belfast Agenda Refresh (22-26 new community plan) it is recommended that Committee:

- In addition to the funding already secured for 22/23 - agree to commit to fund Belfast Healthy Cities at the same level (£81,294 per annum) for a further 3-year period to align with the Phase VII and Community Plan timeframes – to 31 March 2026.
- Note a report will be brought to Living Here Board on 13th June requesting that the Board recommend to the Belfast Community Planning Partnership that the Health Inequalities Strategic Reference Group (HISRG) be established, and recognised, as the oversight body for allocating resources to, and agreeing and reviewing action(s) undertaken in support of, health inequalities work in the city under community planning. It is proposed that Belfast Healthy Cities will have representation on this group.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background/Context

Belfast's membership to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network is facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC), an independent partnership organisation, recognised as having charitable status by The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. Belfast Healthy Cities is governed by a Board of Directors, elected annually and representing the public, university, voluntary and community sectors.

Council are one of four core funders to Belfast Healthy Cities, along with the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSC) and Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Annual funding amounts to over 300k of which BCC contributes £81,294.

Phase VI of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network was in operation from 2014 and came to an end in 2019. The application process for Phase VII commenced in 2019, with the outcome originally expected to be known by April 2020. This was significantly delayed by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and as such the existing contract with BHC was extended during 19/20, 21/22 and for the first quarter of 22/23.

On 21st May 2021 Belfast Healthy Cities confirmed that the City of Belfast had been successful in its application (previously approved by Council), and had been designated in Phase VII, and thereby extended as a WHO European Healthy City to April 2026.

3.2 Copius Consulting Value for Money Review Conclusions

On behalf of the four funders, BCC led on a quotation exercise and as a result Copius Advisory Services/Consulting were appointed to undertake a 'value for money' review based on the Challenge, Compare and Consult components of the 4 C's of Best Value. The findings of the review were presented to P&C Committee in November 2021.

Ultimately the review concluded that the funding provided to BHC by each of the partner organisations represented good value for money based on return for investment. As part of the recommendations several work areas were identified for the funding bodies to consider and progress, namely:

1. Ensuring BHC investment is strategically aligned to policy drivers including the Programme for Government, Making Life Better and the Belfast Agenda.
2. Moving performance analysis to an outcomes focused / based approach (away from output measures).
3. Establishing a clearly defined role for Belfast Healthy Cities with consistency of service across Belfast.
4. The removal of duplication in planning and reporting between Belfast Healthy Cities and the various funders involved in this process.

The funders agreed to continue to work with Community Planning leads, and with Belfast Healthy Cities, and Belfast Health Development Unit, to ensure better alignment of existing resources and streamlining of oversight and accountability processes to include addressing the governance concerns and duplication issues identified that had been identified within the review.

3.3 Nov 21 P&C Committee Report

The report to members of P&C committee in November 2021 sought approval for officers to continue to work with partners to:

- undertake a series of facilitated discussions between Nov 21-Mar 2022 namely with BHDU staff, BHC staff and Board alongside key health and community planning leads to develop and agree health priorities for Belfast to be progressed as part of the Belfast Agenda Refresh, Belfast's Phase VII plan and the emerging ICP structure and planning process for Belfast; and
- agree the governance structure and resources anticipated/required to progress the priority actions.

3.4 November 2021 to May 22 Progress Update

Facilitated Workshops

Irene Hewitt was appointed by the Public Health Agency to facilitate three workshops on behalf of the funding partners. The first was held on 9th December and focussed on governance and specifically the proposal to establish a Health Inequalities Strategic Reference Group – it was attended by representatives from BCC, BHSCT, HSCB, NIHE and PHA. The second was held on 14th December 2021 and brought together BHC and BHDU staff alongside thematic leads from across the health family specifically those responsible for drugs and alcohol, mental health, physical activity and nutrition to review existing community planning priorities and actions and agree how these should be amended and/or further developed in support of the 'health inequalities' priority under the Belfast Agenda refresh. A third focussed workshop was facilitated by Irene on 7th March and involved the BHC CEO and several Board members working alongside the funding partner leads to consider the Phase VII priorities alongside the proposed refreshed community planning priorities identifying opportunities for alignment.

3.5 Governance and Oversight

The VfM review recommended that funding partners considered their position as Board members of Belfast Healthy Cities and whether this could be considered as a conflict of interest – this applied to Belfast City Council, Belfast HSC Trust and NIHE – PHA do not currently sit on the Board. As a result of this recommendation, each agency has had follow up meetings with their internal legal departments and all three have been advised to withdraw from the Board. This has been communicated verbally

to Belfast Healthy Cities and formal responses are currently being drafted.

It has been agreed from 22/23 onwards that:

- Regular contract monitoring will continue to be undertaken by each funding body – using the same (PHA and BCC-quarterly) or similar (BHSCT-bi-monthly) progress monitoring template.
- A more strategic level review will occur biannually between the funders and BHC.
- BHC will also join the HISRG once established which will then incorporate the wider view and work being undertaken across the city to tackle health inequalities.

3.6 Agreed Priorities, Actions & Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) Approach

- The funders and BHC will meet collectively to set and review progress against targets twice a year (as noted above).
- The 22/23 Progress Monitoring Return (PMR) will be transitional taking account of the fact that the refreshed community plan won't be finalised until towards the end of 2022/23. The PMR will have more of a focus on outputs and outcomes and the funders have agreed to support BHC to develop an OBA approach to a number of in-year actions.
- The contract with BHC will specify that the PMR will be reviewed and adjusted (where/when necessary) on annual basis – to take account of developments and emerging issues.

Phase VII Priority Areas	Action Areas
Promoting Healthy Transport	-Supporting good active travel infrastructure to increase physical and mental wellbeing -Generating the Evidence to Support Reduction in Car Dependency -Improving Air Quality and Public Health
Greening the City	-Intersectoral Partnership for Healthy Places -Child Friendly Places -Age Friendly Cities

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Community Prosperity	-Caring Places that Enhance Health and Well-being and Reduce Health Inequalities
Increasing Knowledge & Capacity	- Inequalities Training: Building Public Health Capacity at the Local Level -Health Literacy: Fostering Greater Participation for Health and Well-being through Increasing Health Literacy - Seminar Series on People; Place; Participation; Prosperity; Peace; Planet
Maximising Learning & Knowledge Exchange	- Promote Belfast within global and European networks and to maximise knowledge and learning from WHO, international and other networks among elected representatives; stakeholders in the public, voluntary, community and private sectors

3.8 It is clear from the priority and action areas outlined above, and the initial mapping work already undertaken that there will be significant alignment with the proposed refreshed Belfast community plan priorities actions across all of the themes, namely:

Climate, Resilience & Sustainability	Connectivity, Sustainable & Active Travel	Housing-led Regeneration	Health Inequalities	Future City Centre
Educational Inequalities	Employability & Skills	Sustainable & Inclusive Economic Growth	Community & Neighbourhood Regeneration	City Regeneration & Investment
<i>Cross Cutting themes:</i>	<i>Inclusive Growth</i>	<i>Children and Young People</i>	<i>Good Relations & Shared Future</i>	<i>Older People</i>

As outlined previously, it will be considered and agreed via the Health Inequalities Strategic Reference Group (HISRG) who is best placed (from Belfast Healthy Cities, from Belfast Health Development Unit or via thematic or service leads within the Partner Organisations – or indeed a combination of some or all) to

provide support to take forward timebound specific pieces of work in support of key actions. We will also be able to draw on Belfast Healthy Cities relationships and networks with peers and colleagues in the UK, Ireland and Europe to avail of, and share, learning and expertise.

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

The total in-year financial allocation from Belfast City Council to Belfast Healthy Cities is £81,294 which has been included in the planned budget for 2022/23 and previously approved by P&C Committee in November 2021 – ratified by Council in December 2021.

Officers are seeking approval to enter into a contract with Belfast Healthy Cities from 22/23 to 25/26 to align with the both the timeframe for Phase VII (21-26) along with the refreshed Belfast Community Plan (22-26). This would involve a contract being in place from 1st July 2022 to 31st March 2026 and Council commitment to continue funding BHC to the same level (£81,294) for 23/24, 24/25 and 25/26. Members will be aware that the level of funding will be subject to annual approval by committee through the estimates setting process.

It is worth noting that Council has previously approved continuous funding (approval was given on the 5th September 2012 by the then Health & Environmental Services Committee that funding to BHC be maintained for three years from April 2013 to March 2016). This level of commitment allows for stability within the organisation in relation to recruitment and retention, and in the building and maintaining of relationships, as well as for consistency in developing and delivering on agreed actions in support of Phase VII and Community Planning.

It should also be noted that Belfast was first designated to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network in 1988 and that the city has been a key member since that time, supported by Belfast Healthy Cities, with the recent VfM review in 2021 having concluded that this arrangement represented a good return on investment for Council (and the other funding partners) in relation tackling health inequalities in the city and raising the profile of Belfast within the European Healthy Cities Network.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

None identified at this stage but kept under continuous review. It should be noted that much of the work undertaken by BHC is to address, or promote awareness of, health inequalities and best

practice whole population or targeted approaches to mitigate or prevent these.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Update on Reference Group on Older People

The Director of City Services drew the Members' attention to the minutes of the Reference Group on Older People and provided a brief overview of the items that had been considered, as follows:

- Update from Ms. A. Keenan, EOS Community Consulting, in regard to the Development of Age-friendly Belfast Plan 2022-2026;
- Update on the 'Get It Project'; and
- Update in respect of age-friendly Belfast Activities and Events.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Reference Group on Older People meeting held on 30th May, 2021.

Consultation on Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) System and Operator Approval

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To present to Committee, Belfast City Council's draft response to the DEFRA consultation on the Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) System and Operator Approval.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to endorse the draft response as the Council's response to the DEFRA consultation on the Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) System and Operator Approval which was submitted by the 21st May deadline, subject to the consideration of Committee and Council ratification. (Consultation paper attached as Appendix I and BCC Draft response attached as Appendix II)**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

Members may recall from the People and Communities Committee meeting on 8th June 2021 that the Department for Environment,

Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had launched two consultations on packaging: one on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and one on Deposit Return Schemes (DRS).

- 3.2 Following the consultation periods, DEFRA collated feedback and have now issued a response to the EPR consultation (the DRS response is expected to follow).
- 3.3 Within the EPR response, the UK Government and Devolved Administrations have decided to make provisions for the continuation of the PRN/PERN system in the new 'Extended Producer Responsibility Regulations for Packaging Waste' as an interim measure, to demonstrate that recycling obligations have been met.
- 3.4 In light of the decision to retain the PRN/PERN system, DEFRA has published a consultation titled 'Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) System and Operator Approval'.
- 3.5 Whilst the wider EPR measures (including full net cost payments for household packaging, modulated fees, mandatory labelling and enhanced communications) should address many of the shortcomings of the current producer responsibility arrangements, there are several improvements that may be necessary to further improve the functioning of the PRN/PERN market in the short term. These include the volatility and unpredictability of PRN/PERN prices, a lack of transparency, the potential for fraud in the issue of PRNs/PERNs and producer dependency on exports to meet recycling targets.
- 3.6 This consultation seeks views on proposals to address the identified issues and improve the overall effectiveness of the system, including suggestions from the Advisory Committee on Packaging (ACP) and other industry bodies.

In particular, the consultation focuses on the following areas for reform:

- Reporting requirements on the sales of PRNs/PERNs
- Reporting requirements on how the revenue from PRN/PERN sales is used
- Timeframes for the trading of PRNs/PERNs
- The introduction of a 'technical competence' test for compliance scheme operators and accredited reproprocessors/exporters
- The interface with the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

- 3.7 The consultation also asks for additional views and evidence on other proposed changes to the PRN/PERN system, including:
- The introduction of a compliance fee for producers that fail to meet their obligations
- 3.8 The responses to this consultation will inform decisions on Government's approach to the PRN/PERN system as part of the wider EPR reforms.
- 3.9 The consultation invited responses until 21st May 2022. Resources and Fleet Services have submitted a draft response, subject to the pending consideration and approval by Committee.
- 3.10 A copy of the consultation 'Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) System and Operator Approval' is attached as Appendix I
- 3.11 A draft Belfast City Council Response is attached as Appendix II
- 3.12 Overall, Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. Whilst the consultation does not have a direct bearing on councils (as we are not in receipt of PRNs/PERNs), the proposals around increased monitoring and reporting (particularly around revenue) from the sector are to be welcome, especially if there is to be greater transparency and accountability arising from the need to manage the resources within supply chains. The lack of transparency around this area has previously been one of the main criticisms of the PRN scheme.
- 3.13 Within our consultation response, we are supportive of the proposed measures outlined to bring about better consistency, clarity and regulation across the industry. We welcome the introduction of an operator competence test and we also await the proposed guidance on revenue reporting.
- 3.14 With particular reference to the PRNs/PERNs on DRS materials that remain in kerbside, we support Option 2 (To place a recycling obligation on DRS producers for packaging waste that is in scope of the DRS, but not collected by the Deposit Management Organisations) as this should provide greater clarity of the volume of DRS material recovered through councils' kerbside and other collection systems.
- 3.15 Financial and Resource Implications
- None in relation to responding to the consultations.

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

None in relation to responding to the consultations.”

The Committee endorsed the draft response available [here](#) as the Council's response to the DEFRA consultation on the Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) System and Operator Approval which had been submitted by the 21st May deadline.

Commonwealth Games Support

The Committee considered a request from the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council (NICGC) seeking financial assistance from the Council to help support the team competing in the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Committee agreed a contribution of £10,000 to the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council (NICGC) in support of the the team competing in the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) 2022 – 2023

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the successful 2021/22 Playground Improvement Programme (PIP), the latest annual Independent Playground Inspector's report and the playground refurbishments proposed from that for inclusion in the 2022/23 programme.

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

1.3 The report also updates members on the refurbishment works completed under last year's PIP (2021-22).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee are asked to:

- **Agree refurbishment works at the sites below under the Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) 2022-23.**

This year's programme has an allocated budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme for financial year 2022/23.

1. Areema playground
2. Sally Gardens playground
3. Westlands playground

3.0 Main report

Playground Refurbishment Programme

- 3.1 Since its inception in 2012, the Playground Refurbishment Programme continues to make a significant and positive impact to the overall quality and play value of the city's playgrounds; this has greatly improved accessibility, providing more inclusive equipment, safety surfacing, boundary fencing, site furniture and landscaping works.
- 3.2 With continued investment over the last ten years, Council is achieving the desired improvements at each of its sites. Over the last year the Council has constructed a new playground at the Vere Foster site and refurbished the Ormeau 2000 (Park Road) playground. Refurbishment works at Cavehill Adventurous playground (senior section) are also nearing completion
- 3.3 In January 2022 Council secured an additional £97k of DfC funding for previously agreed refurbishment works at Clarawood Park playground (junior zone). These works are now due to commence in early June 2022.
- 3.4 The Council's newest refurbished playground facilities below are now more inviting, inclusive, and exciting places for children and parents to visit, moving their quality scores to the desired higher standard. (See appendix 1 – images of recently refurbished playgrounds at Forster Greene and Ormeau 2000 (Park Road).
- 3.5 Members should note that Play Services Ireland Ltd have undertaken the annual independent playground inspections on behalf of the Council. The 'quality score' allocated for each playground is based on compliance with European safety standards BS EN 1176-7: 2020.
- 3.6 The independent playground inspection report highlights the age range for each piece of playground apparatus and identifies and prioritises repairs to existing playground equipment. The Council's Facilities Management and Playground Inspectors continue to undertake these repairs in the order they have been prioritised. (See Appendix 2 – copy of Independent Playground Inspection report for Sally Gardens playground).

- 3.7 Each playground is individually categorised, giving a combined 'quality score' Sally Gardens playground for example was allocated an overall quality score of 5.6.

Quality scores:

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

- 3.8 Following the independent inspection assessments of all 104 playgrounds across the city, it is proposed that sites listed under Item 2.2 are refurbished as part of this year's Playground Improvement Programme, which has an allocated budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme.
- 3.9 The playgrounds recommended for refurbishment are the ones with the lowest quality scores (See appendix 3 – 2022 mean quality score ratings). Because of the proposed refurbishment works, these playgrounds will move from insufficient/poor/fair to the higher classification of 'Excellent' – quality score 9 – 10 when re-inspected.
- 3.10 Members should note that Areema playground has been out of commission for several years due to the construction of a social housing scheme adjacent to the playground, resulting in the facility being closed to the public. Members should also note that Areema playground is in a very poor condition. Council's Independent Playground Inspector recorded that all existing playground equipment was in a poor state of disrepair and recommended complete removal of all items, which has now been passed on to the Council's Facility Management to undertake.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.11 The proposed playground refurbishment works will be funded through the Capital Programme and a budget of £580,000 has been allocated to this. C&NS Landscape, Planning and Development Officers will continue to re-design play facilities and project manage all works associated with the 2022/23 Playground Improvement Programme.

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

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

- 3.13 None.”**

A Member welcomed the refurbishment works that had taken place to the Ormeau 2000 (Park Road) Playground as part of the 2021/22 refurbishment works.

A further Member highlighted that it was disappointing to note that a quarter of the parks within the Great Shankill had fallen within the bottom 20% in terms of quality scores ratings in the inspection report, yet all had missed out on refurbishment works as they did not happen to be the bottom three

The Director explained that the PIP was an Independent Playground Inspection report which had identified, through rigorous processes, the proposed three playgrounds as those with the lowest scores and noted that some of the aforementioned playgrounds might meet the threshold during next year’s inspection programme.

Given the points raised in the earlier presentation, several Members reiterated the need for more inclusive and accessible playground equipment.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that the Council was committed to providing accessible and inclusive playground equipment for children of all abilities. She stated that, in terms of new playground schemes, the Council was keen to engage with residents to ensure that local needs were met.

Discussion ensued regarding cleanliness of the playgrounds, the Director provided the Members with detail regarding the daily cleaning and health and safety checks undertaken, she encouraged the Members to contact officer’s director if they had any cleanliness issues that needed addressed urgently.

The Committee agreed the refurbishment of the playground sites detailed below, under the Playground Improvement Programme, which had an allocated budget of £580,000 under the Capital Programme for financial year 2022/23:

- Areema playground
- Sally Gardens playground
- Westlands playground

Operational Issues

**Request for the Use of Dundonald Cemetery for
Somme Commemoration Parade**

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Dundonald Apprentice Boys of Derry seeking permission to use Dundonald Cemetery to conduct a wreath laying ceremony.

The Committee noted that the Director would be exercising her delegated authority to grant authority to the Apprentice Boys of Derry to use Dundonald Cemetery to conduct a wreath laying ceremony on 23rd June from 7.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m., subject to the Event Organisers resolving all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction.

**Installation of AED (defibrillator) at
Duncairn Community Centre**

The Committee was advised of a request from the Dean Clarke Foundation, a community organisation/user group at Duncairn Community Centre, seeking permission to place an AED device in Duncairn community centre for public/user access. It was noted that they wished to have an AED at this location following an incident involving a local resident when no AED had been available.

The Members were advised that the defibrillator would be placed on an internal wall of the building, this was to avoid vandalism as antisocial behaviour (ASB) in the area was an ongoing problem. It was hoped that this could be reviewed at some stage in the future, however, until then the device would only be accessible during the community centre opening hours.

The AED would be stored in an appropriate wall mounted cabinet with suitable signage and an Co-ordinator would be nominated to carry out regular equipment checks, and appropriate staff training would be provided. The AED would be repaired and maintained by the Council and registered on the national database '[The Circuit](#)' (The National Defibrillator Network).

The Committee approved the request to accept donated AED equipment from the Dean Clarke Foundation for installation within the Duncairn Community Centre.

Chairperson

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 21st June, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman McCoubrey;
Councillor Murray (In the Chair);
Councillors Bower, Canavan, Corr,
Donnelly, de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett,
Maghie, McAteer, McCusker,
O'Hara and Verner.

In attendance: Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Mrs. C. Taggart, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Mrs. A. Hargey, Community Council Support Officer;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

External attendance:

Belfast Youth Forum: Madeline Wilson;
Barry Sejoud;
Kaila Patterson;
Laura Blackledge; and
Tomas Murphy.

Appointment of Chairperson

In the absence of the both the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, it was agreed that Councillor Murray would Chair the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of the Chairperson, Councillor McMullan, Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Bunting, and Councillors Cobain, Magee and Newton.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Canavan, Flynn, Garrett and McAteer declared an interest in agenda item 2 (b) Bright Lights Event at Botanic Gardens as they had either accepted or indicated that they had accepted complimentary tickets for the 2021/22 event.

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Last Meeting

The Members were informed that this would be Ms. A. Hargey's last meeting in her role as Youth Council Support Officer as she was leaving the Council to take up a new position at Queen's University Belfast as the local co-ordinator for their Queen's Community and Place, Social Charter.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, thanked her for her service and wished her well in her new role.

Congratulations

The Chairperson extended congratulations to the Chairperson, Councillor McMullan, on the recent birth of his daughter Olive.

Restricted

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 2 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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

Request for the use of CS Lewis Square for a Music Festival

The Committee were advised of the details of a late request that had been received seeking permission to host a live, outdoor music festival as part of the 2022 Eastside Arts Festival at CS Lewis Square.

The Committee granted authority to to Eastside Arts, a project of Eastside Partnership, to host a "Live @ CS Lewis Square" music festival at the Civic Square from 11th – 14th August 2022 and delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to ensure the following:

- 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
- to 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:

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

Consideration of Bright Lights Event

The Committee considered further the use of the Botanic Gardens for the Bright Lights event and:

It was

Proposed by Councillor O'Hara; and
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite that

"The Committee agree to amend its decision of 9th February, 2021 for the use of the Botanic Gardens up to December 2024 and retract the granting of permission to use Botanic Park to host the Bright Lights event in 2022."

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

Belfast City Youth Council Agenda

The Committee was advised that representatives from the Belfast City Youth Council (BCYC) were in attendance to provide an update in relation to the work of the Council.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed the representatives to the meeting. It was noted that a number of the Youth Council Members would be addressing the Committee, whilst others were in attendance remotely to watch proceedings.

**Unison Presentation on Free
School Meals Campaign**

The Chairperson also welcomed to the meeting Mr. J. P. Clayton and Ms. A. Taggart, representing Unison.

The representatives thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present regarding its 'Free School Meals for All Campaign'.

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Mr. Clayton commenced by providing an overview of the aspirations of the campaign, which was to achieve universal, free, nutritious school meals for all. He outlined the current provision, along with detail in respect of the current eligibility for free meals which was based on social security benefits and income thresholds.

The Members were advised of the benefits of the provision of free school meals, notably, having a positive impact on child behaviour, concentration, health and learning outcomes as well as helping to reduce the financial burden for families in poverty.

Ms. Taggart advised that Unison members who worked in school catering settings were consistently raising and highlighting the lack of free meals as a significant issue affecting children and that staff were often having to supplement children's lunches. It was noted that many children in poverty were not in receipt of free school meals, with parents often struggling to pay for school meals as they were just above the income threshold, whilst others did not want their child to be stigmatised by being seen to be taking free school meals. She advised that Unison members in schools regularly reported the impact of hunger on children.

Mr. Clayton drew reference to the Department of Education Review of Free School Meals and Uniform Grants that had been announced by the then Education Minister, Minister Weir, in May 2021. He advised that, yesterday, the current Education Minister, Minister McIlveen, had announced a 20% increase in the school uniform grant which would provide some assistance to a number of low-income families but unfortunately did not address the free school meals issue.

The representative concluded by asking the Council to endorse the introduction of universal free school meals within the new Executive Programme for Government and to commit to supporting Unison's campaign.

Several of the Members welcomed the work undertaken by Unison and reiterated the need for universal free school meals.

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

The Committee agreed to write to the Education Authority and Minister for Education to endorse Unison's campaign for Free Schools Meals and also to seek an update in respect of its antipoverty campaign.

**Post Covid Recovery and ways to help Young
People - Madeline Wilson and Barry Sejdou**

The representatives of the BCYC presented the details of a Post Covid Recovery Campaign that it wished to launch during its term, they advised that the campaign would consist of two parts.

The first would aim to tackle the isolation that young people had experienced throughout the pandemic by connecting them with volunteering opportunities within Belfast. BCYC planned to organise a young people's event, possibly in the City Hall, which would showcase volunteer opportunities in Belfast, highlight the benefits of volunteering and provide

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an opportunity for young people to sign up to volunteer roles in the community. The representative explained that, as a part of this work, the Youth Council aimed to map out young people's current contribution to volunteering in Belfast and to focus on building on this.

The Members were advised that the second phase of the Covid campaign aimed to explore how the pandemic had impacted on young people's education, mental and physical health and family and social life. It aimed to focus in on specific groups such as minority ethnic young people, young people with disabilities and young carers.

The representatives advised that the Youth Council planned to carry out a research project that would engage with young people on the issue and identify youth focused solutions to any issues that were highlighted. In terms of progressing the campaign, a scoping exercise of current research projects on young people and the pandemic would be carried out to ensure that the proposed project was unique and had merit.

A Member suggested that the BCYC Members liaise with the Elected Members from specific District Electoral Areas (DEAs) who could help provide advice and guidance as to youth groups and organisations that could be included in the consultation.

The Members of the Committee discussed the difficulties and disruption that young people had experienced during the pandemic, drawing reference to their own constituents and families. Specific discussion focused on the upheaval and disruption that young people had experienced for such a prolonged period to their education, in particular, no continuity with online study and the disruption and lack of clarity around this year's exams.

The Neighbourhood Services Manager commended the proposed project and suggested that the Youth Council should present their intent to the Belfast Area Outcomes Group, the city partnership working to improve outcomes for the CYP. She stated that she felt the community and statutory members of the BAOG partners would be keen to help inform the project and support subsequent project recommendations.

Following discussion, the Members of the Committee agreed to write to the Education Authority to seek clarity on its processes regarding last minute exam changes that had come about as a direct result of the pandemic and to also ascertain if any special measure were being implemented to help those young people who might not have achieved expected grades as a direct result of the pandemic.

**The Impact of Prejudice on Young
People – Kaila Patterson**

The representative advised the Committee that the BCYC were keen to progress a project that would explore prejudice in Belfast. She advised that, at present, they were unsure of the specific focus of this project. She explained that during initial discussions the themes of race, religion and gender had regularly arisen, however, the BCYC members were aware that research work had already been undertaken on many of these areas. As a starting point, the members planned to explore what projects already existed in Belfast, with the aim of identifying gaps that could be filled.

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The representative advised that, given that ideas for this project were less well developed than the covid recovery campaign, the BCYC were keen to seek guidance and advice from the Elected Members about potential project ideas and initiatives to help develop the project and form the future campaign.

The Committee welcomed the proposed programme of works to explore prejudice in Belfast and suggested that these works should include:

- investigating the prejudice of young people in the LGBTQ Community; and
- consideration of the impact of social media and technology in spreading prejudice amongst young people;

It was agreed that, given that the campaign would be focussing on prejudice and the themes of race, religion and gender, the Council's Shared City Partnership be consulted for its input.

In addition, the Youth Council Members were encouraged to link directly with the Political Youth Champions to discuss the campaign further.

**Queens University Belfast 'RADICAL'
Research Project – Laura Blackledge**

The Committee was reminded that, at the December 2019 meeting of the People and Communities Committee, permission had been granted for the Council to act as a stakeholder in the Queen's University 'RADICAL' research project (Respect and Disrespect in Children and Adolescents Lives) and to be named as the official city partner organisation in the grant application.

The representative explained that the project, facilitated by QUB, sought to understand how respect, lack of respect, and disrespect were theorised, understood, and experienced by children and young people in the City of Belfast. The overall aim was to generate a rich understanding of the concept and experiences of respect and disrespect from children and young people's perspectives, with a view to generating better relationships among children and their peers. The research would also seek to inform the delivery of public and community-based services which children and young people engage with daily in the City.

The Members noted that the BCYC were acting as the Children and Young People's Advisory Group (CYPAG) on this project and that QUB had already held pre-grant application consultations with them. QUB had already helped shape the study and had informed on areas and issues of importance,

The Committee was advised that unfortunately the Covid pandemic had halted the application process in early 2020, but QUB had now resumed engagement with staff and young people to shape the final stages of the application.

The representative advised that, as part of the process, the Council would be asked to submit an official letter of support/endorsement for the project.

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The Committee noted the ongoing work and partnership arrangements for the 'RADICAL' project and agreed that, in due course, an official letter of support endorsing Belfast City Youth Council's role as the Children and Young People's Advisory Group could be submitted to Queen's University Belfast.

Youth Champions – Tomas Murphy

The representative reminded the Members that it had previously been agreed that each Political Party would nominate a Political Youth Champion to take a leadership role to further improve communications and cooperation between Councillors, officers and the Youth Council

He advised that the Youth Council Members were keen to establish the Political Youth Champions Group but several of the political nominations were currently outstanding. He reported that the current Elected Members appointed were as follows:

Sinn Féin – Councillor McCann
PUP- Councillor Hutchinson
Green Party – Councillor O'Hara

During discussion the following appointments were made:

SDLP – Councillor de Faoite
Alliance – Councillor Bower

It was noted that the outstanding nominees for People Before Profit and the DUP would be confirmed through the Party Group Leaders and that officers would update the BCYC accordingly.

General Discussion

During discussion the Youth Council Members highlighted several issues to the Elected Members which, amongst others, included accessibility to parks and inclusive playgrounds, sectarian graffiti, and the cost of school uniforms.

The Elected Members encouraged the young people to contact them directly to discuss any issues.

Noted.

Chairperson

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Extract from minutes of:

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

11th January, 2022

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Item referred back - Erection of Dual Language Street Sign at Clifton Street

(Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor, and Mr. I. Harper, Building Control 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 To consider the dual language street sign application for Clifton Street.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- consider the report and decide to approve or refuse the application based upon the updated survey results.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

Background

- 3.1 The Clifton Street dual language street sign application was considered under the existing Street Naming and Numbering policy.

Policy:

- 3.2 For the Clifton Street application, based on the information taken from the electoral register, and site checks of commercial properties, 12 surveys were originally issued, to both residential and commercial properties. 10 were hand delivered. 2 survey forms were posted through Royal Mail as they could not be hand delivered due to no letter box or no one present.
- 3.3 On review of the processing of this application, it was noted that two occupiers who had signed the initial petition had not been surveyed as their properties were deemed to be vacant at the time

officers carried out their physical inspection of the street. However, it now appears they are in fact occupied.

- 3.4 At the committee meeting on 9th November members agreed to survey these two occupiers and asked that a report be brought back to December committee.
- 3.5 Survey forms were hand delivered to these two properties, with an explanation on the survey to confirm the decision of committee, and that these surveys were being carried out without prejudice, pending ratification at December council meeting.
- 3.6 At December committee members agreed to defer considering the application until the deadline for the surveys to be returned had passed and the results finalised. The deadline has passed and of the two additional surveys, one survey form was returned, and one was not. These occupier's preferences are reflected in the revised percentage totals in the report.
- 3.7 In addition, following the agreement at the committee meeting on 9th November a survey form was also re-issued by post to the secretary of Belfast Orange Hall, a property on the street. This property was originally surveyed by post and was declared a non-return and therefore the occupiers were deemed not be in favour of a dual language street sign in accordance with the policy. This survey has since been returned and is reflected in the revised percentage totals.

3.8 Application details

English Name	Non-English Name	Location	Applicant	Persons surveyed
Clifton Street	Sráid Clifton	Between Carrick Hill, BT1 and Carlisle Circus, BT14	Carrick Hill Residents Association	14

- 3.9 The translation was authenticated by Queens University, the approved translator for Belfast City Council.

Results for survey carried out for Clifton Street

- 3.10 In accordance with the Council's policy for the erection of dual language street signs surveys of all persons appearing on the Electoral Register plus owners or tenants in actual possession of commercial premises carried out and the following responses were received.
- 3.11 A revised number of 14 surveys have now been issued in total, 12 hand delivered and 2 posted using Royal Mail. The revised results are:

- 9 occupiers (64.3%) were in favour of the erection of a second street nameplate
 - 1 occupier (7.1%) had no preference either way
 - 2 occupiers (14.3%) were not in favour of the erection of a second nameplate
 - 2 occupiers (14.3%) did not respond to the survey
- 3.12 The Council's policy on the erection of a second street nameplate establishes a threshold of two thirds (66.6%) of the occupiers on the street surveyed being in favour of the proposal is sufficient to erect a second street sign in a language other than English.
- 3.13 In this instance 64.3% of occupiers were in favour of erection of dual language street signs. The Committee does have discretion in exceptional circumstances to approve an application notwithstanding the fact that the threshold is not met. On 17th December officers wrote to the applicant to advise that the application does not meet the two thirds threshold and has been asked whether there are any exceptional circumstances which warrant departure from the policy. The applicant has responded to confirm that there are no exceptional circumstances in relation to this application. Members will be aware that a new street naming dual language policy is currently being consulted on and that the threshold under that policy would be met.

Provision of street signs

- 3.14 The practice on siting the street signs is to identify those that exist on the street, and these are either added to or replaced to reflect the street name in a second language, as approved. The position of the street signs on Clifton Street are as follows:
- Junction with North Queen Street – on metal railings
 - Junction of Westlink on-slip (north) – wall mounted to bridge
 - Junction of Westlink on-slip (south) – wall mounted to bridge
 - A sign on railings at the junction with Carlisle Circus was damaged and is not currently in place.
- 3.15 If the Committee was minded to exercise its discretion to grant this application, as per standard practice the dual language street signs would be erected at the locations at which the current street signs are located. Committee will note that none of the existing street sign locations set out in paragraph 3.14 are on or immediately beside the Belfast Orange Hall building.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.16 There is a cost of approximately £450 to cover the cost of the manufacturing and erection of the dual language street signs in the current locations. The cost for these street signs has been allowed for in the current budget.

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

3.17 There are no direct equality/rural needs implications.”

Moved by Councillor Magee,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

“That the Committee agrees to use its discretion to approve the application for the erection of dual language street signs on the basis that, one participant had no preference either way, and if this response were to be excluded from the results, the threshold of two-thirds would be met, in addition, there was nothing specific in the current policy relating to an occupant stating no preference.”

A Member stated that she did not think it was appropriate for the Committee to use its discretion to approve the application, as it did not meet the requirements of the Council’s current street naming policy. She stated that the threshold had not been met and therefore there were no exceptional circumstances to support the application.

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

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 8th June, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

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

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

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Beattie and McLaughlin.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 11th May 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 June.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor McCabe declared an interest in that, she was an employee of Feile an Phobail.

Presentations

Renewed Ambition Partnership

The Chairperson welcomed Ms. J. Dobson, Useful Projects, Mr. J. O'Neill, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Mr. J. Eyre, Titanic Quarter, and Ms. K. Doran, Lanyon Communications, to the meeting.

Ms. Dobson outlined the case for change, a shared ambition for a built environment that would deliver more and enhance communities, sustain the environment and provide a springboard for economic growth. She explained the purpose of the project, which was to deliver research that would demonstrate the positive economic, environmental and social impact that investment in the built environment could deliver

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and to provide recommendations to realise economic, social and environmental impacts from future investment and development in the Belfast region.

She pointed out the main objectives of the project were to look back, look locally and further afield and to look to the future.

She referred to local case studies and to the summary of recommendations, a pathway to inclusive and sustainable development, which included that local councils should continue to drive and support more inclusive and sustainable real estate investment, which could be done through three key levers: to lead by example, influence and invest.

Ms. Dobson explained the key findings and associated recommendations.

Mr. O'Neill stated that a mainstream process was required to undertake all major capital projects to deliver the ambition of the report and that it was an opportunity to share best practice and to create a practical tool kit to apply across all projects.

**The Committee agreed to consider the following item
subsequent to the above, associated presentation.**

Renewed Ambition Programme Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report, which was accompanied by a presentation delivered by the Director of City Regeneration and Development, Mr. J. Eyre and Mr. J. O'Neill:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- **Update Members on the Renewed Ambition Partnership Programme for 2022 / 2023 aimed at delivering regeneration, infrastructure and a modern built environment for Belfast and wider City Region.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- I. **Note an update on elements of the programme of work which is being delivered via the Renewed Ambition public-private partnership, including report findings from research which examined the role that the built environment plays in delivering Social, Environmental and Economic benefits to Belfast and the wider Belfast City Region, and update following Belfast's attendance at UKREiF – the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum**

- II. Note that a presentation will be made at this Committee (by the Chair of the Renewed Ambition Partnership Taskforce and consultants) on the report findings in relation to the role that the built environment plays in delivering Social, Environmental and Economic Benefits including recommendations on how this can be enhanced and maximised going forward for the benefit of the city and wider region.**
- III. Approve entering into contractual arrangements on behalf of the Renewed Ambition Partnership with event organisers for MIPIM 2023, noting that this event will be funded through the existing Renewed Ambition Partnership sponsorship.**
- IV. Approve attendance by the Chairperson of the Committee, or their nominated representative, along with senior officers as appropriate at MIPIM 2023**
- V. Approve the establishment of a Members City Centre Working Group, with further details to be brought back on the Terms of Reference and membership based on advice via Democratic Services.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 At May's City Growth and Regeneration Committee Members agreed that representatives from the Renewed Ambition Taskforce, alongside the consultants who undertook research which sought to examine the role the built environment plays in delivering social, environmental and economic benefits to the Belfast Region, attend this month's Committee meeting to update on report findings and wider programme of work currently being undertaken by the partnership.**
- 3.2 Members will be aware that the Renewed Ambition Partnership, a joint public – private initiative which is supported by public and private sectors as well as key anchor institutions, is currently delivering a programme of work aimed at ensuring Belfast is positioned to continue to attract investment and delivering sustainable and inclusive growth.**
- 3.3 The Renewed Ambition Partnership is comprised of Belfast City Council, all Belfast Region City Deal Partner Councils, Invest Northern Ireland, Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Belfast Harbour Commissioners,**

and representatives from the developer and built environment supply chain community.

- 3.4 Having the right physical, digital and social infrastructure in place is essential for creating the physical capacity for people to live, work and visit the city and delivering on our shared longer-term ambitions for the city, as outlined in the Belfast Agenda. Underpinning the successful delivery of regeneration and development projects and creating the right city infrastructure is the ability to attract investment. This requires collaborative working with city partners to attract investment and ensure we create the right physical and built environment required to support a sustainable, inclusive city.
- 3.5 The Renewed Ambition Partnership is an important lever within our wider 'Positioning the City to Compete' proposition which seeks to build on the city's reputation as a unique destination for investment, tourism, development and supporting inclusive economic growth. It aligns to work being undertaken by other city partnerships including Innovation City Belfast, Belfast Region City Deal and Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor, alongside council-led activities to accelerate city centre living, build resilience and create a healthy, shared, vibrant and sustainable environment that promotes wellbeing for all, inclusive growth and innovation.
- 3.6 The Renewed Ambition Programme of activity for 2022 / 2023 launched in April and is delivering a structured 12 month programme of work focused on the five key pillars of Research; Events; Advocacy and Engagement; Communications and Repository with a clear focus on securing investment to deliver on city priorities.
- 3.7 Research Report: 'Building Impact – The Role the Built Environment Plays in Delivering Social, Environmental and Economic Benefits to the Belfast Region'
- 3.8 Members are reminded that the Renewed Ambition Partnership commissioned research to identify and demonstrate the positive social, economic and environmental impact that real estate and built environment projects can deliver when done well but importantly provide recommendations as to how, moving forward, the built environment partners can further enhance the delivery of wider sustainable development benefits from future development in the Belfast region.
- 3.9 The report findings and recommendations were informed through engagement with representatives from the Renewed

Ambition Partnership, City Growth and Regeneration Committee, the CPP City Development Board, the Belfast Region City Deal partner Councils (inc Belfast City Council) and the local and international real estate development community.

- 3.10 A presentation will be made to Committee (on 8 June) which will provide further detail on the research findings and the recommendations going forward.**
- 3.11 In summary, the report found that the real estate sector in the Belfast region is already stepping up to the sustainable development challenge and has performed well at delivering social, environmental and economic benefits to the wider city region. It highlights however that there is an opportunity for the built environment to drive additional sustainable development benefits, while also playing a key role in resolving some of the region's societal and sustainable development challenges, including unemployment, skills inequalities, economic growth, housing provision, levelling up, community cohesion, and climate change. It found that wider sustainable development and inclusive growth outcomes can be delivered over the three main phases in the real estate lifecycle: planning and acquisition, development phase and operational phase, and have a positive impact both within the redline boundary of any built asset as well as within local surrounding communities and in the wider Belfast region.**
- 3.12 The local case studies identified in the research report include examples of real estate projects that have gone beyond minimum building regulations and delivered wider social, environmental and economic benefits to the city region. Some highlights from case studies contained within the report include Titanic Quarter which has already delivered £146 million of social value and it is expected that by 2035 that a further £382 million of social value will be generated. During construction of the new Ulster University campus in Belfast, UU has indicated that the equivalent of 101.7 years' worth of training, placement and apprenticeship opportunities were delivered to young people, students, and the long term unemployed. The Belfast Transport Hub early works was highly commended by the National Social Value Awards in 2021 for its approach to social value and the outcomes achieved during the enabling works phase. The restoration of Durham Street to create social housing by Clanmill Housing has won several awards. Council's Leisure Transformation Programme has provided the equivalent of 3,120 employment weeks to date throughout construction (still ongoing) to those furthest removed from the labour market. Blacks Gate, a 244**

housing-led development being brought by Radius Housing Association on former industrial land, was also highlighted within the report. This project will see the delivery of 244 new homes, including 28 affordable homes, 3 play parks/open space, a linear park, a community facility and 60,000sqft of commercial space and has included significant social clauses to promote community development, employment, and apprenticeships.

- 3.13 The report also highlights that there are major real estate projects across all asset classes in the Belfast region that are in the pipeline – i.e. projects that are currently in design and construction, due to be completed in the future, that have the ability to deliver wider social, environmental and economic benefits to Belfast and the wider city region, including the potential to generate significant employment, skills development and local supply chain opportunities, as well as community and wellbeing benefits, for people and businesses in the Belfast region.
- 3.14 There are a number of public and private sector led projects and initiatives referenced in the report as examples of best practice, including Belfast City Council, Belfast Region City Deal partner Councils and BRCD projects. From the Council's perspective, the report highlighted the leadership Belfast City Council has demonstrated on the social value agenda by developing a Social Value Procurement Policy and a Social Value Toolkit, which aims to both achieve the best commercial outcome from our procurement activities and make a positive difference to the people and communities in Belfast. Council's Leisure Transformation Programme, Innovation Factory and Connswater Community Greenway were identified as positive projects in delivering wider social, environmental and economic benefits to the city region, while 'A Bolder Vision', Belfast Stories and Giant's Park North Foreshore were recognised as pipeline project examples that have the ability to deliver broader social, economic and environmental benefits to the city.
- 3.15 The report also recognises that the Belfast Region City Deal presents a unique opportunity to accelerate inclusive growth and sustainable development in the region. The tourism, regeneration, infrastructure and innovation projects funded through the Deal are being developed with inclusive growth and sustainability in mind, underpinned by an employability and skills programme. All BRCD projects are required to adhere to the BRCD Inclusive Growth and Sustainability Framework seeks to set new standards for the delivery of

wider benefits in Northern Ireland and the reporting of outcomes.

- 3.16 The report has resulted in six key findings, and associated recommendations. Three of the recommendations are for the real estate sector and construction supply chain, one relates specifically to BRCD projects, one is focused on the role of local Councils, and one relates to the role of the NI Executive. These will be presented as part of the presentation at the CGR Committee.
- 3.17 The final draft report has been endorsed by the Renewed Ambition Taskforce and is being considered by the wider Renewed Ambition Partnership. It is also hoped that it will be brought to a future meeting of the Social Policy Working Group for consideration. A copy of the final report will be made available for Members following consideration by the wider Renewed Ambition Partnership.
- 3.18 The presentation to Committee will provide further detail on the research findings and the recommendations going forward as to how to ensure that the built environment continues to deliver positive social, environmental and economic benefits to the city and wider city region.
- 3.19 A key pillar of the 'advocacy and engagement' strand of the Renewed Ambition Programme of work moving forward will focus on ensuring that the report findings and recommendations act as enabling levers for city region partners to incorporate sustainable development best practice into real estate development projects moving forward. From a Council perspective, officers from across Council have input into the report and with mechanisms being progressed internally to ensure the Council takes a lead role in implementing the report recommendations in terms of their specific areas of responsibility.
- 3.20 2022 / 2023 Programme of Work

At the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 8 September 2021 an update was provided to Members on the Renewed Ambition Partnership, the programme objectives and proposed future programme of activity (copy September CGR report attached at Appendix 1). As set out in that report, from a Council perspective, this collaborative public / private sector partnership approach offers a strong foundation to build on the work to date achieved through attendance at international built environment events and presents an ongoing opportunity for alignment with other strategic aims of

the Council. For the Council, the key aims and objectives of being part of the partnership and contributing to the programme include:

- Securing longer term institutional investors to support agreed regeneration plans of the Council and other partners, with a particular emphasis on housing led regeneration and city centre living
- Securing investment to deliver housing development at scale as set out in the growth ambitions of the Belfast Agenda and the ‘Reset for Growth’ report
- Secure investment in the built environment on a city-wide basis to facilitate opportunities for jobs and business, communities and providing physical and social infrastructure to deliver on inclusive economic growth
- Investment in waterfront regeneration and key infrastructure, connectivity and innovation related projects
- Investment to help address dereliction and support the re-use and preservation of heritage assets
- Investment in tourism and cultural products to underpin regeneration priorities
- Investment in clean tech, environmental and sustainability initiatives

3.21 UKREiiF

UKREiiF, the UK’s Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum took place in Leeds from the 17 to 19 May 2022 and brought together nearly 4000 representatives from the public and private sector, central and local government, investors, funders, developers, housebuilders and end-users with the objective of accelerating the Levelling Up Agenda, whilst unlocking sustainable, inclusive and transformational investment across the UK. All major UK cities had a presence at the conference, and as previously agreed by Committee, included Council as part of a Belfast Region Partnership presence.

3.22 Key themes and conference sessions included achieving net zero targets by designing and delivering healthier, equal,

greener cities; how we create vibrant places that work socially, economically and spatially, while delivering social value and inclusive growth; building better communities and inclusive inward investment.

- 3.23 As part of the Renewed Ambition Partnership, officers from Belfast City Council and Belfast Region City Deal partner Councils, alongside representatives from Queen's University Belfast, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, private sector developers and supply chain companies attended the conference to showcase the Belfast, and wider city region to support the delivery of our inclusive growth ambitions.**
- 3.24 The Belfast programme included a dedicated panel discussion focused on how the Belfast Region City Deal will further strengthen the region's compelling investment proposition and unlock a decade of opportunity; a Belfast networking reception on the DIT Stand; a joint investment facilitation networking session with Glasgow City Council, and a dedicated Belfast stand within the exhibition space.**
- 3.25 Belfast City Council officers also presented and attended events organised by other cities and partner organisations including a main stage Panel discussion on "Levelling Up Across The UK" with BCC Chief Executive alongside representatives from Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Manchester; a panel discussion in the DIT Pavilion on "The UK is open and ready for business" featuring Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh and DIT; Networking Reception hosted by Leeds City Council and Core Cities CEO's Meeting and Investor's Roundtable. In addition, there were a number of 1:1 meetings organised with institutional investors, funding organisations active in other UK cities, social value delivery vehicles, housing delivery partners, Innovation District representatives, senior officers from other UK Cities and regions, and the Department for International Trade, which facilitated the opportunity to discuss and share learnings on best practice for bringing forward sustainable, inclusive development and mechanisms for funding and delivery.**
- 3.26 Officers are currently following up on a number of leads generated at UKREiiF, alongside other Renewed Ambition partners, and it is worth noting that there was a strong interest in investment and development opportunities across all residential tenures to support housing-led and mixed use regeneration, although with further information being sought as part of the follow up discussions on issues around demand/supply, planning, viability, rates and land values etc. In addition, there was a strong focus on innovation and the**

city's growth sectors and how the Belfast Region City deal will support inclusive economic growth across the region, as well as net zero and infrastructure related projects. Further detail will be brought back to Committee as these follow up discussions progress.

MIPIM 2023

- 3.27 Members are reminded that in previous years the Council has participated in the 'Team Belfast' attendance at MIPIM - the world's leading built environment conference and exhibition. Following the cancellation of MIPIM 2020 due to Covid, the 'Team Belfast' partners coalesced into the Renewed Ambition partnership but with a renewed focus around a wider range of activities to bring forward investment and support inclusive growth with a particular focus on priority areas such as housing and another example being the research paper referenced above aimed at maximising the social, environmental and economic benefit from real estate. The Partnership membership was also expanded and now includes NIHE, Housing Association representation, all the BRCD Councils and anchor institutions as well as developer and supply chain representatives.
- 3.28 Whilst there was a MIPIM 2022 event in March, the Renewed Ambition Partnership did not attend on this occasion. However, the Renewed Ambition Taskforce has recently endorsed a Belfast presence at MIPIM in March 2023 and its inclusion within the Renewed Ambition Programme of activity for 2022 / 2023. The presentation to Committee from representatives from the Renewed Ambition Taskforce will provide further detail on how a Belfast Region presence at MIPIM assists on the delivery of investment that provides for sustainable inclusive growth in the city and wider city region, based on previous experience at MIPIM and looking forward.
- 3.29 MIPIM is an annual built environment exhibition and conference which brings together nearly 27,000 public and private sector built environment representatives from across the globe, including all major UK and European cities. It provides city leaders with an opportunity to promote their city to a global audience and connect with potential partners and sources of investment required to unlock built environment regeneration and development. In a similar vein to UKREiiF, MIPIM has re-pivoted to focus on ensuring the built environment supports sustainable development. Discussions are on-going with the event organisers on emerging themes and structure for the 2023 conference and they have indicated that the conference themes are likely to build on the 2022 key

themes of Cities for Citizens, Housing, Sustainability and Decarbonising the Built Environment.

- 3.30 From a Renewed Ambition Partnership perspective, partners feel that attending MIPIM allows Belfast and the Belfast Region to position itself to a global audience and attract the interest of institutional investors, developers, occupiers and funders in the context of bringing forward sustainable development to create a well-connected and culturally vibrant, sustainable city and region. The Partnership has therefore proposed a Belfast City Region presence at MIPIM 2023, in line with other UK Cities, and a focused programme of activity which would include key investment priorities of housing, innovation, green technology and showcasing investment opportunities within the Belfast region which draw on our key growth sectors, BRCD ambitions and delivering key regeneration projects to help ensure the built environment delivers social, environmental and economic benefits to the wider city region as highlighted within the 'Building Impact' Report.
- 3.31 The other BRCD partner Councils and private sector partners have expressed a clear interest in attending MIPIM 2023, however they feel that in order to successfully showcase Belfast and the wider City Region, it requires the civic leadership and attendance of Belfast City Council. As referenced in section 3.20, the Council's involvement will align to and complement other BCC led activities within the context of 'Positioning the City to Compete' and delivering a 'Global Future' - a key action area from the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission, with a core focus on accelerating city centre living, notably seeking institutional investment to help drive housing building at scale, while also supporting work being undertaken by Economic Development, Tourism and Culture, Resilience, SMART Belfast and partnerships including Innovation City Belfast, Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor and BRCD.
- 3.32 The governance of the Renewed Ambition Partnership is via a Taskforce comprised of representatives of the public and private sector, with Council managing all contractual and financial elements of programme delivery. Subject to Members approval, officers would enter into contractual arrangements on behalf of RAP with the event organisers for MIPIM 2023, noting that the Belfast City Region presence at MIPIM will be funded through the existing RAP programme budget.

City Centre Working Group

- 3.33 Post-pandemic the city continues to face a range of societal, economic and environmental challenges. Committee are regularly briefed on projects and interventions that Council and partners are working on to drive city recovery in the short term, while also bringing forward priorities under the Corporate Plan and strategic programmes of work including 'A Bolder Vision' and wider city connectivity, housing led regeneration, tourism and cultural activity and the Future City Centre Programme aimed at delivering a vibrant, liveable and sustainable city centre which connects to the surrounding communities. From a city centre perspective, there remain a number of opportunities but also challenges ranging from operational issues such as cleansing, safety and transport, to vibrancy/cultural and tourism activities, engagement with businesses, development and regeneration priorities including the drive for more city centre living, enhanced connectivity and the importance of physical, social and economic connections to existing communities.
- 3.34 Successfully delivering our city ambitions and addressing the challenges of the city centre requires public and private sector city partners working collaboratively to address these challenges. All city stakeholders have a key role to play in successfully delivering this ambition and there is a clear desire amongst a number of these stakeholders for a more cohesive forum for discussing and addressing issues, whilst maximising opportunities to collectively deliver on the ambitions for a successful city centre.
- 3.35 It is proposed that a Members City Centre Working Group is convened to provide a forum to allow, as appropriate, public and private city stakeholders, including representatives from business and community organisations, the development, tourism and cultural, housing and education sectors and BID's, to engage with Members to address the short- and longer-term challenges facing the city centre. Members will be aware that similar Working Groups are already in place for North, South, East and West Belfast and it is felt that it would be beneficial to have a similar dedicated focus on the City Centre. Given the important role of the city centre as a hub for investment, culture, tourism, learning and employment, it is felt that a Members Working Group could help ensure it can continue to perform these important roles for all areas of the city to derive the benefits. Given the importance of continued public private partnership working it could also serve as a useful forum to consider some of the matters raised via the

Renewed Ambition Partnership and seek input of Members as appropriate.

- 3.36 Subject to Members agreement on this approach a further paper will be brought back on the Terms of Reference and advice via Democratic Services on the make-up of the Group.

3.37 **Financial and Resource Implications**

The Renewed Ambition Partnership is delivered as a public private sector sponsorship fund and is supported by a range of public, private and key anchor institutions.

- 3.38 Council has previously agreed to contribute of £80,000 towards the 2022 Renewed Ambition Partnership. In addition, all Belfast Region City Deal partner Councils, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Queen's University Belfast, and representatives from the developer and built environment supply chain community have contributed towards the current programme of activity, with external and private sector funding forming the majority of the overall programme budget.

- 3.39 The Renewed Ambition Partnership (RAP) Taskforce, the governing body for the Partnership, are proposing that a Belfast City Region presence at MIPIIM 2023 should be included in the RAP 2022 / 2023 programme of activity, with associated costs being funded through the existing Partnership sponsorship budget.

- 3.40 Council undertakes the contract and financial management on behalf of RAP. Approval is sought for officers to enter into contractual arrangements on behalf of RAP with event organisers for MIPIIM 2023, noting that this will be funded through the sponsorship already secured from public and private partners to deliver the wider Renewed Ambition Programme.

- 3.41 Approval is also sought for the Chairperson of the Committee, or their nominated representative, along with senior officers as appropriate to attend MIPIIM 2023 with travel costs to be met from within existing departmental budgets. All other costs related to the Belfast Region Presence at MIPIIM 2023 would be met from the existing RAP Public - Private Partnership Programme Budget.

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

None associated with this report.”

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In response to a request by a Member, the Director of City Regeneration and Development agreed to explore the viability of a Communities of Interest Working Group and to provide an update to the Committee, in conjunction with a future update on the establishment of a Members City Centre Working Group.

Subsequent to responding to a number of questions from Members, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation, and they retired from the meeting.

The Committee:

- Noted an update on elements of the programme of work which was being delivered via the Renewed Ambition public-private partnership, which included report findings from research that examined the role that the built environment played in delivering Social, Environmental and Economic benefits to Belfast and the wider Belfast City Region, and update following Belfast's attendance at UKREiiF – the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum;
- Noted that, a presentation had been made to the Committee (by the Chair of the Renewed Ambition Partnership Taskforce and consultants) on the report findings in relation to the role that the built environment played in delivering Social, Environmental and Economic Benefits, which included recommendations on how it could be enhanced and maximised going forward for the benefit of the city and wider region;
- Approved entering into contractual arrangements, on behalf of the Renewed Ambition Partnership, with event organisers for MIPIM 2023, noting that this event would be funded through the existing Renewed Ambition Partnership sponsorship;
- Approved attendance by the Chairperson of the Committee, or their nominated representative, along with senior officers as appropriate at MIPIM 2023; and
- Approved the establishment of a Members City Centre Working Group, with further details to be brought back on the Terms of Reference and membership based on advice via Democratic Services.

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 five items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of

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

A Bolder Vision Update

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided the Committee with an update on A Bolder Vision, that included the ongoing engagement with Ministers for Communities and Infrastructure, and the ongoing traffic analysis in relation to options for the Donegall Place/Royal Ave section of the Civic Spine.

She further updated the Committee on the timeframe to complete the Bolder Vision Strategy and Action Plan, and that, a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would form the basis of a framework for collaborative partnership working under A Bolder Vision.

The Committee:

- Noted the ongoing engagement with DfC and DfI Ministers and other partners, including the work being undertaken by a DfI consultant focusing on resolving issues on the Civic Spine and Inner Ring Road Key Moves aimed at enabling the design for Belfast Streets Ahead 3 and the Frederick St Junction to progress within the context of the Bolder Vision, to enable the completion of ABV Strategy and Action Plan;
- Noted the ongoing work on the BCC/DfI/DfC partnership and MoU approach, subject to agreement from all three organisations, and that, this will be brought to Committee at the appropriate time; and
- Noted the planned BCC/DfI/DfC statement that would follow the proposed Ministerial meeting, anticipated to take place late June/early July and the next steps to bring forward the Bolder Vision Strategy and Action Plan.

Quarterly Zoo Performance Update

The Director of Economic Development and the Zoo Manager provided the Committee with an update on the Zoo performance during Quarter 4 (January - March) of the 2021-22 financial year.

During discussion, the Director of Economic Development agreed to bring a report to a future meeting of the Committee with further detail on the financial performance of the Zoo.

The Committee:

- Noted the Zoo performance update report for the period January to March 2022; and
- Approved the process for dealing with Charitable Requests.

Request to Present

Streetdock

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from Streetdock on an update on its e-cargo delivery pilot that was supported under the Revitalisation Funding, at a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

Car Parking Strategy Update

The Director of City Regeneration and Development reported that it had been proposed that the refresh of the Car Parking Strategy would be postponed until the completion and publication of the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) and the adoption of the Belfast LDP Draft Plan Strategy.

She informed the Committee that an important strand of the Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan (2018) had been to ensure the appropriate provision and location of car parking in the city and that the volume, location and quality of parking in the city was seen as key to its vitality and viability.

She explained that the Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan (2018) outlined a range of actions designed to promote more sustainable travel provision and to address residential parking issues.

She reported that officers had, in preparation for undertaking the refresh of the Car Parking Strategy, considered the statutory processes which had been underway, including the development of the draft Plan Strategy and BMTP, the publication of which would provide direction for all policy approaches to car parking and other transportation issues.

She concluded by stating that officers would continue to implement, monitor and promote the Action Plan as contained within the Car Parking Strategy through the Car Parking Working Group and would provide regular updates to the Committee with regard to the implementation status of the actions.

The Committee:

- agreed that, the refresh of the Car Parking Strategy would be deferred until after the LDP draft Plan Strategy (dPS) was adopted; and
- noted that the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) had been considered during the Independent Examination of the (dPS) and that it would be prudent to postpone a refresh of the Parking Strategy to ensure consistency in the policy approach.

**Blue and Green Infrastructure Funding:
Active Travel Enablers Update**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- To update Members on the progress of the Active Travel Enablers projects supported under the DfI Green and Blue Infrastructure Fund that includes covered cycle stands, cycle repair kits and secured cycle parking provision
-
- To note the ongoing engagement with the Department for Infrastructure on future funding for active travel projects

2.0 Recommendations

The Members of the Committee are asked to:

- Approve the proposed covered cycle stand locations and repair kits as outlined within this report to enable delivery within the timeframes of the Letter of Offer;
- Approve the recommendation to provide funding to deliver secure cycle stands as identified within this paper
- Approve the further development and submission of further funding bids to support the delivery of additional secure cycle provision.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

As previously reported to Members, on 2nd February 2022 Council received a Letter of Offer from DfI for capital funding to support Active Travel Enabling Projects in line with the Business Case submitted to the Department. The Letter of Offer for £207,500 of capital funding includes covered cycle parking, secure cycle parking and cycle repair stands. Originally DfI required spend by the end of March, however, Council Officers secured agreement from DfI that the funding could be drawn down prior to 31 March and spend to be completed by 30 September 2022. These Active Travel Enablers are aligned to the Bolder Vision as early

interventions to bring forward improvements in the active travel provision and infrastructure across the city, utilising our own assets and expanding the capacity of key delivery partners to promote and install enabling infrastructure to increase active travel provision and to address the dominance of car-based infrastructure and usage across the city.

3.2 Covered Cycle Stands

Committee had previously agreed the allocation of £100k from the Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme for the provision of covered cycle stands. Sustrans was appointed by the Council to identify appropriate locations for cycle parking across the city, identifying key attractors and locations aligned with the DfI Belfast Cycle Network. Based on their developed criteria and type of cycle stands, locations were identified and approved for installation as a first phase within this programme. Following a competitive procurement competition, Council appointed Externiture to produce ten covered cycle stands. These units are currently under production and will be installed later this summer in the following locations as agreed by this Committee in September 2021:

- Gasworks
- St George's Market
- Grosvenor Community Centre
- Shankill Leisure Centre
- Belmont Park
- Inverary Community Centre
- Belfast Zoo
- Waterworks
- Belvoir Activity Centre
- Mark Peters Track

3.3 Members received an update on the DfI funding for the Active Travel Enabling Projects in March 2022 that outlined the projects, budget and timeframe for delivery by 30th September 2022. In terms of the covered cycle stands, Officers drew upon priority locations areas as identified by Sustrans, and these locations were also assessed in terms of the deliverability within the timeframe as well as the key criteria aligned to cycle infrastructure provision. On approval of the locations Officers (via the City Regeneration & Physical Programmes teams) will commence the procurement process.

- 3.4 Based on identified priority recommendations from the Sustrans report and additional applied criteria such as need and demand and timeframe for expenditure, we are seeking approval for the following locations for the next phase of delivery. In terms of deliverability within the expenditure timeframe there has been a focus on utilising Council owned sites where possible. Reflecting on experience from the first phase and delays for implementing the stands in certain locations, we suggest that Members approve additional locations as a fall-back position in case some of the first set locations become difficult to implement. Additionally, it is proposed that there are five repair kits to go alongside some of the covered cycle units and Officers are seeking flexibility in terms of the location of these due to the need to engage with 3rd party landowners and ensure a spread across the city. If there is additional DfI funding this year, further repair kits could form part of an overall request for funding.

Proposed locations for approval (including backup locations)	
Avoniel Leisure Centre	Ligoneil/Wolfhill Centre
Botanic Gardens	Brook Leisure Centre
New Park Colin	Cherryvale Park
Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre	Crumlin Road Gaol
Ormeau Park	Templemore
Andersonstown Leisure Centre	Writer's Square
Belfast Castle	Connswater Community Greenway
Linen Quarter	Shaftesbury Centre
Four Corners	Musgrave Park
Sailortown	Grove Leisure Centre

- 3.5 Depending on the outcome of the procurement exercise it is envisaged that this funding will provide between 13 & 16 covered cycle stands at the locations identified above with Officers working across the list as above in terms of deliverability and funding within the time period of September 2022 in accordance with the Letter of Offer.

Secure Cycle Parking Provision

- 3.6 As part of the DfI funding to support the Active Travel Enabling Projects the CG&R Committee approved an Expression of Interest for the provision of secure cycle parking within the city centre. The provision of funding of up to £20k capital funding for secure cycle infrastructure provision was proposed to bring forward publicly accessible, secure cycle parking that would be installed and operated by a competent supplier that could deliver the units within the funding period of September 2022.
- 3.7 The Expression of Interest (Eoi), which closed on 16 May 2022 was brought forward to test the market and identify suitable delivery partners for this project, potential locations, and interest in the concept. In addition to utilising the Councils normal advertising channels Officers also engaged directly with delivery partners including the BIDs, the Chamber, Translink and Multi-Story Car Park Operators to promote the scheme throughout the Eoi period, targeting operators that can utilise and repurpose existing physical assets and provide strategically located, publicly accessible, and maintained and operated locations that could deliver out additional secure cycle parking as pilot projects for this type of provision
- 3.8 Delivery partners were assessed by a panel of Council Officers based on the criteria as established within the Eoi and as previously agreed by this Committee. These criteria included the proposed location in relation to key trip attractors, as well as their operating model and ability to adequately deliver a publicly accessible model within the timeframe. In total four applicants responded to the EOI with details and recommendations within the summary table below;

Applicant	Location	Recommendation	Reason
Savilles	Murrays Exchange	Not recommended	Proposal to provide employee bike parking within a building frontage within the Murrays Exchange. Not publicly accessible and for employee use only
Castlecourt	Castlecourt	Recommended	Meets the agreed scheme criteria. Located within the

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			<p>Castlecourt Car Park to provide 24 secure cycle stands beside the security office with lighting & CCTV coverage and included within an established facility management system.</p> <p>Accessible from Berry St and Gresham St during normal car parking hours with overnight parking available.</p>
Linen Qtr Bid	Linenhall Street	Not recommended	<p>Proposal to place a secure cycle cage onto existing on-street parking bays within the Linenhall area.</p> <p>Accessible via a keyfob issued on a first come first served basis and proposed to include within the BID area cleansing team and StreetBeat Officer patrols. Delivery not achievable within the delivery timeframe given landowner consent & statutory approval requirements</p>
Victoria Sq Q Park	Victoria Sq	Recommended	<p>Meets the scheme criteria.</p> <p>Proposed to deliver in conjunction with Spokesafe as a pilot project in Belfast. Located within the Multi-storey car park provided a cycle hub on existing</p>

			parking spaces. Provided 30-35 bike parking spaces (including e-cargo), bike repair and locker provision. Facilitated online customer booking process including PAYG, weekly and monthly booking options and incorporated within the structure's facilities management.
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- 3.0 The Eol has enabled the Council to recommend two successful applications from CastleCourt Shopping Centre and Spokesafe Ltd in partnership with Q-Park Victoria Square Shopping Centre to deliver and maintain safe and secure cycle parking provision within their existing assets, and to provide a self-sustaining operating model for the ongoing use of the facility. This model aligns with one of the emerging actions of the Bolder Vision Action Plan in terms of re-purposing existing assets to create multi-model locations at key locations across the city centre and aligned to the DfI Belfast Cycle Network. Pending approval, a Letter of Offer for £20k capital funding will be sent to the successful applicants, enabling the implementation of grant funding for the secure cycle parking to commence June 2022 and to ensure the project is completed September 2022. This Letter of Funding will stipulate the conditions of the provision of publicly accessible and secure cycle parking aligned with the terms of the submission received from the successful operators. The Letter of Offer will transfer all risk, liability and operation and maintenance to the successful applicant and will also include provision for a clawback of funding should the offer be removed at any stage during the agreed period of two years as per the Letter of Offer.
- 3.10 It should also be noted that during the Eol period Officers received direct interest from a total of twelve groups/businesses who would be interested in bringing forward secure cycle provision but who were however unable to commit to the timeframes of this Letter of Offer in terms of delivery.

- 3.11** The responses received have helped guide decision making around the next steps of this process and highlighted that there is a growing appetite in the market and the potential to support its growth by also expanding the scheme outside the existing city centre boundary, looking at different operating models and by including stakeholders such as private sector employers and the BIDs via a potential second tranche of funding from DfI. This approach would also support the growing number of Cycle to Work schemes and provide security for those using e-bikes. The EoI has demonstrated that there is a demand for secure cycle parking (subject to appropriate delivery models and funding) and Officers feel there is an opportunity to work with stakeholders and help stimulate the market further and bring forward other options and models. As a result of this Members are asked to approve the development and submission of an additional funding request to DfI to support secure cycle infrastructure through future potential funding streams.

4.0 Finance and Resource Implications

The capital costs associated within this report will be covered from within the DfI Green and Blue Infrastructure Fund.

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

Equality of opportunity and good relations, and disability duties screening is complete on the overall programme with mitigating actions agreed and implemented. The screening of the programme is currently undergoing a review and the appropriate actions will be picked up by officers.”

During subsequent discussion, a number of Members stated that city centre locations for secure cycle parking should be explored and considered as a priority, as part of the Active Travel Enablers projects.

The Committee:

- Approved the proposed covered cycle stand locations and repair kits, to enable delivery within the timeframes of the Letter of Offer;
- Approved the recommendation to provide funding to deliver secure cycle stands;
- Agreed that a covered cycle stand location at the Kennedy Centre, be considered as an additional proposed location; and

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- Approved the further development and submission of further funding bids to support the delivery of additional secure cycle provision.

Growing Business and the Economy

**Sustainable and Inclusive Economic
Strategy for Belfast**

The Director of Economic Development provided the Committee with an update on the Economic Strategy: Supporting Sustainable and Economic Growth.

He stated that the purpose of the strategy was to respond to opportunities in a timely manner, effectively plan ahead to secure new funds and improve coherence across the range of Council services. He added that the strategy provided a framework for internal collaboration, focus and prioritisation and facilitated alignment with the work of key partners across the public, private and third sectors.

He explained to the Committee the following objectives of the Economic Strategy:

- Foster growth of indigenous businesses in Belfast;
- Establish Belfast as a resilient, net-zero, circular economy;
- Create new and better jobs in the city;
- Build and maintain a skills pipeline that addresses the skills gaps;
- Improve socio-economic inclusion;
- Grow levels of exports and FDI; and
- Establish Belfast as a vibrant place to invest, live, work and play.

He concluded by outlining the next steps, that included strategic engagement with key partners, public consultation, reshaping internal workplans and establishing management and governance arrangements.

In response to a request from a Member, the Director of Economic Development agreed to include regular Party Group Briefing meetings on the Economic Strategy.

The Committee:

- Noted the progress to date, in the development of the Economic Strategy to support sustainable and inclusive growth in Belfast for the period 2022-2030;
- Endorsed the draft vision, objectives and emerging policy actions and advise on any suggested amendments in advance of the planned public consultation exercise; and
- Noted the ongoing work to develop activities that would be consistent with the emerging vision and objectives of the strategy; and

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- Agreed associated budget allocations, which included £45,000 towards the Social Enterprise Incentive Fund.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Update on City Imagining and Make Yourself at Home

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the delivery of two recent strategies, Make Yourself at Home and City Imagining. The report specifically updates members on:

- **Development work and concept a year of culture with the working title Belfast Imagining**
- **Progress on Neighbourhood Tourism and approval for continuation funding**
- **Update on major events including overview of future commissioning model**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the principles, concept and work related to the development of a year of culture, Belfast Imagining and agree to receive future reports as this work develops further.**
- **Note the progress on the development of a Neighbourhood Tourism investment framework and timeline for the introduction of that framework.**
- **Agree the funding of £37,500 to each of the two partners within the existing ‘City Connections’ programme totalling £75,000 to provide security and the continuation of this work until the Neighbourhood Tourism Investment framework is active. To note the requested monies are within exiting departmental budgets and requires no additional monies.**

- Note the findings from the evaluation of 2022 St. Patrick's Day events and the proposed future commissioning model and the development approach to the Maritime Festival.
- Agree that a full bid is submitted for Belfast to host the Fleadh Ceoil and to receive future reports.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 At its meeting on 6th April 2022 members were provided with the final version of the 'Make Yourself at Home' 10 year tourism strategy and approved its adoption as a council strategy. The strategy aims to double the value of tourism in the city and work with city partners to enhance and develop coherent authentic tourism offers, marketing and visitor servicing. The Make Yourself at Home strategy is designed to align to the ten-year cultural strategy, *A City Imagining*, in order to ensure that tourism development supports cultural development and is based upon an authentic and sustainable Belfast offer.
- 3.2 At this committee's meetings in March and April members approved the 22/23 workplan for both strategies. Those workplans contained a number of initiatives to be delivered within this financial year. These activities are interrelated and are designed to equip the city to deliver on a core ambition of 'A City Imagining' - to deliver our home-grown year of culture to build capacity and ambition in our creative sector whilst placing Belfast on the map internationally as a culturally vibrant destination that will assist our cultural, tourism and hospitality recover and create more and better jobs.

Belfast Imagining

- 3.3 As laid out in the cultural strategy the ambitions of an upscaled year of culture will directly deliver on all 4 strategic themes and their associated priorities – A City Belonging, A City Challenging, A City Creating and a City Exploring – including:
- Long-term capacity building and ensuring sustainability of the cultural sector
 - City-wide civic engagement and buy-in on culture and regeneration development for Belfast
 - A new commissioning model for the city's events and festivals

- Strengthening the tourism proposition in the city through greater understanding of the city's cultural narrative and international appeal
- Integration of planned major developments, such as the Belfast Stories & UNESCO City of Music status, into a citywide approach maximising inclusive growth opportunities for this investment

Belfast Imagining 2024*- Post-Covid

- 3.4 We believe creativity will be at the heart of Belfast's recovery from the pandemic ensuring that we can build back better – across culture, tourism, and hospitality - to a more sustainable position than we were in before the effects of the pandemic set in, leaving a lasting legacy for these sectors, as well as the people of the city. While the full impact of Covid-19 is yet unknown, what is clear is that recovery will require new and innovative approaches, as well as time. We recognise the profound socio-economic impacts across the city, especially for the culture and arts sector. We are pivoting our programmes to help build the capacity of our cultural sector and maintain our commitment to a year of cultural celebration in our city, this will now take place in 2024 recognising the impact on the cultural sector's capacity post-pandemic. Belfast will continue to host a number of landmark international projects in such as UNBOXED 2022 and One Young World in 2023 in the lead up to this home-grown year of culture in 2024.

Belfast Imagining 2024*- Concept

- 3.5 Belfast Imagining* is an investment in the collective imagination of the city, giving space, time and resources for the coming together of its people to imagine, dream and invent. To speculate and investigate. To learn and experiment. To build and develop plans for new futures, new spaces, new expressions of humanness and our relationship with nature, new stories and new experiences that will assemble us together across the city (and in virtual spaces that now are an integral part of our lives) releasing new meaning and building new connections to pave our way into an exciting and creative future for our city.
- 3.6 Council will lead on a process of investment and capacity building that allows a collective imagination to take place across the city. A city allowing its imagination to flourish through creation and collaboration, connecting with each other and with nature, bringing our streets and

neighbourhoods to life, through extraordinary things taking place in ordinary places.

Principles for Belfast Imagining 2024* Programme

- 3.7 **Collaboration and Co-design** - Belfast Imagining* is an opportunity for the city to connect, assemble and collaborate in a multitude of new ways. It is a year to make new connections, to build new relationships and to invent new ways of working and creating through partnership and genuine co-design. It will be a year of Inter-sector collaboration (culture, science, business, education) A year of citizen involvement in the cultural and artistic development processes of the city. And with new relationships come new processes and models of engagement. It is a year to explore and create together.
- 3.8 ***New work - Belfast Imagining**** will involve a significant investment in new work and the creative process. Through a process of co-design, development, commissioning and grants the city will be alive with new and exciting experiences and initiatives that will assemble us together across the city throughout 2024.
- 3.9 ***Us and nature*** - It is the most challenging question of our time: how can humans co-exist more harmoniously with all that we share this planet. Sustainable. Inclusive. It will be a year to reassess, reinterpret and celebrate the splendour of interconnectedness with our natural world. How does nature become a part of how we regenerate our city centre? How can we use creativity to help people understand and engage with the climate crisis? The city will open itself to fresh perspectives and paradigms. 2024 will contribute to the search for harmony and a greener, more sustainable future for our city.
- 3.10 ***Future thinking - Belfast Imagining**** will be an opportunity to project, develop and investigate what possible new futures lie ahead of us. What new spaces, new forms, alternatives, reinvention can we encourage and explore through creativity and culture? What lies ahead for Belfast and for the planet? It will be a space for our collective imagination to explore our future city.
- 3.11 ***Public space Belfast Imagining**** will make a substantial contribution towards examining cultural belonging through public space. The city of Belfast itself will be the canvas for the year; Its streets, its walls, the water surrounds it, the air that fills it. It will be a chance for creators and the people who live,

work and play in Belfast to rediscover their city, to build our civic pride and weave creativity and imagination into the very fabric of Belfast.

Belfast Imagining 2024* Next Steps:

- 3.12 As the Culture team progress with recruitment for the new staff structure designed to support the development and delivery of the ambitions of Belfast Imagining 2024* progress will now focus on delivering the following:
- SOC/ OBC – council have commissioned the development of a Strategic Outline Case and Outline Business Case for Belfast Imagining 2024* to be delivered in June and July respectively. This will help secure buy-in and both private and public sponsorship, as well as partnership, opportunities to deliver on these ambitions with collaborative cross sector, cross governmental and cross departmental approaches.
 - Eden Project Partnership – Eden Project are currently finalising their feasibility study to commission as a lead partner in 2024 design and delivery with a focus on core themes of nature and public space, plans include urban gardens, social prescribing, urban bee keeping, largescale sculptural works and long-term city centre greening and wilding.
- 3.13 *Governance Model* – Culture & Tourism teams are working collaboratively, to design a governance model to suit a variety of largescale projects in delivery over the next 3 years (One Young World, Fleadh Ceoile, UNESCO City of Music, City Compact, Belfast Imagining 2024) to streamline these processes and the ask of various city stakeholders. A future report will detail this governance model.
- 3.14 *Commissioning Model* – Culture & Tourism teams are liaising with procurement, audit and legal departments to develop a bespoke commissioning model that is fit for purpose specifically for cultural development and events commissions for delivering on the ambitions of the year of culture in 2024 as well as the new approach to commissioning local, and of scale, artworks and creative programmes for city events such as St Patrick's Day and Maritime Festival.

3.15 Update Neighbourhood Tourism:

Members will be aware that an Investment Programme for Local Tourism was included as an integral part of the Year 1 Action Plan of the Tourism Strategy 'Make Yourself at Home' approved at April 2022 Committee.

3.16 Initial work has indicated that this Programme will have multiple strands recognising that one size does not fit all. It will also include capacity building for those areas of the city or organisations that are at an earlier stage of development in terms of readiness for investment.

3.17 At the current time, Officers continue to:

- Consult and engage with the appropriate stakeholders around the outline parameters of the Programme ensuring strategic fit to tourism priorities.
- Develop aims and objectives and outcomes of the Programme which are inclusive of geographic communities, communities of interest and thematic clustering while delivering on the four strategic themes within the Tourism Strategy - Grow, Position, Experience and Sustain.
- Benchmark best- practice investment models from other jurisdictions and account for 'lessons learned'.
- Scope and scale an appropriate delivery mechanism which takes cognisance of the varying tourism priority needs across the city.
- Map and develop a flexible and tiered approach to the funding delivery and investment model.
- Resource the internal mechanics to facilitate Programme development and delivery eg. grant management system

Next Steps:

3.18 The proposed timeline for the Investment Programme for Local Tourism is as follows:

- Detailed report will be brought back to Committee in August 2022 (ratified September 2022) detailing the process and criteria for the Programme.
- Consultation on the Programme including Equality Screening - (12 weeks) will be completed by the end of November 2022.

- Final Committee approval and ratification in December 2022.
- Programme opens for applications in December 2022.
- Programme closes and award of applications March/April 2023

Officers are initially working on a multi-strand approach to Neighbourhood Tourism funding recognising the differing stages of development and capacity across the city. It is envisaged the programme will have a core element of 2 year funding, and a one year capacity development component to address these differing requirements. This will allow capacity, product and experiences to be built across the city that align with key strategies including 'Make Yourself at Home', City Imagining' and the Belfast Stories project.

City Connections:

- 3.19 Members will be aware of the ongoing partnership model between Fáilte Feirste and Eastside Partnership to deliver a programme of works that supports the development of local tourism products and city connections including market research, support for local business through joint initiatives, as well as support for delivery partners.
- 3.20 At the March 2022, Committee £25,000 funding (£12,500 each for Eastside and Fáilte Feirste) was approved to cover the period April to June 2022. This financial support was for the purpose of research and delivery of two collaborative projects. At that time, it was intended that the Neighbourhood Tourism Investment Programme would be open for applications to cover the period beyond June 2022.
- 3.21 However, in consideration of the ongoing work on the Neighbourhood Tourism Investment Programme as detailed within this report and with the projected opening date for applications now likely to be December 2022, it is proposed that Members consider approval to release funding for the remainder of the financial year, amounting to £37,500 for each organisation to cover the period July to March 2023.
- 3.22 This proposed funding would be allocated to further market research which could inform a future application to the Neighbourhood Tourism Investment Programme, as well as two further collaborative projects.

Major Events

3.23 St Patrick's Day

Members will be aware that at a meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28 August 2019 a new ten-year cultural strategy for Belfast, A City Imagining, was agreed. As part of this strategy a new investment approach was approved and this model committed to a partnership approach to supporting the cultural sector, with the aim of sustaining and developing accessible cultural activity and infrastructure across Belfast and creating the conditions for long-term transformation. It was agreed that this partnership model should be applied to the direct delivery of City events by Council as well as funded programmes of activity.

- 3.24 For these reasons, it was agreed by SP&R Committee in January 2021 that a different approach would be taken to the future development of St Patrick's Day. Officers designed an open and competitive process to support applications for creative development awards for St Patrick's Day 2022. This opportunity was published to Council's cultural database, promoted on social media and via Council's website as well as through partner organisations and networks.

3.25 The Approach:

Building on the strong foundation of recent years, Council agreed to develop an ambitious approach to St Patrick's Day in the city. This opportunity was designed to allow space for real innovation and experimentation and genuine co-design with the people of the city. Rather than commissioning an external consultant to review the event it was agreed to test a different approach by directly investing in the local sector through Creative Development Awards that could then be progressed to a next stage commission for March 2022.

STAGE 1 - Application for Creative Development Awards:

The four highest scoring applications were awarded £15,000 each to complete a Research and Development (R&D) phase on their approach as agreed by CG&R Committee.

**STAGE 2 – Delivery of a feasibility study
For St Patrick's Day pilots in 2022:**

The lead organisations for the four proposals outlined above completed a period of Research and Development to produce

a feasibility study including full costings and delivery model for the proposed pilots for St Patrick's Day 2022. Organisations were asked to develop proposals based on a guide budget of £80,000 per pilot, however as this was a commissioning process Council reserved the right to offer more or less funding based on information contained in the section of the feasibility report relating to scalability and alternative options.

STAGE 3 - Selection of pilots to be taken forward for delivery in March 2022:

By allowing an opportunity to pilot ideas in March 2022, proposals could be 'tested' in real time and evaluated (by city stakeholders, visitors and residents) with an option of one or more of the pilots to be taken forward to full delivery in 2023. In 2022, Council assumed an overarching curatorial, programming, production and co-ordination role to produce a festival of events over multiple days and also lead on the marketing of the event.

At SP&R in December 2022, Members agreed to proceed with the appointment of Duncairn and Beat Carnival to ensure deliverability for March 2022. Furthermore, Council engaged with Féile and MayWe to refine proposals around core themes of stories and music in keeping with the emerging vision for the programme. These refined proposals were also approved by SP&R.

3.26 Review of 2022 Activity

While there were clearly a number of successful outcomes from the programme, there were also some learnings that will be used to educate the process this year.

Strategic Learnings:

The uncertainty stemming from COVID-19 meant the timescales from the appointment to deliver the programme in 2022 was not feasible to allow the events to be delivered to full potential. Earlier commitment would assist partnership planning, production, programming development and community/participant engagement particularly in respect of the parade and concert. In addition, it allowed no time in attracting additional funding streams, putting in place a framework for worldwide streaming, a more intense, and longer, marketing campaign i.e. tourism package. The short deliver window greatly decision making on all projects.

Operational Learnings:

The parade attracted huge numbers to the city centre, and consideration needs to be given soon to extending the route and other logistical alterations. The concert would have also benefited operationally from a longer lead in time. It was clear that the ability of the Council to call on experienced contractors was of significant benefit.

3.27 The 2023 Approach

As in 2022, Council will have an overarching curatorial, programming, production and co-ordination role to produce a festival of events over multiple days and also lead on the marketing of the event. Officers are seeking approval to use a similar commissioning approach for the events in 2023 and 2024.

- 3.28** That commissioning approach will utilise a similar model to that used in 2022, essentially a Design Contest that will allow council officers to actively review and feed into the creative elements to ensure alignment with existing council strategies including 'City Imagining' and our recently developed Music Strategy. It is proposed that design contest would request competitors to submit a concept for 2023 and 2024 recognising the opportunity to further elevate St. Patricks Day celebrations for our year of culture 'Belfast Imagining' in 2024. However, most significantly all parties will have adequate lead in time to fully explore the development of these projects, recognising the evaluation of 2022 activities. In addition, this will allow for greater collaboration between the projects and longer lead in time to develop a joined up marcomms approach. Early decisions on funding and delivery models will greatly assist with this innovative work so it is proposed the initial stages of the design competition are opening in early July 2022.

Maritime 2022/2023

- 3.29** It has been previously agreed to deliver the full Maritime Festival on a biennial basis in order to grow ambition, budget and impact of the festival. The Festival has been successfully delivered as part of a wider partnership model with key stakeholders in Titanic Quarter.
- 3.30** A Service Level Agreement will be drawn up in 2022/23 with Maritime Belfast Trust (MBT) to support the delivery of activity throughout 2022. Officers have been liaising with MBT to fully develop and cost their initial proposal, which will include a series of smaller events throughout the year. In tandem with

this MBT direct delivery of activity, Council officers will conduct developmental work on future festivals, on the back of both an external and internal review. Some of this work may involve further pilots which may be trailed during the MBT events.

- 3.31 Officers continue to engage with both internal and external stakeholders such as the 2024 team, TNI, Derry & Strabane Council and MBT to establish future festival dates with the best strategic fit; aligning to A City Imagining, Make Yourself at Home, and recognizing Year of Culture, the Foyle Maritime Festival and The Open.

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Update

- 3.32 Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann takes place annually in August and is the most important event in the traditional music calendar and up until the COVID 19 pandemic had been continuously held since 1951. The Fleadh encompasses a range of entertainment activities including concerts, ceili/set dancing, traditional sessions plus competitions in music, song, language and national and international events.
- 3.33 The full Fleadh programme was last held in Mullingar in 2019 and Dundalk in 2018. In recent years the 10-year programme has attracted up to 450,000 visitors with 6,000 accounted for through competitors alone.
- 3.34 Whilst it is estimated that the initial outlay to secure the event is approximately £2.5 million there are also significant opportunities for the host city to recoup this investment through partnership initiatives including media buy-in. It would also be intended to bid for support from government and other sources using the UBC being developed for Belfast Imagining.
- 3.35 Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann will:
- Offer direct economic return through bed nights and visitor spend
 - Profile the city's cultural offering and increase awareness of the city's tourism offer to attract new and repeat visitors in subsequent years
 - Increase exposure of Belfast brand through national and international media coverage

- Provide opportunity for capacity and skills development within the music sector

- 3.36 Members will be aware that in January 2022 permission to submit an EOI was approved. The EOI submitted to the Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCE), co-signed by Ards Comhaltas Branch was to host in 2023 (although this is likely to be 2024 or beyond). In line with the Cultural Strategy, Draft Tourism Plan, UNESCO designation and recovery plans this expression of interest would indicate 2024 and 2025 as optimum years to host the event. Work will continue to ensure that any plans are progressed in a complementary approach to other activity in that period including working in partnership with other cities as required.
- 3.37 The EOI was submitted on 26th April 2022 following a very positive site visit to Belfast on 13th April 2022 which included representation from CCE and Fleadh Executive Committee. The delegation visited City Hall, 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast Waterfront Hall, the Mac, University of Ulster and other venues. Officers presented to the delegation, highlighting the alignment of the Fleadh Cheoil to Cultural and Tourism Strategies and within the context of Year of Culture 2024 and there were discussions involving other stakeholders on project bidding and delivery.

Next Steps Fleadh Cheoil

- 3.38 BCC are currently awaiting confirmation of a further site visit from the wider Fleadh Executive Committee - this is likely to be June / July 2022. It is envisaged that a full bid will need to be submitted following that visit, so approval is sought from members of the committee for the development and submission of that bid. In advance of submitting a bid work is continuing to address particular bid elements, which are deemed to be of significance, in order to prepare for the next visit (areas such as camping, accommodation, school of music requirements). If permission is granted for the submission of a full bid regular updates report will be brought back to committee for consideration. It is envisaged that any financial implications stemming from a successful bid would be funded via departmental budgets with a bid being made for Executive funding, with a report detailing this approach being brought back to committee.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.39 The activities outlined within this report will be resourced from the 2022/23 Economic Development budget agreed by this Committee in March 2022.**

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

- 3.40 The unit is currently working with our Equality unit to develop the required programme of EQIA and screening for the individual elements of this work.”**

The Committee:

- Noted the principles, concept and work related to the development of a year of culture, Belfast Imagining and agreed to receive future reports as the work developed further;
- Noted the progress on the development of a Neighbourhood Tourism investment framework and timeline for the introduction of that framework;
- Agreed the funding of £37,500 to each of the two partners within the existing 'City Connections' programme, which totalled £75,000, to provide security and the continuation of the work until the Neighbourhood Tourism Investment framework was active;
- Noted that the requested monies were within exiting departmental budgets and required no additional monies;
- Noted the findings from the evaluation of 2022 St. Patricks Day events and the proposed future commissioning model and the development approach to the Maritime Festival; and
- Agreed that a full bid would be submitted for Belfast to host the Fleadh Ceoil and to receive future reports on the submission.

Strategic & Operational Issues

Notice of Motion - Quarterly Report

The Committee considered the quarterly update on the Notices of Motion that the City Growth and Generation Committee was responsible for.

The Committee:

- Noted the updates to all Notices of Motion that the Committee was responsible for; and
- Agreed to the recommended closure of the following two Notices of Motion:
 - i) Belfast Bikes - Pilot Scheme to use Rolloe; and
 - ii) Air Passenger Duty.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee –
End of Year Report (2021-22) and Committee
Plan (2022-23)**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To provide an end of year progress update (Appendix 1) on the key actions contained in the 2021-22 City Growth and Regeneration (CG&R) Committee Plan, as agreed by this Committee in June 2021.
- 1.2 To present to Committee the draft City Growth & Regeneration Committee Plan for 2022-23 (Appendix 2).

2.0 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of the end of year report; and
- Approve the new draft City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan for 2022-2023.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 The 2021-2022 Committee Plan and the draft Plan for 2022-23 were both developed in the context of the Council’s Corporate Plan and the Belfast Agenda. Consequently, the Committee Plan contains the commitments within the Corporate Delivery Plan, which fall under the remit of the Committee, plus additional deliverables that have been agreed by CG&R Committee and are relevant to the Standing Orders of the Committee. The Plan sets out the main priorities and programmes of work that the Committee is overseeing to maximise the Council’s contribution to the Belfast Agenda and delivering a sustainable and inclusive recovery.
- 3.2 Whilst the CG&R Committee have a role to play across a number of the Belfast Agenda themes, the focus for this Committee has been on City recovery and reopening. Work has also continued to deliver on longer term plans for the city, with key priorities that will help the people and businesses of Belfast continue to respond to, and recover from, the economic impact of the pandemic while also shaping the future development and sustainability of the city.

3.3 Committee Plan Progress 2021-22

While the Committee has received regular updates on progress for specific programmes and initiatives, Appendix 1 sets out an overview of progress against the main commitments in the Committee Plan 2021-2022, with examples highlighted below:

- Delivery of £4.039m DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme including the award-winning Belfast Entries programme.
- Continuing to develop A Bolder Vision Strategy with DfC and DfI including the completion of the public consultation exercise.
- The acquisition of two heritage buildings, one as the site for the flagship Belfast Stories project and 2 Royal Avenue with delivery of subsequent meanwhile use.
- Securing additional funding for active travel enabling infrastructure, Belfast Entries Phase 2 and development of tactical regeneration programmes for the SW Quarter, the 5C's and Castle Street area.
- Vacant to Vibrant Programme: includes launch of an EoI to inform the viability of a £700k capital grant scheme for the city centre.
- Progressing the Strategic Site Assessments Phase 1 and 2, including regeneration concept plans to PAD stage on a number of city centre sites, and the establishment of a joint public sector housing group, as the appropriate vehicle to drive forward Phase 2 through an agreed methodology.
- Engaged 760 individuals through Enterprise awareness activity supporting them to progress to start a business, including targeted support for 143 women.
- 656 individuals were engaged in business start-up activity, 454 of those developed a business plan through the Go For It programme, supporting the creation of 279 jobs
- Provided test trading opportunities for 49 new businesses and 13 social enterprises through our dedicated start up space at St George's Market.
- 56 Social Enterprises and Co-operatives organisations were supported with one-to-one mentoring, advice and guidance. Six of these were new co-operatives.
- Social Economy Incentive Fund launched, 11 winners receiving a share of £60,000.

- Supported almost 700 businesses through 1-2-1 mentoring and access to masterclasses and workshops across a range of areas including improving tendering skills, developing digital marketing strategies and managing cashflow.
- Launched the Digital Surge programme in partnership with the 10 other councils, providing digital capacity support for businesses with significant growth potential.
- Launched the Vibrant Business Destinations programme in partnership with DfC to drive footfall and create vibrancy in areas outside of the city centre.
- Of the 816 people who participated on an Employment Academy since April 2021, 454 people have successfully completed and 342 have secured employment so far, representing an into-work rate of 75%.
- Our GCSE support programme was significantly disrupted over the last two years but, since September 2021, 362 young people have engaged on the programme.
- Supporting 166 young people who have or are at risk of dropping out of the education system, employment or training through our Youth Support Programme.
- The Labour Market Partnership (LMP) action plan was submitted to DfC and a letter of offer was received. Work is now under way on delivery of priority interventions.
- Produced a draft tourism plan for Belfast, 'Make Yourself at Home' and undertook a 12-week public consultation to refine the plan.
- Achieved UNESCO City of Music designation & developed a music strategy for Belfast.
- Provided £3.08m funding for Arts, Heritage, Festivals and Events through 117 grants.
- Completed cultural mapping of the city including an infrastructure audit.
- Developed a Co-design Framework for culture, arts and heritage and relaunched an Annual Event Programme as Covid restrictions were lifted.

3.4 Draft Committee Plan 2022-23

An Annual Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-23 was approved by Council on 4th April 2022. The Corporate Plan reflects the in-year deliverables against the priorities agreed as part of the

four-year corporate plan, plus some additional priorities that have arisen in response to the pandemic. The plan is structured as follows: Our services; Inclusive economic recovery; Community recovery; Environmental recovery; Strategic planning frameworks; and Organisational foundations. A series of priorities fall under each theme, each with a number of committed deliverables for 2022-23.

3.5 The draft Committee Plan for 2022-23 (Appendix 2) follows a similar structure and contains the commitments within the Corporate Delivery Plan which fall under the remit of the Committee, plus additional deliverables that have been agreed by CG&R Committee and relevant to the Standing Orders of the Committee. Highlights include:

- Progressing the 'A City Imagining Plan' Festival 2022 and the 2023 programme.
- Delivering the UNESCO City of Music actions.
- Delivering ongoing support for businesses as part of the City Recovery Programme.
- Developing a Regeneration Programme Framework for key regeneration projects.
- Providing Council input and strategic direction to major regeneration and development projects; and continuing to progress city wide strategic opportunities.
- Progressing the Bolder Vision for Belfast.
- Work to establish a new entity to support and bring forward priority investments on the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor.
- Starting delivery of the 10-year Tourism recovery plan 'Make Yourself at Home' including support local tourism and delivering an accessible tourism programme.
- Continuing to promote sustainable tourism via the Global Destination Sustainability Index - the Green Tourism Accreditation; and working with supply chain businesses.
- Deliver the Annual Events programme.
- Provide support for people to start and also to grow local businesses.
- Support and promote opportunities for Social Enterprises and Cooperatives.
- Developing options for institutional investment to augment city growth ambitions; and working via the

Renewed Ambition Programme to promote Belfast as a place to invest.

- Continuing to progress the Future City Centre Programme and priority areas under the Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy including physical regeneration and environmental improvements.
- Delivering a major new attraction at the Zoo with the development of a new Lion/Big Cat Enclosure.
- Continuing to progress Belfast Stories.
- Developing an overarching programme to coordinate our approach to access, active and sustainable travel and connectivity
- Support young people (most in need) to progress through education, into employment.
- Delivering Employment Academies in priority sectors, and Enterprise Pathways with intensive, person-centred support for those further back in the labour market.
- Delivering the Belfast Employability and Skills Action Plan as part of the LMP.
- Maximise residential development opportunities to promote city centre living.
- Managing the Development Brief marketing and development process for the INW Northern Cluster and continuing to progress each of the cluster sites.

3.6 Progress Reports

Following agreement on the draft Committee Plan, as well as in-year reports on a number of priorities, officers will bring an overall progress report against all commitments in the Committee Plan in October 2021 and a year-end report in April 2022.

3.7 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report. The Committee Plan will be delivered in accordance with the cash limit of £19,461,512 as highlighted in the Key Expenditure section, on page 16 of the Committee Plan.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

Strategies, programmes and actions within the Committee Plan are developed and delivered in consultation with the Council's Equality & Diversity Unit and subject to appropriate equality, good relations and rural needs assessment."

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 8th June, 2022**

The Committee:

- Noted the content of the end of year report; and
- Approved the new draft City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan for 2022-2023.

Chairperson

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 22nd June, 2022

SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);
Councillors, Beattie, Bunting, Dorrian, Duffy,
Ferguson, Hanvey, Hussey, Maskey, McCabe,
McLaughlin, Murray, Nelson, O'Hara and Whyte.

In attendance: Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mr. C. McCreery, Culture Development Manager;
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

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

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Update on Artist Studios and Makers Space

The Director of Economic Development advised the Committee that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the dedicated programme of work and funding schemes supporting artist-led organisations in the city. He referred Members to the report that had been circulated and to the appendices attached to the report.

The Committee commended the Director of Economic Development and his officers on their work to date in relation to the Artist Studios and Makers Space.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the recommendations for artist studio grants.

Extended Cultural Programme

The Director of Economic Development updated Members on the dedicated programme of work relating to capacity building and the resultant extended cultural programme feeding 'Belfast Imagining' our year of culture in the city.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and progress against delivery of capacity building and the extended cultural programme. The Committee also approved the programme regarding the extended cultural programme and associated expenditure to:

- Traditional Irish groups and activities - £100,000
- Minority Ethnic groups and activities - £50,000

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 22nd June, 2022**

- LGBTQ+ groups and activities - £50,000

After further discussion, it was agreed that officers would liaise with the Director of Finance and Resources to ascertain if additional funding could be made available for minority ethnic groups and LGBTQ+ groups. It was also agreed that officers would engage with the sector to ascertain whether the funding could be utilised by their groups.

Request to Present

It was agreed that officers would arrange for Giant's Park Limited to be invited to present at a future Special meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Monday, 30th May, 2022

MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Donnelly (Chairperson);
Aldermen Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Bradley, Bunting, Howard, Hutchinson,
M. Kelly, Magee, McAteer,
McCann, McCullough and McCusker

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;
Mr. K. Bloomfield, HMO Unit Manager;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported for Councillors T. Kelly, McKeown and Smyth.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 9th May, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Delegated Matters

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

Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority

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

Houses in Multiple Occupation (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.

**Addendum report in respect of an application
for a New Licence to operate a House of
Multiple Occupation for 5 Riverview Street**

The HMO Unit Manager reminded the Committee that, at its meeting in March, having considered whether it would grant or refuse the application for a new licence to operate a house of multiple occupation for 5 Riverview Street, it had agreed to defer its decision, pending further legal advice.

He reported that advice had been sought from Counsel and that, Legal Services had confirmed that, Section 20(2) of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Northern Ireland) Act 2016 clarified that, an application to renew a licence must be made before the licence ceases to have effect.

He informed the Committee that, as the application had been received after the expiry of the previous licence, the application was for a new licence rather than an application to renew a licence and, therefore, the Committee may grant the licence only, if it was satisfied that it would not result in an overprovision of HMO Licences in the locality in which the accommodation was situated.

He stated that, when taking into account the representations made by the Applicant concerning his personal circumstances for failing to renew his previous licence within the specified timeframe, Members must also consider overprovision, and that, the Committee must have regard to the following provisions:

- a) The number and capacity of licensed HMOs in the locality;
- b) The need for housing accommodation in the locality and the extent to which HMO accommodation is required to meet that need; and
- c) Such other matters as the Department may by regulations specify.

He added that, having considered the submissions of the Applicant, the views of the Members and Council officers, the Committee must make a decision, having been satisfied that the granting of the licence would not result in an overprovision of HMO licensed accommodation in the locality in which the living accommodation was situated.

The Chairperson welcomed the Applicant, Mr. C. Gill to the meeting. Mr. Gill referred to his previous representation to the Committee with regard to his reasons for inability to renew the licence on time, and he referred to a letter he had received from the Council, dated 4th August, 2020, which had stated that existing licence holders should submit their renewal applications online before the expiry of their existing licence. However, he stated that, in order for him to have completed the online application, he would have had to obtain the required gas and electric certificates, which he had been unable to do, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, in that, he had been isolating from his parents who were immunosuppressed.

He stated that he felt his actions over the previous two years had been in an effort to protect the community during the pandemic.

**Licensing Committee,
Monday, 30th May, 2022**

In response to a question from a Member regarding the Committee's ability to grant the licence with special conditions, the Divisional Solicitor informed the Committee that the licence should only be granted if the Committee was satisfied that the granting of the licence would not result in overprovision, and that, the area in which the accommodation was situated, was an area where the number of HMO licences had been in excess of the policy threshold.

She added that advice had been sought from Counsel, which had strongly corroborated that the Committee would have to conclude that, the application would not result in overprovision. She advised that the Committee had been consistent in respect of applications relying upon personal circumstances and that it would have to be fairly exceptional circumstances to depart from that approach.

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

**Application for a New Licence to operate a House
of Multiple Occupation for 43 Stranmillis Park**

The HMO Unit Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received for a new Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) for 43 Stranmillis Park.

He reported that the property owners had previously obtained an HMO Licence which had expired in August 2020, and that, on 4th March, 2021, an HMO licence application had been received from the owner of the property, which had subsequently been rejected, on the basis that, the granting of the licence would have constituted a breach of planning control.

He informed the Committee that, the Applicant and Managing Agent had confirmed that they had not been convicted of any relevant offences, and that there had been no relevant enforcement action taken with regard to day or night-time noise, rubbish accumulation, litter or waste.

He outlined the assessments which had taken place on 11th April, 2022 and 5th May, 2022, in order to determine the provision and availability of HMO accommodation in the HMO Policy Area, and he stated that Legal Services had advised that there was a clear requirement in Section 8 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Northern Ireland) Act 2016, for the Council to be satisfied that the granting of a licence would not result in overprovision.

He reported that there had been no objections received in relation to the application and that, the accommodation had been certified as having been compliant with the physical standards required for an HMO, by a technical officer from the NIHMO Service on 15th April, 2022.

He pointed out to the Committee that a notice of proposed decision had been issued on 6th May, advising the Applicant that the Council intended to refuse the

**Licensing Committee,
Monday, 30th May, 2022**

application as it could not be satisfied that the granting of the licence would not result in overprovision in the locality.

The Chairperson welcomed the Applicant, Mr. D. Magennis to the meeting. Mr. Magennis informed the Members that, he had previously held an HMO licence for the property but that, due to personal circumstances, including work pressures, resulted in the oversight whereby the licence had expired and he had failed to renew it.

He added that, he believed that there was a shortage of HMO accommodation in the Stranmillis area and that, although the granting of the licence would exceed the 30 percent development limit, as set out in Policy HMO 1, it would still not constitute an overprovision in the area due to demand, and he requested that, the Committee consider his appeal and grant the licence.

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that, granting the licence would result in overprovision.

The Committee dealt with the following four items together as they were from one applicant for multiple licences contained within one property, however consideration was given to each application separately

FLATS 1-4, 2A INDIA STREET

The HMO Unit Manager, reported that applications had been received to for a new licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO), in respect of four units, flats 1-4, at 2A India Street. He stated that, the properties had previously held HMO licences, granted by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, but that the licences had expired in December, 2020.

He informed the Committee that, HMO licence applications had been received from the owner of the four accommodations on 8th September, 2021, and that, a temporary exemption notices had been granted on 22nd November, 2021 and had been further extended to 8th July, 2022.

He pointed out that the four properties each had a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development and that officers were not aware of any issues in relation to the fitness of the Applicant or his Managing Agent.

He outlined the assessment which had taken place on 11th April and 4th May, 2022, in order to determine the provision and availability of HMO accommodation in the HMO Policy Area and he stated that, Legal Services had advised that there was a clear requirement in Section 8 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Northern Ireland) Act 2016, for the Council to be satisfied that the granting of a licence would not result in overprovision.

He reported that, there had been no objections received in relation to the applications and that technical officers from the NIHMO Service had inspected the properties and had noted that, there were several outstanding fire safety issues

**Licensing Committee,
Monday, 30th May, 2022**

regarding all four properties, additionally, Flat 1, had been reported as having an undersized bedroom.

The HMO Unit Manager pointed out that a notice of proposed decision had been issued to the Applicant, for each of the four applications, on 5th May, 2022. He stated that, with regard to Flats 2, 3 and 4, the notices of proposed decision advised the Applicant that, the Council intended to refuse the applications, as it could not be satisfied that the granting of the licences would not result in overprovision in the locality.

He added that, with regard to Flat 1, the notice of proposed decision outlined that the Council intended to refuse the application on the grounds of overprovision, and that it could not be satisfied that the living accommodation was suitable for occupation as an HMO, by the number of persons to be specified in the licence.

The Chairperson welcomed the Applicant, Mr. C Stewart and his Managing Agent, Ms. D. Robertson, to the meeting. Mr. Stewart stated that all issues with regard to the four properties had been addressed, and that the properties had been further inspected by the NIHMO technical officers. Ms. Robertson added that, with regard to the suitability of the accommodation at Flat 1, a previously single bedroom had been converted to a double room, and therefore, the property was suitable for occupation as an HMO, by the number of persons to be specified in the licence application.

In response to a question from a Member with regard to the conversion of the single bedroom to a double bedroom at Flat 1, the HMO Unit Manager confirmed that, subsequent to the recent inspections carried out by the NIHMO technical officers, the proposed decision to refuse the licences, would solely be on the grounds of overprovision, with regard to all four applications.

He added that, the HMO Policy area threshold was 30 percent and that it was currently, 46 percent, and that, the Council could only grant new licences where it was satisfied that, in doing so, it would not result in overprovision in the HMO Policy Area.

**Application for a New Licence to operate a House
of Multiple Occupation for Flat 1, 2A India Street**

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

**Application for a New Licence to operate a House
of Multiple Occupation for Flat 2, 2A India Street**

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

**Application for a New Licence to operate a House
of Multiple Occupation for Flat 3, 2A India Street**

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

**Licensing Committee,
Monday, 30th May, 2022**

**Application for a New Licence to operate a House
of Multiple Occupation for Flat 4, 2A India Street**

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 15th June, 2022

MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McCullough (Deputy Chairperson in the Chair); Aldermen McCoubrey and Sandford; and Councillors Bradley, Canavan, Gormley, Howard, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee, McAteer, McCann, McCusker, McKeown, Murray, Nelson and Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control; Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager; Mr. K. Bloomfield, HMO Unit Manager; Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported for Councillor Matt Collins (Chairperson).

Declarations of Interest

Councillor McCullough declared an interest in respect of Late Item: Application for the Grant of a 7-day annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for Grove Park.

Councillor Gormley declared an interest in respect of items under the headings "Application for a New Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation for Flat 1, 3 Ireton Street" and, "Application for a New Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation for Flat 2, 3 Ireton Street", in that he had made representations previously, in another application, on behalf of the applicant.

Councillor Murray declared an interest in respect of the item under the heading "Application for a New Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation for 20 Stranmillis Gardens", in that, the Applicant was the landlord of his office.

Delegated Matters

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

Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority

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

**Objections received to an application for the Renewal
of a 14-Day Occasional Outdoor Entertainments Licence –
Boucher Road Playing Fields**

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that the application had been received on 10th August, 2021 and that, subsequently, an objection had been received outside the 28-day statutory period on 29th September, 2022.

He pointed out that the Committee had agreed, at its meeting on 16th March, to consider the objection that had been received outside the statutory period.

He reported that the objection had been submitted as a result of noise nuisance which had arisen from a number of concerts which had taken place in Boucher Road Playing Fields, in September, 2021.

He informed the Committee that the objector had contacted the Night Time Noise Team on 24th September, complaining of noise disturbance from the AVA concert at Boucher Road Playing Fields and that officers from the team had called to the complainant's premises at 22.05hrs and witnessed audible music from the direction of Boucher Road and had taken an indicative noise measurement which had shown an Leq of 47Db(A), which had been well within the agreed guidelines.

He added that the complainant had also complained about a sound test which had taken place on 28th October, 2021 and a sound test for the Ed Sheeran concert which had taken place on 12th May, 2022. Indicative readings had been taken in the Malone Road area during the Ed Sheeran event which had also been within the agreed guidelines.

He reported that, further to the objection, both the objector and the licensee had been invited to attend a liaison meeting to discuss the issues and ascertain if any measures could be implemented to alleviate the objector's concerns, however, the objector advised that he did not wish to attend the meeting.

The Building Control Manager outlined the special conditions which were attached to the licence, the measures taken to ensure health, safety and welfare, and stated that, both the PSNI and NIFRS had been contacted and confirmed that they had no objection to the application.

He explained to the Committee that promoters of large outdoor events must submit a Noise Management Plan to the Environmental Protection Unit for evaluation in advance of an event taking place and that Council officers worked with promoters in order to assess the noise that might be generated and to minimise the potential for noise disturbance.

He informed the Committee that the Applicant was present at the meeting to answer any questions and that the Objector had been invited to the meeting, however, was unable to attend due to illness and that the Committee could, if they so wished, defer the matter to a future meeting.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 15th June, 2022**

After consideration, the Committee agreed to approve the application for the renewal of a 14-Day Occasional Outdoor Entertainments Licence.

Applications for the Variation of a 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for The Dirty Onion, 42 Waring Street.

The Building Control Manager reported that an application had been received for the variation of a 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments licence for the hours at which entertainment might be provided at the Dirty Onion, based on the Council's Standard Conditions to provide music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.

He explained that the days and hours during which entertainment might be provided under the terms of the licence were:

- Monday to Saturday: 11.30am to 1.00am the following morning, and
- Sunday: 12.30pm to 12.00midnight.

He pointed out that the days and hours which entertainment was being proposed to be provided, as a variation of the licence, were:

- Monday to Sunday: 11.30am to 3.00am the following morning.

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that the applicant had stated that the proposed extension of hours to 3.00am had been in an effort to fulfil the customer demand for a late-night music venue and would operate in conjunction with an Article 44a extension to Liquor Licensing hours.

He highlighted that no representations had been received in response to a public notice of the application and that both the PSNI and NIFRS had no objections to the application. He added that an inspection had been carried out on the premises regarding health, safety and welfare and that Council officers had been satisfied with all safety measures and management procedures. There had been no noise complaints received in relation to the premises in the previous 12-month period.

The Committee agreed to approve the application for the variation of a 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence to provide entertainment to 3.00am.

Application to provide outdoor musical entertainment beyond 11.00 pm at Falls Park

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that the organisers of Féile an Phobail had submitted a request to hold a festival event within Falls Park from Saturday 6th August, to Sunday 14th August, 2022, and to permit the planned entertainment to run beyond 11.00pm on up to four occasions.

He reported that a 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence and a 7-Day Annual Indoor Licence for a Marquee has been granted for Falls Park and that both had been used to hold events in the past. He added that the Licences were held by the City

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and Neighbourhood Services Department and had been transferred to the organisers for the duration of their event.

He stated that the days and hours during which entertainment might be provided both outdoors and, in a marquee, were Monday to Sunday from 11.30 am to 11.00 pm.

He highlighted that the event had been running for over 30 years as a community festival and had grown from a two to three day festival to a 10-11 day festival, which offered a mix of arts and cultural events, including concerts, comedy, tours and walks, and that, in recent years, the event organisers had consolidated the entertainment events at Falls Park to three to four evenings, which had been motivated by a desire to minimise disruption to the local community.

He pointed out that the event organiser had engaged with an independent acoustic consultant to develop a noise mitigation strategy and that, once received by the Service, the strategy would be provided to Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) for appraisal.

He stated that the EPU had received a total of 13 noise complaints with regard to the festival in 2021, and that the majority of issues raised had been related to the volume of music and the finishing time of the dance event which had taken place on 8th August, 2021. He added that the aforementioned complaints had been brought to the attention of the event organisers following the conclusion of the 2021 festival and would be highlighted to their acoustic consultant in preparation for this year's festival. No formal action had been undertaken by the EPU in respect of those noise complaints received.

The Building Control Manager outlined the measures which would be taken to ensure health, safety and welfare and stated that the PSNI had been contacted in relation to the event, but had not yet confirmed if they had any objection to the application.

The Committee agreed to approve the application to provide musical entertainment beyond 11.00pm to 1.00am on four occasions, at Falls Park, subject to no objection having been received from the PSNI.

**Applications for the Variation of a 7-Day Annual
Indoor Entertainments Licence for The Merchant Hotel,
16 Skipper Street**

The Building Control Manager reported that an application had been received for the variation of a 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments licence for the hours at which entertainment might be provided at the Merchant Hotel, based on the Council's Standard Conditions to provide music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.

He explained that the days and hours during which entertainment might be provided under the terms of the licence were:

- Monday to Saturday: 11.30am to 1.00am the following morning, and
- Sunday: 12.30pm to 12.00midnight.

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He added that, in addition to the above standard operating hours, entertainment might be provided in Ollie's Nightclub to 3.00am seven days a week and the USC First Floor Rear Bar to 3.00am on Friday and Saturday nights.

He pointed out that the days and hours which entertainment was being proposed to be provided, as a variation of the licence, were:

- Monday to Sunday: 11.30am to 3.00am the following morning.

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that the applicant had stated that the proposed extension of hours to 3.00am had been in an effort to fulfil the customer demand for a late-night music venue and would operate in conjunction with an Article 44a extension to Liquor Licensing hours.

He highlighted that no representations had been received in response to a public notice of the application and that both the PSNI and NIFRS had no objections to the application. He added that an inspection had been carried out on the premises, regarding health, safety and welfare and that Council officers had been satisfied with all safety measures and management procedures. There had been no noise complaints received in relation to the premises in the previous 12-month period.

The Committee agreed to approve the application for the variation of a 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence to provide entertainment to 3.00am.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (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.

The Committee dealt with the following two items together as they were from one applicant for multiple licences contained within one property, however consideration was given to each application separately

(Councillor Gormley, who had declared an interest in the following two items, left the meeting while they were under consideration)

Flats 1 and 2, 3 Ireton Street

The HMO Unit Manager reported that applications had been received for a new licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO), in respect of two units, flats 1 and 2, at 3 Ireton Street. He stated that the properties had previously held HMO licences, granted by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, but that the licences had expired on 28th February 2021.

He pointed out that the Applicant had applied to renew his licences on 23rd February, 2021, however, he had contacted the NIHMO Unit on 26th March, 2021, to withdraw his applications, citing that it had been due to a recent outcome with a separate HMO application.

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He informed the Committee that the two properties each had a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development and that officers were not aware of any issues in relation to the fitness of the Applicant or his Managing Agent.

He outlined the assessment which had taken place on 12th May, 2022, in order to determine the provision and availability of HMO accommodation in the HMO Policy Area, and he stated that Legal Services had advised that there was a clear requirement, in Section 8 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Northern Ireland) Act 2016, for the Council to be satisfied that the granting of a licence would not result in overprovision.

He reported that there had been no objections received in relation to the applications and that technical officers from the NIHMO Service had inspected the properties and that the accommodations had been certified as complying with the physical standards for an HMO on 16th April, 2022.

The HMO Unit Manager pointed out that a notice of proposed decision had been issued to the Applicant, for each of the two applications, on 17th May, 2022. He stated that, with regard both applications, the notices of proposed decision advised the Applicant that the Council intended to refuse the applications, as it could not be satisfied that the granting of the licences would not result in overprovision in the locality.

The Chairperson welcomed the Applicant's solicitor, Ms. M. O'Neill to the meeting. Ms. O'Neill explained that the decision to refuse the applications on the basis of overprovision had been flawed and was an error of law. She stressed the need for accommodation in the area and referred to a rental housing crisis. She highlighted that the Council had indicated that it recognised that there was a need for housing accommodation in the locality, but had still indicated its intention was to refuse the applications.

The Chairperson thanked Ms. O'Neill for her submissions on behalf of the Applicant.

Application for a New Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation for Flat 1, 3 Ireton Street

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

Application for a New Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation for Flat 2, 3 Ireton Street

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

(Councillor Gormley returned to the meeting)

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**Application for a New Licence to operate a House of
Multiple Occupation for 20 Stranmillis Gardens**

(Councillor Murray, who had declared an interest in this item,
left the meeting while it was under consideration)

The HMO Unit Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received for a new Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) for 20 Stranmillis Gardens.

He reported that the property had previously had the benefit of an HMO Licence, in the name of the previous owner, granted on 9th September, 2020 and that the property had been purchased by the existing owner on 29th March, 2021.

He informed the Committee that the Applicant and Managing Agent had confirmed that they had not been convicted of any relevant offences and that there had been no relevant enforcement action taken with regard to day or night-time noise, rubbish accumulation, litter or waste.

He outlined the assessment which had taken place on 12th May, 2022 in order to determine the provision and availability of HMO accommodation in the HMO Policy Area and he stated that Legal Services had advised that there was a clear requirement, in Section 8 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Northern Ireland) Act 2016, for the Council to be satisfied that the granting of a licence would not result in overprovision.

He reported that there had been no objections received in relation to the application and that the accommodation had been certified, as having been compliant with the physical standards required for an HMO, by a technical officer from the NIHMO Service on 27th April, 2022.

He pointed out that a notice of proposed decision had been issued on 6th May, advising the Applicant that the Council intended to refuse the application as it could not be satisfied that the granting of the licence would not result in overprovision in the locality.

The HMO Unit Manager referred to correspondence from the Applicant's solicitor, which stated that the property had been previously registered as an HMO and was recorded in the 2015 subject plan and, therefore, had been taken into account at the time the subject plan was drawn up as an existing HMO in the area and that the Council should bear in mind the need for housing accommodation in the locality.

He drew the Committee's attention to officers' comments in response to the solicitor's correspondence, which stated that officers believed that the argument that it had been previously registered as a HMO was misconceived and that it did not have the benefit of a valid HMO licence.

He further stated that officers had accepted that there was high demand for HMO accommodation in the area but that had to be balanced against the Council's obligation

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to be satisfied that the grant of the licence would not result in the overprovision of HMO accommodation in a particular area.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. MacDermott, Solicitor acting on behalf of the Applicant, to the meeting.

Mr. MacDermott explained that the property had been an HMO property since 2014, when it had been purchased by the Applicant's mother and had been operated lawfully while under her ownership. He stated that she had renewed the HMO registration in December, 2020 for period of five years.

He informed the Committee that, in 2021, the Applicant's mother decided to transfer her investment property into the ownership of her son, the Applicant, whereby the Applicant had emailed the NIHMO Unit to advise them that the property had changed ownership and they had been advised that the date of transfer had ceased the effect of the current licence and the Council was treating the application as an application for a new licence.

He stated that he believed the use of the 2015 subject plan had been unlawful, in that the plan had been drafted for different purposes. He further stated that assessments undertaken would not necessarily be accurate and that there was a major need for accommodation of this type within the locality.

He explained that, the area was one that demanded affordable accommodation for young adults, students and young professionals and failure to grant licences would further contribute to a housing crisis, and that granting of the licence would not result in overprovision.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor T. Kelly,
Seconded by Councillor M. Kelly,

That the Committee agrees to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

On a recorded vote, fourteen Members voted for the proposal and one against and it was declared carried.

<u>For 14</u>	<u>Against 1</u>
Councillor McCullough (Chairperson); and Alderman Sandford; and Councillors Bradley, Canavan, Gormley, Howard, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee, McAteer, McCann, McKeown, Nelson and Smyth.	Councillor Hutchinson.

(Councillor Murray returned to the meeting)

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**Application for a New Licence to operate a House of
Multiple Occupation for 19 Sandymount Street**

The HMO Unit Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received for a new Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) for 19 Sandymount Street.

He reported that the property had previously had the benefit of an HMO Licence, in the name of the previous owner, granted on 9th September, 2020 and that the property had been purchased by the existing owner on 25th June, 2019. On 26th September, 2019, an authorised officer from the NIHMO Unit had inspected the property following the service of a Section 78 Notice: Powers of entry without warrant of the 2016 Act, which had resulted in enforcement action.

He advised the Committee that an HMO licence application had been received from the owner of the accommodation on 26th September, 2019, which had been subsequently rejected by the NIHMO Unit on 4th October, 2019, on the grounds that granting the application of the new licence would constitute a breach of planning control. The applicant had submitted an application for a Temporary Exemption Notice on 9th October, which had been granted until 17th January, 2020.

He informed the Committee that both the Applicant and Managing Agent had confirmed that they had not been convicted of any relevant offences and that there had been no relevant enforcement action taken with regard to day-time or night-time noise or rubbish accumulation. However, there had been one incident which had resulted in the service of an Article 21 notice in accordance with The Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 in February 2018, that required the occupier to place the waste for collection in receptacles of a kind and number specified.

He outlined the assessment which had taken place on 12th May, 2022 in order to determine the provision and availability of HMO accommodation in the HMO Policy Area, and he stated that Legal Services had advised that there was a clear requirement, in Section 8 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Northern Ireland) Act 2016, for the Council to be satisfied that the granting of a licence would not result in overprovision.

He reported that there had been no objections received in relation to the application and that the accommodation had been certified, as having been compliant with the physical standards required for an HMO, by a technical officer from the NIHMO Service on 27th April, 2022.

He pointed out that, a notice of proposed decision had been issued on 1st June, advising the Applicant that the Council intended to refuse the application as it could not be satisfied that the granting of the licence would not result in overprovision in the locality.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. MacDermott, the Applicant's solicitor, to the meeting.

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Mr. MacDermott stated that the purpose of the HMO legislation was to grant the Committee the powers to decide whether a HMO licence should be granted and was not a mathematical exercise to ascertain overprovision. He referred to comments made earlier in the meeting, by a Member of the Committee, whereby if the Committee were to embark on a blanket ban of all new HMO licence applications presented, it would be unlawful and that the Committee had a duty and responsibility to consider each and every application on its own merits.

He explained to the Committee that, due to personal circumstances, the Applicant had to move to another area to care for his father and was unable to make the application. He added that there was no provision within the locality for HMO accommodation and that the Committee must consider the need within the area. He asked for the Committee to consider the fact that the property had been operating as an HMO since 1988.

The Divisional Solicitor responded to Mr. MacDermott's comments by stating that the Council did not operate a blanket ban on applications and was obliged to have regard to the relevant legislation which required the Committee, when assessing overprovision, to have due regard to the number of licenced HMO accommodations in the area. She added that the Committee did take into account representations and material considerations which had been made in support of applications and that it was a matter for the Committee to decide what weight to attach to those considerations.

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, on the basis that granting the licence would result in overprovision.

**Application for a New Licence to operate a House of
Multiple Occupation for 31 Melrose Street**

The HMO Unit Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received for a new Licence to operate a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) for 31 Melrose Street.

He reported that the property had previously had the benefit of an HMO Licence, in the name of Mr. Patrick McNabb, with an expiry date of 19th June, 2022. He informed the Committee that Mr. McNabb had died on 2nd June, 2021 and that the property had been jointly owned by Mr. McNabb and his wife, the current licence applicant, since March 2006.

He informed the Committee that both the Applicant and Managing Agent had confirmed that they had not been convicted of any relevant offences and that there had been no relevant enforcement action taken with regard to day or night-time noise, rubbish accumulation, litter or waste.

He outlined the assessment which had taken place on 12th May, 2022 in order to determine the provision and availability of HMO accommodation in the HMO Policy Area and he stated that Legal Services had advised that there was a clear requirement, in Section 8 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Northern Ireland) Act 2016, for the Council to be satisfied that the granting of a licence would not result in overprovision.

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He reported that there had been no objections received in relation to the application and that the accommodation had been certified, as having been compliant with the physical standards required for an HMO, by a technical officer from the NIHMO Service on 27th April, 2022.

The HMO Unit Manager outlined Section 29 of the 2016 Act which provided the transfer of the licence of a deceased sole licence-holder to that person's executor and that the licence would expire three months after the date of death, unless the Council was satisfied that it was reasonable to extend it in order to wind up the holder's estate. He added that the restricting factor in Section 29 of the Act was the requirement for the Council to be notified of the death of the sole licence-holder and that Counsel's advice had been sought and obtained on the issue, whereby Legal Services had confirmed that there might be some scope to grant an extension to the three-month period which had been triggered by the death of an owner.

He pointed out that a notice of proposed decision had been issued on 18th May, advising the Applicant that the Council intended to refuse the application as it could not be satisfied that the granting of the licence would not result in overprovision in the locality

He referred to correspondence which had been received on behalf of the Applicant, from her Managing Agent, in response to the proposed decision, which had cited the sudden death of her husband, trying to get his affairs in order, and not having been aware of the legislative requirements and pointed to the significant investment that she and her late husband had made to bring the property up to HMO standards and that it had operated as a HMO with no issues.

He reminded the Committee that it had discretion to be flexible in relation to the mandatory time limit within which the death of a licence holder must be notified to the Council and might decide that it would be reasonable to extend that period, in which case the licence would remain extant and the issue of overprovision could not be taken into account.

The Committee agreed to grant the application, by extending the period within which the owner was required to notify the Council of a change of ownership, on the basis of unique and tragic circumstances of the applicant.

LATE ITEM

**Application for the Grant of a 7-day annual Outdoor
Entertainments Licence for Grove Park**

(Councillor McCullough (Chairperson), had declared an interest in this item,
and left the meeting for the duration)

(Councillor Smyth in the Chair)

The Building Control Manager reported that an application had been received for the grant of a 7-day annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence in respect of Grove Park, Jellicoe Avenue from the City and Neighbourhood Services Department.

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He explained that, the Council, at its meeting in January, had agreed to deliver as a £500,000 diversionary and festival programme on the understanding that, as part of the programme, there would be events taking place on Council-owned land that would be required to be organised within a short timeframe. He added that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 13th May, had awarded the Hubb Community Resource Centre funding to run the Dockside Festival from 4th to 11th July and this application related to that event.

He pointed out that, as with all licences of this nature, the applicant was the Director of Neighbourhood Services and that the standard days and hours for an Outdoor Entertainments Licence were Monday to Sunday, 11.30am to 11.00pm.

He advised the Committee that both the PSNI and NIDRS would be consulted in relation to the application and that officers from the Health, Safety and Welfare Service would engage with the applicant and event organisers in the lead-up to the event, in order to ensure that all documentation and technical information was in place. He added that officers would inspect the site during the build of the event space, and following its completion, to ensure that all safety and management procedures were in place.

The Committee agreed to grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive to approve the application for the Grant of a 7-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.

Chairperson

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 14th June, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Whyte (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff, Councillor Hussey;
Alderman Rodgers;
Councillors Carson, Douglas, Garrett,
Groogan, Hanvey, Hutchinson,
Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.

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

Apologies

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 17th May 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 June, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Whyte declared an interest in item 6a - (Reconsidered Item) LA04/2020/1959/F - New parkland (Section 2 Forthmeadow Community Greenway), in that he had previously met with Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR), who were objecting to the application, and that he would leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion on the item.

He also declared an interest in item 6h - LA04/2021/0859/F - Retention of 21-23 Victoria Street and 41-51 Waring Street, Belfast with minor alterations to facades and erection of a 3 storey extension to the buildings to facilitate a 164 bedroom hotel, in that he had previously met with the applicant and had expressed support for it, and that he would leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion on the item.

He also declared an interest in item 6j - LA04/2022/0207/F - Change of use from Church halls to offices at Townsend Street Presbyterian Church, 32 Townsend Street, in that he was on the Board of the Ulster Orchestra, which was the intended end user for the application, and that he would leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion on the item.

Councillor Maskey also declared an interest in item 6a - (Reconsidered Item) LA04/2020/1959/F - New parkland (Section 2 Forthmeadow Community Greenway), in that

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the organisation that he was employed by had worked with Sustrans to recruit walking and cycling volunteers for the Forthmeadow Community Greenway and that he would leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion on the item.

Committee Site Visit

Request for a Pre-Emptive Site Visit

The Committee agreed to undertake a pre-emptive site visit in respect of the following applications, on Thursday, 16th June:

- **LA04/2022/0535/F & LA04/2022/0468/DCA** - Physical development - re-cladding of the exterior of the building, creation of a new access point to the upper floors and central core on Castle Arcade, demolition of bridge link over Castle Arcade and erection of a new oversail section at the junction of Castle Lane and Castle Arcade. Change of use - partial change of use of upper floors from storage and back of house facilities to a mixed use of Assembly and Leisure (class D2) and a sui-generis multifaceted leisure use combined with the sale of food and drink for the consumption on the premises. Reconfiguration of existing ground floor storage, associated public realm improvements and ancillary development. Net reduction in gross floorspace of approximately 331 sqm. Partial demolition of existing facade treatment on Castle Lane, Castle Arcade and Cornmarket, demolition of existing internal staircases and internal walls and demolition of bridge link over Castle Arcade, at 13-25 Castle Lane Belfast BT1 5DA; Castle Arcade Belfast BT1 5DF and 3-9 Cornmarket.

Planning Appeals Notified

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

Planning Decisions Issued

The Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Director of Planning and Building Control, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 10th May and 9th June 2022.

Proposed Abandonments

The Committee noted that correspondence had been received from the Department for Infrastructure, advising the Council that it proposed to abandon land at Little Victoria Street Car Park and at Charlotte Street Car Park under the Roads (NI) Order 1993.

The Committee:

- noted the proposal to abandon land at Little Victoria Street Car Park; and

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- deferred consideration of the Department's intention to abandon land at Charlotte Street Car Park and requested that further information be sought from DFI in relation to the reason(s) for the abandonment. It further agreed that DFI be requested to provide the Council with further information in respect of future abandonments under the Roads (NI) Order 1993.

Withdrawn Items

The Committee noted that the following two items had been withdrawn from the agenda by officers:

- (Reconsidered Item) LA04/2019/0775/F - 18 dwellings to include revision of site layout of previous approval Z/2007/1401/F at sites 2-8 (7 dwellings) and additional 11 No. dwellings, including landscaping, access via Hampton Park and other associated site works on lands approximately 50m to the north of 35 Hampton Park and approximately 30m to the west of 60 Hampton Park, Galwally; and
- Update on Planning Portal replacement IT system (Restricted Item).

The following item was withdrawn by the applicant:

- LA04/2021/2440/F & LA04/2021/2439/DCA - Demolition of existing dwelling and garage to allow for the erection of a new semi-detached dwelling and two apartments at 362 Lisburn Road.

Planning Applications

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

(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2020/1959/F - New parkland (Section 2 Forthmeadow Community Greenway) - foot and cycle pathways, lighting columns, new entrances and street furniture on site including vacant land bounded by the Forthriver Industrial Park in the east Springfield Road to the South and Paisley Park & West Circular Road & Crescent to the West. Area also includes links through the Forthriver

(The Chairperson, having declared an interest in the item, left the meeting while the item was under consideration.)

(Councillor Groogan in the Chair.)

Moved by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Councillor Councillor Groogan and

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Resolved – that the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the application, to the Special Meeting on 27th June, in order to allow the objectors more time to consider the Case officer's report and the Judicial Review findings.

(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2020/1666/F - Demolition of existing two storey building and erection of an office development with heights of 9-14 storeys with landscaping, parking, and associated development. At Lands at 102-127 Grosvenor Road and adjoining the Westlink/Grosvenor Road junction

(Councillor Whyte, Chairperson, resumed the Chair.)

The Committee was provided with the key details of the application.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the application had been before the Committee in March 2021, where it had agreed to grant permission with delegated authority given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of conditions and the Section 76 Planning Agreement.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, whereby Legal Services had since confirmed that the Section 76 Agreement had since been executed.

The Principal Planning officer explained that, due to the length of time taken to finalise the Section 76 Agreement following the Committee meeting, the Planning Service had reconsulted NI Water and that it had responded in June 2021 advising that there was insufficient Waste Water Treatment Capacity available at present for the proposed development.

The response from NI Water stated that:

"Belfast WWTW no longer has headroom capacity to serve this proposal. However, initial improvement works currently under construction at Belfast WWTW, once completed, together with base maintenance of the activated sludge process of the existing works, will result in providing some additional capacity in advance of the major phased upgrade of Belfast WWTW.'

In a further response dated June 2022 NI Water had advised that:

"Our only requirement is that this proposal shall not be occupied before 1 July 2023, which is the date when additional treatment capacity will be available as a result of completion of initial phase of upgrade work at Belfast WWTW. The developer has already confirmed to NI Water that this condition would be acceptable as this proposal will not be completed until after this date.'

The Principal Planning officer explained that officers felt that the condition from NI Water was not required given that the improvements to the WWTW were expected by July 2023 and should provide increased capacity by the time that the development was completed.

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The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to conditions and a Section 76 Planning Agreement, with delegated authority given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording.

**(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2022/0275/F - Awning attached
to existing façade at 26 University Avenue**

The Principal Planning officer explained that the application was one of four applications which had initially been presented to the Committee on 17th May 2022, and which had been deferred in order that the Committee would be provided with clarification of the Area of Townscape Character (ATC) between the BUAP and draft BMAPs.

She explained that the proposed site was outside the adopted ATC under the BUAP 2001. Under draft BMAP 2004 and 2015, the site was within a proposed ATC.

The Committee was advised that, within adopted ATCs, Planning Policy Statement 6 Addendum was applicable. However, PPS6 Addendum was not applicable to proposed ATCs, as confirmed by the Planning Appeals Commission. However, regardless of this, the Principal Planning officer explained that the impact of the proposal on the overall character of the proposed ATC could still be objectively assessed in the context of the surrounding built form. She outlined that the impact of the proposal had been assessed in relation to the character of the area including the proposed ATC and was considered acceptable.

The proposal was for a minor awning to the front door which did not negatively impact the existing property or surrounding built form. The character of the area, including the draft ATC, would be maintained.

The key issues which had been considered included the design/impact on character and appearance, amenity and public safety.

She outlined that the amended plans which had been uploaded to the planning portal on 3rd May, 2022, had reduced the size and design of the awning to address concerns of anti-social behaviour and being out of character with the existing building and in a residential area. The Members were advised that the proposal would not negatively impact the amenity of neighbouring properties and would not prejudice public safety.

DFI Roads had been consulted and had no objections and no third party representations were received.

The Committee granted approval to the application, with delegated power given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise conditions.

**(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2022/0276/F - Awning attached
to existing façade at 27 University Avenue**

The Principal Planning officer explained that the application was one of four applications which had initially been presented to the Committee on 17th May 2022, and were

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deferred in order that the Committee would be provided with clarification of the Area of Townscape Character (ATC) between the BUAP and draft BMAPs.

She explained that the proposed site was outside the adopted ATC under the BUAP 2001. Under draft BMAP 2004 and 2015, the site was within a proposed ATC.

The Committee was advised that, within adopted ATCs, Planning Policy Statement 6 Addendum was applicable. However, PPS6 Addendum was not applicable to proposed ATCs, as confirmed by the Planning Appeals Commission. However, regardless of this, the Principal Planning officer explained that the impact of the proposal on the overall character of the proposed ATC could still be objectively assessed in the context of the surrounding built form. She outlined that the impact of the proposal had been assessed in relation to the character of the area including the proposed ATC and was considered acceptable.

The key issues which had been considered included the design/impact on character and appearance, amenity and public safety.

The proposed awning and materials were considered in keeping with the existing ground floor commercial unit of the building. The proposal would not negatively impact the amenity of neighbouring properties and would not prejudice public safety.

DFI Roads had been consulted and had no objections and no third party representations were received.

The Committee granted approval to the application, with delegated power given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise conditions.

**(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2022/0277/F - Awning attached
to existing façade at 65-67 University Avenue**

The Principal Planning officer explained that the application was one of four applications which had initially been presented to the Committee on 17th May 2022, and were deferred in order that the Committee would be provided with clarification of the Area of Townscape Character (ATC) between the BUAP and draft BMAPs.

She explained that the proposed site was outside the adopted ATC under the BUAP 2001. Under draft BMAP 2004 and 2015, the site would be within the ATC.

The Committee was advised that, within adopted ATCs, Planning Policy Statement 6 Addendum was applicable. However, PPS6 Addendum was not applicable to proposed ATCs, as confirmed by the Planning Appeals Commission. However, regardless of this, the Principal Planning officer explained that the impact of the proposal on the overall character of the proposed ATC could still be objectively assessed in the context of the surrounding built form. She outlined that the impact of the proposal had been assessed in relation to the character of the area including the proposed ATC and was considered acceptable.

The key issues which had been considered included the design/impact on character and appearance, amenity and public safety.

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The proposed awning and materials were considered in keeping with the existing ground floor commercial unit of the building. The proposal would not negatively impact the amenity of neighbouring properties and would not prejudice public safety.

DFI Roads had been consulted and had no objections and no third party representations were received.

The Committee granted approval to the application, with delegated power given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise conditions.

(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2022/0138/F - Awning attached to existing façade at 1 Rugby Avenue

The Principal Planning officer explained that the application was one of four applications which had initially been presented to the Committee on 17th May 2022, and were deferred in order that the Committee would be provided with clarification of the Area of Townscape Character (ATC) between the BUAP and draft BMAPs.

She explained that the proposed site was outside the adopted ATC under the BUAP 2001. Under draft BMAP 2004 and 2015, the proposed site would be considered within the proposed ATC.

The Committee was advised that, within adopted ATCs, Planning Policy Statement 6 Addendum was applicable. However, PPS6 Addendum was not applicable to proposed ATCs, as confirmed by the Planning Appeals Commission. However, regardless of this, the Principal Planning officer explained that the impact of the proposal on the overall character of the proposed ATC could still be objectively assessed in the context of the surrounding built form.

She advised that the impact of the proposal had been assessed in relation to the character of the area including the proposed ATC and was considered acceptable. The rear property line was adjacent to the adopted ATC. The proposal was for a minor awning to the front door which would not negatively impact the existing property or surrounding built form. The character of the area, including the draft ATC, would be maintained.

The Members were advised that amended plans had uploaded to the planning portal on 3rd May 2022, reducing the size and design of the awning to address concerns of anti-social behaviour and it being out of character with the existing building and in a residential area.

DFI Roads had been consulted and had no objections. Two objections had been received, raising concerns over anti-social behaviour, noise and safety, as well the awning not being in keeping with the residential area. She explained that those matters had been addressed within the Case officer's report and that the amended proposed scheme was considered acceptable.

The Committee granted approval to the application, with delegated power given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise conditions.

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LA04/2021/0859/F - Retention of 21-23 Victoria Street and 41-51 Waring Street, Belfast with minor alterations to facades and erection of a 3 storey extension to the buildings to facilitate a 164 bedroom hotel with ground floor bar/restaurant, meeting rooms and fitness centre, back of house facilities, 7th floor bar, and public realm improvements

(The Chairperson, having declared an interest in the following two items, left the meeting while they were under consideration.)

(Councillor Maskey in the Chair.)

The Principal Planning officer presented the Committee with the details of the application. He outlined that the demolition and alterations included the:

- dropping of window cills and installation of new aluminium framed windows;
- removal and relocation of existing doors to form fire exits;
- removal of existing roller shutter door and installation of a new entrance door;
- removal of existing doors and installation of new aluminium framed windows;
- demolition of wall sections and formation of new window openings;
- alteration of existing window configurations; and
- demolition of existing internal columns, stairs and removal of lift shafts and non-structural internal walls.

The Members were advised that the key issues which had been considered during the assessment of the proposal included:

- the principle of the proposal at that location;
- demolition, impact on amenity / character of the area, Conservation Area and listed buildings;
- design and layout of the proposed accommodation;
- impact on transport and other infrastructure;
- flood and drainage risks;
- amenity and contamination issues;
- Employability and Skills; and
- Developer contributions.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the site comprised a vacant unlisted former warehouse/commercial building located within the Cathedral Conservation Area. The area was commercial in character and use, comprising office, retail, and bar, food/restaurant uses.

He reported that the scheme would introduce a three-storey extension above both 21- 23 Victoria Street and 41-43 Waring Street, with internal demolition to enable the new floor

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layouts to be achieved. The Members were advised that the extension had been subject to detailed discussions through the preapplication discussion (PAD) process with both the Council and HED, and that it had evolved significantly from the initial iterations in an effort to address concerns around scale, height massing and design of the proposed extension. The Committee was advised that the current proposal was considered acceptable in scale, form and massing and design. The acceptability of a three storey extension was a key consideration and was much discussed during the PAD. Overall, the extension was considered acceptable following key design changes to minimise its impact on the character and appearance of the host building, the setting of adjacent listed buildings and the conservation area.

The Members were advised that weight had also been given to the value of retaining and re-using the original, vacant buildings, given that a previous permission had included the demolition of both buildings, and the efforts made to ensure that the design and elevational treatment were of suitable quality to compliment and respect the surrounding buildings.

Some internal demolition works were proposed, however, given the positive response from HED and the Conservation Officer, the extent and nature of demolition was considered acceptable. A method statement detailing the methodology and 'making good' of all demolition works would be required by condition in order to ensure the protection of historic features. The Members were advised that the Urban Design Officer had also considered the design solution to be acceptable and would not adversely impact on the local townscape. The proposal was therefore considered acceptable in relation to heritage issues, as set out in the SPPS and PPS6. No other consultees had any objections subject to conditions and/or informatives.

The Principal Planning officer reported that the application had been neighbour notified and advertised in the local press and that one objection had been received in relation to the retention of a heritage, tiled street sign. He explained that the sign would be retained as part of the proposals.

He drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items pack, whereby a final consultation response had been received from Environmental Health, on 9th June, confirming it had no objection subject to conditions and informatives, including a proposed hours of use restriction on the hotel bars.

The Committee was also advised that correspondence had been received, on 13th June, from Beannchor, the owner/operator of the nearby Merchant Hotel, advising that they had:

- not received a neighbour notification;
- no objection in principle to hotel use at the site but that they had concerns about the scale, height and massing of the extension and impact on the listed Merchant Hotel building; and
- concerns about the proximity of the proposed extension which might give rise to noise, odour and overlooking and overshadowing impacts on the amenity of residents within their hotel.

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The Principal Planning officer advised the Committee that notification had been undertaken in accordance with standard practice. He reported that neighbour notification letters had been sent to the bar and the hotel at “35-39 Waring Street” on 1st March 2022. He further advised that correspondence indicated that Beannchor was aware of the planning application back in May 2021 and therefore no prejudice had occurred. He explained that the issues raised by Beannchor had been considered within the committee report. He added that HED, the Conservation officer and Urban Design officer had no objections to the scale, height and massing of the proposal and that Environmental Health had considered noise and odour information and had no objections subject to conditions. The Committee was advised that no harmful overlooking issues arose due to the location of existing window positions. The window positions of the upper floor extension would not overlook adjacent properties to an unacceptable degree given the city centre context and filtering by rooftop structures and plant on neighbouring buildings.

The Committee was advised that two further emails had been received from Beannchor requesting that the Committee would defer consideration of the application and reiterating their concerns about overshadowing. The Principal Planning officer advised the Committee that it was considered that there would be no unacceptable overshadowing, taking into account the separation distance between the proposal and the adjacent hotel, the orientation of the buildings, the city centre location/tight urban grain, the proposed and existing uses as hotels and not in permanent residential dwelling use and for efficient use of land.

Councillor Maskey, in the Chair, welcomed Mr. M. Worthington, agent, to the meeting.

Mr. Worthington advised the Committee that the main area of interest had concentrated on the design and the potential for impact on the Cathedral Conservation Area and the listed buildings around the proposal. He explained that the design was an area which had taken some deliberation to finalise but that it had been dealt with in a positive manner by the Council, the consultees and the applicant and had resulted in a final proposal which had been recommended for approval. He confirmed that the applicant was content to the proposed planning conditions and with the proposal for a Section 76 Planning Agreement in respect to employability and skills provision.

In response to a Member’s question, the Principal Planning officer advised the Committee of the issues which had been raised by HED during the PAD process. He advised the Committee that the issues around the style of windows and the paint colour would be conditioned as part of any approval.

The Committee granted approval to the full planning application and to the demolition consent, subject to conditions, with delegated authority given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and agreed to enter into a Section 76 Planning Agreement with the applicant to secure employability and skills Developer Contributions.

**LA04/2022/0207/F - Change of use from Church halls
to offices at Townsend Street Presbyterian Church,
32 Townsend Street**

(Councillor Maskey in the Chair.)

The Principal Planning officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application.

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She explained that the application was before the Committee as the officer's recommendation to approve was contrary to a statutory consultee's recommendation, Northern Ireland Water (NI Water).

The Committee was advised that the proposal was for the change of use of a listed building, The Old School House, which currently had the use of "class D1 community". She explained that it was in use as a church hall associated with Townsend Street Presbyterian Church – which was also a listed building. The Members were advised that the Old Schoolhouse was situated to the rear of the church. It was proposed the building would be used for office space - use class - B1(a). The building was to be used as the administrative offices of the Ulster Orchestra.

She reported that the building had three floors. The ground floor included offices, file storage, a meeting room and other ancillary facilities, whilst the first floor contained open plan office space, a training room and a breakout area. No office accommodation was included on the second floor. Occasionally the Ulster Orchestra would propose to use the space to meet prior to rehearsal, which currently happened within the adjacent Church.

The Committee was advised that Historic Environment Division (HED) had no objection to the proposal.

The Members were advised that NI Water had objected to the proposal as it had stated that there was insufficient capacity at the wastewater treatment works. The Principal Planning officer detailed that the applicant had submitted calculations which indicated that there would be a reduction in the amount of water usage as a result of the 'change of use'. Officers considered that there would be no significant impact on the infrastructure from the development relative to its current use.

She reported that the proposal was in keeping with development plan designations and with all other planning policy. It complied with the SPPS -'listed buildings' (paragraph 6.13) and accorded with policy BH7 of PPS6. There was also an application for 'Listed Building Consent' associated with the application, LA04/2022/0208/LBC.

The Committee granted approval to the application, with delegated power given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of conditions.

Chairperson

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Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

Monday, 20th June, 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, Flynn, Howard,
McAteer, McCann, Newton and Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. J. Corkey, Chief Executive, ICC Belfast
(Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.);
Mr. I. Bell, Director of Finance and Systems, ICC Belfast
(Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.);
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Cobain, Hutchinson and Nelson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st February 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 March.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Restricted Item

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the 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, 20th June, 2022

Performance Report for Q4 YTD 2021/2022

The Chief Executive of the ICC Belfast provided an update on the company's performance for Quarter 4 and covering the period 1st April, 2021, to 31st March, 2022.

She advised that, as the venues had been mandated to close for half of the financial year 2021/2022, there had inevitably been a major impact on the sales revenue, overall financial results, and the majority of the Key Performance Indicators. However, as the venues had re-opened at the beginning of October 2021. She reported that there had been an increase in activity with increased sales income across all revenue streams.

The Committee was provided with the challenges and opportunities that the company faced.

The Committee was updated in respect of the company's work in terms of its Corporate Social Responsibility. She outlined that employee fundraising had taken place for their chosen charity, Autism NI. The Members were reminded that the Ulster Orchestra continued to use the Ulster Hall for its rehearsal space and that the company would continue to support the orchestra.

In terms of making the venues as accessible as possible, the Chief Executive highlighted that over 80% of the permanent staff had completed the Just a Minute (JAM) card training, to ensure that their customers could communicate their accessibility needs discreetly, highlighting that they might need extra time and patience during their visit. A Changing Places facility had been installed in the ICC Belfast, in partnership with the Council, to ensure that there were adequate accessible spaces available for all customers.

She highlighted that the recent Harkin International Disability Employment Summit 2022 had taken place at the ICC Belfast. The Members were shown a short video which illustrated what a success it had been for all involved. The Members were pleased to note that the organisers of the Summit had stated that it had been so successful that it had, in fact, set a new standard for its future meetings.

The Members were advised that the company was working in partnership with Work+ to deliver apprenticeship opportunities commencing in August 2022. The Chief Executive outlined that Work+ specialised in bringing employers, potential apprentices, colleges and universities together to support all aspects of recruitment. The Members were advised that a Queen's University Belfast student had recently commenced working with the team to support sustainability practices and to work closely with the BWUH ESG (Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance) Committee. In respect of student placements, a Customer Services student had recently started with the company, in April 2022, for one year. Another student would soon complete their year with the company in June 2022, having worked in the Sales and Marketing Team, and two further students had been confirmed for a year-long placement from July 2022. The Committee noted that further student placements were planned for the remaining quarters.

The Director of Finance and Systems provided the Committee with an overview of the financial affairs of the company.

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee
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A Member asked for further information in relation to the company's work in terms of sustainability.

The Committee was advised that BWUH Ltd. was committed to building on the Green Meetings Silver award that it had received in 2021. The Director of Finance and Systems advised the Committee that 50% of the lighting was fitted with LED lights and that they were working on converting the rest, with a number of motion sensors fitted throughout the building. He added that they were working with Queen's University on increasing the company's sustainability.

The Members were advised that a sustainability audit for reducing waste and carbon offsetting had been completed in partnership with Tourism NI. He explained that that would form the basis of the ongoing sustainability strategy and that BWUH would welcome the All-Ireland Sustainability Summit in June. The Committee agreed to receive an update in relation to the sustainability of the business at a future meeting.

A further Member requested an update on the National Merchandise issue. The Chief Executive advised the Committee that, since 1st June 2022, BWUH Ltd. now operated an in-house merchandise model. She added that it was working well, with smaller acts paying a smaller percentage than larger acts. At the request of a Member, it was agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on the merchandising model.

A Member raised the issue that the UK would potentially be asked to host Eurovision 2023, given the ongoing war in Ukraine. He suggested that he would like to see the ICC Belfast, and Belfast as a City, participate in some way if the UK was to host the major international event.

The Director of Economic Development added that he had already been in touch with the BBC and had spoken with Visit Belfast in response to a request from Members which had been sent to the Chief Executive of the Council. He advised the Committee that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in order to update the Members on any progress in respect of Belfast's role in the UK hosting Eurovision 2023.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted the update which had been provided in respect of the performance report;
- agreed to receive an update report on the in-house approach to merchandise sales at a future meeting;
- agreed to receive an update report on the sustainability measures at BWUH; and
- noted that a report on any progress in respect of Belfast's role in the UK hosting Eurovision 2023 would be submitted to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

Chairperson

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Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 9th June, 2022

MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Walsh (Chairperson);
Alderman Sandford; and
Councillors Gormley, Maghie, McKeown, McLaughlin,
Murray, Newton and Spratt.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mrs. C Reynolds, Director City Regeneration;
Mrs. D. Caldwell, Climate Commissioner;
Mr. R. McLernon, Climate Programme Manager - City;
Mr. R. Connelly, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer;
Mr. J. McKearney, Project Support Assistant;
Ms. W. Langham, Programme Director, Belfast Stories
Mr. R. Treacy, Energy and CO2 Manager
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for an inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors de Faoite, McCabe and Smyth.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 12th May 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 June.

Presentation from Lisa-Dee Collery of the Shared Island Unit

The Committee welcomed Ms. Lisa-Dee Collery and Mr. Eoighan Duffy to the meeting. They then received a presentation from Ms. Collery in relation to the Shared Island initiative. She advised the Members that the shared island initiative had three strands of work, namely, building the shared island, dialogue and engagement and research.

She went on to provide an overview of the Shared Island Fund Budget 2021- €500m capital fund from 2021-25, ring-fenced for collaborative North/South projects, that would implement PfG commitments and objectives of the Shared Island.

**Climate and City Resilience Committee,
Thursday, 9th June, 2022**

The National Development Plan had been reviewed in October 2021, along with the key criteria for allocations from the Shared Island Fund. The Committee noted the allocations to date and that the Shared Island Fund would enable progress with delivery of Programme for Government commitments.

The Revised National Development Plan had been launched by the Government in October 2021. That included a significant Shared Island dimension setting new investment objectives across virtually all sectors. It committed €3.5bn for collaborative cross-border investment over the next decade and the Shared Island Fund had doubled to €1bn to 2030.

The Government committed to work through all-island partnerships for a more connected, sustainable and prosperous island. It outlined plans for a more connected island through connectivity of infrastructure, systems and people: encompassing transport, tourism and recreation, public services as well as culture, arts and heritage.

She went on to inform the Committee of the plans for a more sustainable island. A well-coordinated North/South approach was fundamental to effective policy and public investment actions on climate and environment. Co-ordinated investment for a regionally balanced and prosperous island, including a national development plan total all-island investment commitment of more than €3.5billion. This would be delivered through an Extended Shared Island Fund (€1bn); Government's annual funding for North/South cooperation (€1.4bn); Project Ireland 2040 funds and the PEACE PLUS programme (€1bn+) - delivered with the EU, UK and NI Executive.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the presentation.

It was agreed that Council officers would come back with a report looking at any potential collaboration with local authorities across the island to look at avenues of funding through the Shared Island unit.

**Update on Belfast Stories, including
Geothermal Feasibility Study**

The Committee received a presentation from the Belfast Stories Programme Director giving an update on Belfast Stories, including the Geothermal Feasibility study. She advised the Committee that Belfast Stories aspired to be a sustainable, net zero carbon exemplar for the city and region, at the forefront of environmentally sensitive design, minimising energy consumption and maximising the potential for enhancing biodiversity, on-site energy generation and sustainable transport. The design process which underpins the development therefore required early consideration of the elements relating to best practice that would support this ambition.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and the content of the presentation, the update on the net zero ambitions for Belfast Stories. It also noted the findings from the shallow geothermal feasibility study.

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Belfast Net Carbon Roadmap

The Committee received a report providing an overview of the Belfast Net-Zero Carbon Roadmap, which had been commissioned for Belfast through the Place Based Climate Action Network (PCAN) which had also been circulated to Members for information.

The Committee adopted the recommended emissions reduction targets for Belfast, as set out in the Belfast Net-Zero Carbon Roadmap.

Recap on Suggestions for Future Meetings

The Policy, Compliance and Research Officer the Committee with a verbal update on the items which were likely to be brought forward to future meetings.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Chairperson

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Standards and Business Committee

Tuesday, 28th June, 2022

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Hanvey (Chairperson);
Councillors Canavan, Corr, Douglas, Duffy, de Faoite,
Ferguson, Flynn, Gormley, Kyle, McCabe, McCullough,
Pankhurst and Vernor

In attendance: Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer,
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer,

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Long, Hutchinson and McAteer.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 24th May 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 June, subject to the omission of those matters which had been delegated to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were recorded.

Motions

The Committee considered a report in relation to Notices of Motion which had been received for consideration by the Council at its meeting on 4th July.

The Committee considered each motion in turn and agreed the following:

Care Home and Top Up Fees

Moved by Councillor de Faoite,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson,

That the motion in relation to Care Home and Top Up Fees be referred to the Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

**Standards and Business Committee,
Tuesday, 28th June, 2022**

Amendment

Moved by Councillor McCabe,
Seconded by Councillor Duffy,

That the proposal standing in the name of Councillor de Faoite be amended to provide that the Committee agrees to adopt the motion.

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

The amendment was put as the substantive motion and agreed.

A copy of the motion is set out hereunder:

Moved by Councillor Heading,
Seconded by Councillor Lyons,

“This Council notes that Residential Care of Older People is a statutory function of the Department of Health and delivered through a number of private Care Home companies. The Council also notes that costs for standard care is paid from the budget of the Department of Health. Placement in a care home can be means tested and affecting savings and property owned by the resident. There are some cases where top up fees are introduced and paid for by either the resident and or family and introduces a second level of care based which profits the residential care home company. Furthermore, these top fees vary from care home and company to company and is not always reflected in the level of care or the wages of staff employed in care homes. The care of our older people is important to society and accordingly this Council calls upon the Department of Health to investigate the top up costs charged by care homes.”

Continuance of Hybrid Meetings

The Committee agreed that the motion in relation to Continuance of Hybrid Meetings be referred to the Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

**Capital Investments in Parks, Public
and Open Spaces**

That Committee agreed that the motion in relation to Capital Investments in Parks, Public and Open Spaces be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

**Standards and Business Committee,
Tuesday, 28th June, 2022**

Support the Caterpillar Strike for Fair Pay

Moved by Councillor Pankhurst,
Seconded by Councillor McCullough,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the motion.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor Flynn,

That the proposal standing in the name of Councillor Pankhurst be amended and that the motion in relation to Support the Caterpillar Strike for Fair Pay, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

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

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Pankhurst was put to the meeting and passed.

A copy of the motion is set out hereunder:

**Proposed by Matt Collins,
Seconded by Michael Collins,**

“This Council commends workers from Caterpillar factories, in West Belfast and Larne, for engaging in strike action for fair pay. The Council offers its full support to these workers campaigning for a fair pay increase. Staff in Caterpillar are highly skilled, yet many continue to receive a rate of only £10.70 per hour. With a rapidly escalating cost of living: workers are struggling to get by on these low wages and have taken strike action as a last resort to overturn this circumstance. The Council notes with concern that despite 6 weeks of consecutive strike action, Caterpillar refuses to engage with Unite the Union, or enter into negotiations for a fair pay uplift. This is completely unacceptable. This Council calls upon employers at Caterpillar to treat these workers with the respect they deserve. To this end, the Council agrees to write to senior management of 3.4 3.5 3.6 Caterpillar, urging them to immediately enter discussions with trade union representatives to negotiate a fair pay increase for staff.

Chairperson

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