

# Public Document Pack

## BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

### SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

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

Notice is hereby given that the monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the **Council Chamber and remotely via Microsoft Teams** on Wednesday, 1st February, 2023 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. Request to Address the Council

(To consider a request for Mr. Máirtín Mac Gabhann to address the Council in relation to Dáithí's Law on organ donation)

7. Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies
8. Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 11 - 62)
9. Minutes of People and Communities Committee (Pages 63 - 96)
10. Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 97 - 112)
11. Minutes of Planning Committee (Pages 113 - 130)
12. Minutes of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee (Pages 131 - 132)
13. Minutes of Standards and Business Committee (Pages 133 - 134)
14. Motions
  - a) End Hostile Environment (Pages 135 - 136)
  - b) Support for striking Health Workers (Pages 137 - 138)

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Chief Executive

## Council

### MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Monday, 9th January, 2023 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

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

### Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey and Councillor McCusker.

### Declarations of Interest

Alderman Copeland declared an interest in relation to the item "Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund" within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that her daughter worked for an organisation that was a potential delivery partner.

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to the item "Social Supermarket Funding – Update" within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that he was employed by an organisation which was a potential recipient of the funding.

Councillor Bradley declared an interest in relation to the item "Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund" within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that she was an employee of the Healthy Living Centre.

Councillor Canavan declared an interest in relation to the item "Social Supermarket Funding – Update" within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that she was a Committee Member of one of the potential delivery partners.

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Councillor Gormley declared an interest in relation to the item “Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that he was a board member of LORAG which was one of the strategic partners for delivery of the scheme.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in relation to the items “Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes and “Social Supermarket Funding – Update” within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that she was employed by one of the strategic partners for delivery of the scheme, Forward South Partnership and that she would therefore leave and not take part in the discussion on the item.

Councillor Hutchinson declared an interest in relation to the items “Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes and “Social Supermarket Funding – Update” within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that he worked for an organisation that line managed one of the strategic partners.

Councillor McKeown declared an interest in relation to the item “Physical Programme and Asset Management” within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that his son played for a mini soccer team.

Councillor McLoughlin declared an interest in relation to the item “Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that his cousin was employed by a strategic partner and that he would therefore leave and not take part in the discussion on the item.

Councillor Thompson declared an interest in relation to the items “Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund” and “Update on Area Working Groups” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that she was a Board Member of the Greater Shankill Community Council.

Councillor Verner declared an interest in relation to the item “Social Supermarket Funding – Update” within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that she was employed the Greater Shankill Partnership who was a Strategic Partner, and that she would therefore leave and not take part in the discussion on the item.

Councillor Whyte declared an interest in relation to the item “Ulster University and Queen’s University” within the City Growth and Regeneration Committee minutes, in that he was a teaching assistant at Queen’s University School of Economics.

**Minutes of the Council**

**Amendments**

Councillor M. Kelly pointed out that, at the meeting of the Council of 1st December, she had declared an interest, which had not been recorded, in the Motion – Translink – Night-time Provision of Services, in that she worked for an organisation that Translink regularly consulted with.

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Councillor Gormley requested a correction under the official announcements of the minute of the meeting of the Council of 1st December, whereby he had offered congratulations to Mr. Mark Sykes, whose name had been misspelled.

Councillor Maghie pointed out that her attendance at the meeting of the Council of 1st December had not been recorded, and that she had belatedly joined the meeting remotely.

The Council agreed that the minutes be varied accordingly; and

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

That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 1st and 7th December, be taken as read and signed as correct.

**Adoption of Minutes**

The minutes of the proceedings of the Council of 1st and 7th December were thereupon approved and adopted, subject to the foregoing amendments.

**Official Announcements**

**Welcome**

The Lord Mayor welcomed Councillor Doran to his first meeting of the Council.

The Lord Mayor also agreed to Councillor de Faoite's request that she write to Mr. Joe Kennedy III to welcome his appointment as the US Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland.

**Best Wishes**

Alderman Rodgers and Councillor McCullough paid tribute to former Councillor Dale Pankhurst who had recently stepped down and wished him well in his future endeavours.

Alderman Rodgers brought to the Council's attention that former Lord Mayor, Eric Smith, had been in hospital and the Lord Mayor acceded to his request to write to Mr. Smith to extend the Council's best wishes.

Alderman Rodgers also thanked Councillor Hussey for his term as High Sheriff.

**Condolences**

The Lord Mayor and Cllr Magee paid tribute to former Councillor Mr. Bobby Lavery and offered condolences to his family upon his recent death.

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She also stated that she had been saddened to hear of the sudden passing of former Council employee, Alan Stewart, and passed on her sympathy and condolences to Alan's family.

The Lord Mayor, in response to a request from Councillor Walsh, agreed to write to the family of Irish language activist, Mr. Diarmuid Ó Tuama, to offer condolences on behalf of the Council upon his recent death.

**Congratulations**

The Lord Mayor offered congratulations to Deputy Registrar, Winnie McConnell, who had been awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to local government.

Alderman Copeland and Councillor Lyons offered congratulations to Councillor Kyle as the incoming High Sheriff. Councillor Kyle stated that it was a great honour to be nominated as High Sherriff.

Councillor T. Kelly congratulated Mr. Brian Armstrong, who had become a Guinness World Record holder after completing fifty half triathlons and the Lord Mayor agreed to write to Mr. Armstrong, on behalf of the Council, to offer congratulations.

Councillor Verner congratulated Ms. Mary Montgomery, Principal of Boys Model Secondary School, and Ms. Debbie Watters, Co-Director of Greater Shankill Alternatives, on receiving Orders of the British Empire (OBEs) in the new year honours list.

Councillor Maghie congratulated the Northern Ireland Women's Wheelchair Basketball Team on their recent establishment and the Lord Mayor agreed to write to the team to convey the Council's best wishes for the future.

The Lord Mayor agreed to Alderman Rodgers' request that a letter would be sent to congratulate former professional football, Mr. Pat Jennings, who had been awarded a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the new year's honours list.

**Gender Based Violence**

The Lord Mayor condemned the recent murders of Natalie McNally and Bruna Fonseca and offered condolences to their families, friends and local communities.

Several Members concurred with the Lord Mayor's sentiments and she stated, in response to Alderman Copeland's comments, that she would write to the Northern Ireland Executive for an update on the proposed strategy to end violence against women and girls, and that a meeting would be convened by the Lord Mayor to discuss the issue.

**Request to address the Council**

The Chief Executive reported that two requests to address the Council had been received, the first from Ms. Clare Mullaly from End Deportations Belfast and Ms. Kellie Turtle from Faith Voices for Reproductive Justice to address the Council meeting in relation to their ongoing campaign regarding the living conditions of

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pregnant asylum seekers and refugees. The second was from Mr. Chris Eisenstadt from BookTrust – in relation to a motion on an Imagination Library

The Council acceded to the requests and, accordingly, Ms. Clare Mullaly from End Deportations Belfast, together with Ms. Kellie Turtle from Faith Voices for Reproductive Justice, were welcomed by the Lord Mayor.

Ms. Turtle explained that Faith Voices for Reproductive Justice was one of three organisations that were campaigning on the issue of the detention of pregnant women at Larne House, a short-term holding facility.

She said that it had come to light through freedom of information requests that, between June 2016 and June 2022, eight pregnant women had been held at Larne House, and that the issue was of great concern. She stated that reproductive justice meant creating a society where the reproductive rights and health of women and pregnant people were fully available to all without discrimination and included the right to have safe and dignified pregnancy and birth and have babies born into safe environments.

She stated that it was unacceptable to have pregnant people in detention in Larne House on the basis of their immigration status, which would mean that they are cut off from all statutory health services and would only receive care from a private healthcare provider, Mighty, who operate the facility on behalf of the Home Office.

She explained that most individuals who passed through the UK immigration detention system were subsequently released back into the community, with their detention having served no purpose and to subject pregnant people and their babies to risk for no clear purpose, was not acceptable.

She concluded by stating that there had been clear consensus that the dehumanising treatment of marginalised people was not acceptable and that there was a need for alternatives to detention. She said that Belfast City Council had a part to play and asked for commitment to being part of the process in developing community based alternatives to prevent pregnant people being detained in Larne House.

Ms. Mullaly stated that Larne House, as a short-term holding facility and according to the UK Home Office, immigration detention should only be used to detain an individual immediately prior to their scheduled deportation, however, she explained, that the reality was different and, in 2022, only fourteen percent of individuals detained were eventually deported.

She informed the Council that alternatives to detention existed and that Action Foundations' alternative to detention pilot, run in conjunction with the UK Home Office, identified an humane alternative to detention with no decrease in compliance to immigration rules.

She pointed out that the geography of Northern Ireland provided an ideal region for alternatives to detention and that she was calling on the Council to work with other bodies to explore ways to ensure everyone in the city was treated with dignity and respect and that Larne House would cease to operate.

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The Lord Mayor thanked Ms. Mullaly and Ms. Turtle for their deputation and they retired from the meeting. She welcomed Mr. Eisenstadt from BookTrust to the meeting.

Mr. Eisenstadt explained that he was pleased that the Council had been taking action to support children's reading and that he felt the Council had a capacity to do a lot of work to encourage and support children's reading.

He outlined the work of the BookTrust and how they deliver through the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Education Authority, and how the BookTrust carefully selected partners who were working towards the same goal, to get children to enjoy reading. He stated that all projects were designed to fit in with the work that partners were undertaking and not to add to their busy schedules.

He provided an overview of a pilot project which had been in progress, BookTrust Early Years, which was a targeted project aimed at children who had been, statistically, most likely to miss out on forming a reading habit. He informed the Council that the pilot project did not have a funding source as it was still in the pilot stage and that the BookTrust was keen to find resources to expand the project.

He explained that the BookTrust Time to Read project, which was being delivered by teachers and the Letterbox Club project, whereby children, signed up to the project, between the ages of three to thirteen were sent an age-appropriate book between the months of May to October to encourage reading over the summer months.

He concluded by stating that the BookTrust had a range of partnerships, pilots and projects and had successfully worked with children and families across age ranges and communities and had strong local knowledge and that he was delighted that the Council recognised the vitality of the issue and had seen a role for itself in supporting giving children the joys of reading.

The Lord Mayor thanked Mr Eisenstadt for his attendance and he retired from the meeting.

The Council noted the information.

**Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies**

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) of the following changes in membership:

- Councillor Thompson to replace former Councillor Pankhurst on the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee;
- Councillor Verner to replace Councillor Bunting as Deputy Chairperson on the People and Communities Committee;
- Alderman Haire to replace former Councillor Pankhurst on the Standards and Business Committee;

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- Councillor Cobain to replace former Councillor Pankhurst on the Cathedral Quarter Trust; and
- Councillor McCullough to replace former Councillor Pankhurst on the North Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership.

The Council noted the changes.

**Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**

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

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th December, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Amendment**

**Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund**

Moved by Councillor Flynn  
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

Resolved – “That the Council agrees that the All-Party Cost-of-Living Task Group be re-established, to discuss the challenges and learnings of the scheme, that would be considered should a similar scheme be required in winter 2023.”

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th December were thereupon approved and adopted.

**Minutes of People and Communities Committee**

Moved by Councillor Murray,  
Seconded by Councillor Donnelly,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 6th December be approved and adopted.

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

At the request of Councillor de Faoite, the City Solicitor agreed to provide a report to the People and Communities Committee with regards to any previous partnership agreements which may have been withdrawn and to consider a review of the provisions of partnership agreements.

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**Notice of Motion - Imagination Library**

At the request of a Councillor Murray, the Council agreed that the BookTrust be included as one of the interested partners the Council would work with to secure the success and sustainable funding of the scheme.

**Financial Reporting - Quarter 2 2022/23**

At the request of Councillor Whyte, the Council agreed to the holding of special meetings of the People and Communities Committee specifically to discuss issues around waste collection. In addition, the Chief Executive undertook to re-establish the Cleansing Taskforce.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic People and Communities Committee of 6th December were thereupon approved and adopted.

**Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee**

Moved by Councillor Murphy,  
Seconded by Councillor Duffy and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 7th December be approved and adopted.

**Minutes of Licensing Committee**

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,  
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and

Resolve - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 14th December, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Minutes of Planning Committee**

Moved by Councillor Whyte,  
Seconded by Councillor Maskey and

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

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**Minutes of the Climate and City Resilience Committee**

Moved by Councillor Walsh,  
Seconded by Councillor McCabe and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 8th December, 2022 be approved and adopted.

**Minutes of Standards and Business Committee**

Moved by Councillor Harvey,  
Seconded by Councillor Duffy and

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 5th January, 2023, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson

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## Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 20th January, 2023

### MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

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

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

Also attended: Councillors de Faoite and Flynn.

### **Apologies**

No apologies were reported.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 16th December 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 January, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in respect of agenda item 2a - Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24, in that she was employed by an organisation which

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was an applicant for a Capacity Grant. She declared an interest also in relation to item 7a - Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership, as that organisation had been referred to in the PEACE IV update on Building Positive Relations Theme.

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2a - Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24, in that he was employed by an organisation which might avail of Capacity and Revenue Grants. He declared an interest also in respect of agenda item 8b - Requests for Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality, as that organisation was included in the list of applications to be approved for 2023.

Councillor Verner declared an interest in respect of agenda item 2a - Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24, on the basis that that she was employed by an organisation which received a Revenue Grant.

The City Solicitor informed those Members who had declared an interest in relation to item 2a - Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24, that, as the Committee was not being asked at this stage to allocate funding for Capacity and Revenue Grants to specific organisations, they would not be required to leave the meeting whilst the report was being considered.

**NI REVAL 2023**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 18th November, it had agreed that a representative of Land and Property Services be invited to attend its meeting in January to provide a presentation on the outcome of its NI REVAL 2023 non-domestic revaluation exercise.

Accordingly, Mr. G. Humphrey was welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Humphrey informed the Committee that the revaluation exercise had involved a review of the rateable value of more than 74,500 non-domestic properties across Northern Ireland, including cinemas, factories, hospitals, hotels, licenced premises, offices, playing fields, power stations, schools, shops and warehouses. The previous revaluation had been undertaken in 2020.

He pointed out that:

- regular revaluations were essential to maintain fairness and equality between ratepayers;
- a revaluation did not increase or decrease the total Northern Ireland rates revenue;
- revaluations sought to redistribute the rate burden by rebalancing business rates;

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- revaluations ensured that business rates stayed up-to date and reflected local economic change; and
- revaluations reflected relative changes between properties which occurred over time.

He explained that new rateable values had been based upon an estimate of open market rents on the statutory valuation date of 1st October, 2021 and that those would be used to calculate business rates liabilities from 1st April, 2023. A draft schedule of values had been published on 11th January, 2023, which enabled a ratepayer to view their draft valuation and contact Land and Property Services, should they feel that their figure was inaccurate.

In terms of initial outcomes, seven councils had seen a decline in Net Annual Value from 2020, three had witnessed an increase and one, namely Belfast City Council, had remained unchanged. The revaluation for Belfast had been based on 16,982 valuation list entries and he provided a brief breakdown of the results for various non-domestic category types.

Mr. Humphrey concluded by confirming that 75% of non-domestic properties were entitled to some form of rates relief, amounting to £243 million, and provided details of the various categories of properties/businesses which were eligible.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Restricted Items**

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

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

**Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24**

The Director of Finance submitted for the Committee's consideration a report on the development of the revenue estimates for 2023/24 and the next steps in the rate setting process. The report provided information on the current financial position, Departmental and additional growth proposals, medium-term financial planning and the financial strategy for the next two years. It also set out a number of recommendations for the Committee's consideration, including the striking of the rate and the proposed cash limits for the Council's Standing Committees.

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**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Long,  
Seconded by Councillor Groogan and

Resolved – That the Committee agrees that the kerbside glass expansion project be taken forward as a priority for the 2024/25 rate setting process and that officers begin the preparatory work to enable it to be introduced from 1st April, 2024.

At the request of Councillor Spratt, the Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining how the glass collection service trial reduced the use/volume of glass recycling in recycling centres and how any extra capacity could be used to provide an additional soft plastic recycling service, with the estimated cost to be included.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Long,  
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson),

That the Committee agrees not to allocate funding of £500k to the Summer Diversionary Festival Programme in 2023/24 and to develop a new scheme for 2024/25 which would seek to build capacity at a local level.

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

<b><u>For 5</u></b>	<b><u>Against 15</u></b>
Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); and Councillors Groogan, Long and McMullan.	Aldermen Dorrian and Haire; and Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Ferguson, Garrett, Heading, Lyons, McLaughlin, Murphy, Spratt, Thompson, Verner and Walsh.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,  
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson),

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

On a vote, eighteen Members voted for the proposal and one against, with one 'no vote' and it was declared carried.

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Accordingly, the Committee:

- i. approved an indicative domestic rate increase of 7.99% for 2023/24;
- ii. approved the proposed Financing Strategy to fund the 2023/24 budgetary gap in 2023/24 and 2024/25, as set out within the report;
- iii. noted the implications of this approach for the 2024/25 rate setting process;
- iv. approved the growth proposals included in the 2023/24 uncontrollable cost increase of £27.2m, as set out within the report;
- v. agreed to recommend the following cash limits for 2023/24:
  - a. a cash limit of £50,355,486 for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2023/24, including £3,270,000 for Belfast Investment Fund and £3,000,000 for City Deal;
  - b. a cash limit of £98,901,629 for the People and Communities Committee for 2023/24;
  - c. a cash limit of £20,445,354 for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for 2023/24;
  - d. a cash limit of £1,624,167 for the Planning Committee for 2023/24; and
  - e. a Capital Financing Budget of £22,274,022 for 2023/24 and
- vi. agreed that the aforementioned decisions would not be subject to call-in, as this would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

**Update on Section 76 Developer Contributions  
(Public Realm Improvement Works)**

*This minute has been restricted on the basis of Commercial Sensitivity.  
The restriction will be removed in due course.*

**Update on Employees on Temporary  
Contracts and Agency Workers**

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

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She reported that, on 31st December, 218 staff had been filling posts on a temporary basis, 140 of whom had substantive Council posts to return to. The other 78 were Fixed Term Contract employees who had no substantive post. Since 1st October, 7 temporary staff had been given permanent status, in line with the fixed term contract guidelines, however, over the same time period, an additional 17 temporary project posts had been created, on the basis of business/operational need.

The total number of agency assignees engaged by the Council on 31st December had been 275, which was 58 less than in the previous quarter. A dedicated Corporate Contract Manager had now been appointed to manage, challenge and control agency usage across all Departments and would take up post on 6th February.

She then provided an update on the ongoing recruitment exercises for the permanent posts of General Operatives and Business Support Clerks and confirmed that, to date, there had been 54 and 30 appointments respectively.

The Director went on to provide details of the advice which had been received from counsel, the Local Government Staff Commission and the Equality Commission NI on the motion which had been adopted by the Committee on 22nd October, 2021, on the potential for anyone on a temporary contract who had been employed for twelve continuous months, regardless of job title, to have that contract made permanent, if they so wished.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed:

- i. that officers investigate the possibility of the Council employing 'at risk' those people who had been working for a significant length of time on temporary projects which were being funded by other agencies; and
- ii. noted that the Director of Human Resources would seek to identify additional support which could be offered to temporary staff, including those with disabilities, applying for permanent Council posts.

### **Update on Living Wage Accreditation**

The Committee noted the contents of a report providing an update on the Council's application for Living Wage accreditation and the next steps in the process.

### **Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

#### **Motion - Comber Greenway**

The Committee was reminded that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 5th January, had considered the following motion which had been received for submission to the Council on 9th January:

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“This Council notes the significant contribution which the Comber Greenway makes to East Belfast, in terms of active travel, urban biodiversity, and wildlife.

The Council further notes the strategic importance of having well maintained and connected routes in the City, including gritting during the winter periods, providing residents and commuters with safe alternatives to getting around the City.

The Council will -

- i. engage with relevant stakeholders to consider a plan for gritting the Comber Greenway, making it accessible at all times of the year; and
- ii. engage with the Department for Infrastructure regarding an asset transfer of the Comber Greenway between the Beersbridge Road and Tullycarnet boundary, with a view to bringing the urban path under full Council ownership.”

The motion had been proposed by Councillor Flynn and seconded by Councillor Groogan.

Councillor Flynn sought and was granted approval by the Committee to replace point ii. of his motion with the following wording:

- The Council will engage with the Department for Infrastructure regarding an asset transfer, including relevant resource, of the Comber Greenway between the Beersbridge Road and Tullycarnet boundary, with the aim of bringing the urban path under full Council ownership. Additionally, it will engage with the EastSide Partnership, with a view to partnering for the benefit of the Comber Greenway, similar to the successful model in place between the two organisations for the Connswater Community Greenway.

After discussion, the Committee noted the motion, as amended, and agreed, in the first instance, that a report be submitted to a future meeting on how it might be facilitated, resourced and managed. The Committee agreed also that a letter be forwarded to Northern Ireland Electricity requesting it to install and switch on lighting on the Comber Greenway as soon as possible for the benefit of residents and users.

**Motion – School Street Schemes**

The Committee was reminded that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 5th January, had considered the following motion which had been received for submission to the Council on 9th January:

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This Council:

- i notes that the “School Street” schemes in the Republic of Ireland and GB, which close the roads outside schools during drop-off and pick-up times, have the multiple benefits of improving road safety for pupils, encouraging active travel to school by walking, cycling and public transport, and improving the air quality around schools;
- ii commends Fingal County Council, which has successfully pioneered the scheme at many schools in North County Dublin;
- iii recognises that we do not have the statutory powers to introduce such a scheme in Belfast, either in pilot or permanent form;
- iv calls upon the Department for Infrastructure to bring forward urgently a School Streets pilot project in Belfast, identifying a number of pilot schools across the City;
- v agrees that the Area Working Groups will agree a number of schools in each area to recommend to the Department for Infrastructure as part of a pilot scheme; and
- vi shall explore further ways to work with all relevant partners to develop School Streets and support measures to cut vehicle emissions and pollution in the vicinity of schools, including enforceable No-Idling Zones, air quality measuring and tree planting as part of the one million trees initiative.

The motion had been proposed by Councillor de Faoite and seconded by Councillor McKeown.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,  
Seconded by Councillor Lyons,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the motion in full.

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

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,  
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson) and

Resolved - That the Committee agrees, in the first instance, that the Council write to the Department for Infrastructure requesting it to bring forward a School Streets pilot project in Belfast, with the response to be

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presented to the Committee for consideration and a decision to be taken on the way forward.

**Motion – Leave Arrangements**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 Three motions were agreed by the Council in 2021 relating to leave arrangements for parental bereavement leave and pay, miscarriage leave and fertility treatment leave.**

**1.2 This report informs the Committee of the outcome of the consultation with the Trade Unions and the additional leave provisions which will be implemented on 1st February 2023, pending completion of the equality screening.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to note the outcome of the consultation with the Trade Unions on enhanced leave arrangements.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, on 19th August 2022, agreed that the Council would consult with the Trade Unions on the proposed enhanced leave arrangements as follows:**

**Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay**

**3.2 To award 10 consecutive days bereavement leave, not solely in the case of a child under 18, but for the death of a close relative;**

**To award 10 consecutive days full pay, not statutory pay, as a day one right with no qualifying service required: and**

**To award 1 days paid leave to attend the funeral of an extended family member.**

**Paid Leave for Miscarriage**

**3.3 To treat miscarriage as a bereavement and offer 10 days' bereavement leave on full pay to employees who suffer a miscarriage as a day one right.**

**Fertility Treatment Leave**

- 3.4 To award 10 days full paid leave following any unsuccessful IVF treatment to employees who have undergone IVF treatment, as a day one right, in addition to the paid time off for medical appointments that already exists.

Through the consultation process with the Trade Unions, the following more favourable provisions were agreed at JNCC on 15th December 2022:

**Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay**

- 3.5 Award 10 consecutive days' bereavement leave, not solely in the case of a child under 18, including the case of still birth for the partner, or the death of a close relative (1) or for those who have sole responsibility for the funeral arrangements.

Award 10 consecutive days' full pay, not statutory pay, as a day one right with no qualifying service required.

Award 1 days' paid leave to attend the funeral of an extended family member (2)

(1) The definition of a close relative is a 'spouse, civil partner, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, stepdaughter, stepson, stepmother, stepfather, stepbrother or stepsister'. There may be exceptional circumstances where the 10 days could be awarded outside of the above 'close relative' definition' e.g., for the death of a grandparent when the employee was brought up by their grandparents.

(2) The definition of an extended family member is grandparent, grandchild, mother/father-in-law, daughter/son-in-law.'

**Paid Leave for Miscarriage:**

- 3.6 Treat miscarriage as a bereavement and offer 10 days' bereavement leave on full pay to employees who suffer a miscarriage as a day one right.

Offer 3 days' bereavement leave to an employee who is the partner/surrogate parents for someone who had a miscarriage.

**Fertility Treatment Leave:**

- 3.7 Award 10 days full paid leave following any unsuccessful IVF treatment to employees who have undergone IVF treatment, as

a day one right in addition to the paid time off for medical appointments that already exists

Offer 3 days' leave to an employee who is the partner/surrogate parents for someone who had unsuccessful IVF treatment.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.8 There will be an impact in terms of increased leave entitlement in the case of bereavement, miscarriage and IVF treatment as outlined above.

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

- 3.9 The introduction of the enhanced leave provisions will be subject to equality and rural needs screening.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

**Update on City Region Growth Deal**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

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

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- i the engagement that took place with senior government officials at the City and Growth Deals Senior Stocktake session;
- ii the progress being made on the Contracts for Funding which are required for each of the capital projects delivered through the Deal and the update on project development and delivery across the pillars of investment; and
- iii the update in respect of the BRCD Council Panel.

**3.0 Main Report**

**City and Growth Deals Senior Stocktake**

**3.1 A City and Growth Deals Senior Stocktake meeting was held in October 2022, hosted by the Department of Finance (DoF). The stocktake was chaired by the Permanent Secretary of DoF and participants included the Head of the Civil Service, Permanent Secretaries and senior officials of a number of government departments and senior representatives of the City and Growth Deal partners. This workshop was held in order to discuss progress to date across all Northern Ireland City and Growth Deals and key issues and challenges being experienced, such as the impact of construction inflation and concerns about the complexity of arrangements and pace of delivery. A detailed discussion on the Stocktake took place at the November meeting of the Executive Board and members of the Board broadly welcomed the stocktake and in particular highlighted the need to build on the positive engagement, with a number of areas of change identified including:**

- The adoption of a ‘Clearing House’ approach to resolve key issues and challenges at leadership level at an earlier stage;**
- The need to reset the model of working with a stronger focus required on outcomes and opportunities across all the deals;**
- Agreement of a set of principles to underpin a more collaborative model of working to help ensure a focus on delivery and avoid the introduction of additional complexity;**
- The need to establish shared commitment to and accountability for timeframes as well as quality/cost;**
- The need for increased clarity in relation to the distinct roles and responsibilities of government departments and government agencies to avoid duplication and support timely decision making; and**
- The potential to use departmental resource in different ways to support deals respond to cross-deal challenges**

**3.2 The Programme Director for the BRCD is engaging directly with senior officials in the key government departments to seek to agree a plan of action in line with the areas of change/action identified by the Executive Board.**

**Contracts for Funding**

- 3.3 As previously noted by the Committee, before funding can flow to projects for which Outline Business Cases (OBCs) have been approved, Contracts for Funding need to be agreed between departments and the Accountable Body and Funding Agreements agreed between the Accountable Body and Project Sponsors.
- 3.4 It was also noted by Members that the Committee would be advised of progress to agree the funding agreements for each project. Since the last update to the Committee in November progress has continued to prepare and agree a number of contracts as outlined below:
- In addition to Studio Ulster, the contract for which was approved and signed in the summer, contracts have now been approved and signed for Carrickfergus Regeneration, Bangor Waterfront, and Newry City Centre Regeneration and a number of press releases have been issued to mark these significant milestones for deal delivery;
  - The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) contract is currently being considered with final approval and signing expected in the coming weeks;
  - Draft Contracts for the Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iREACH), the Global Innovation Institute and Mourne Mountain Gateway are being actively progressed.

**Progress across BRCD Pillars**

**Innovation**

- 3.5 AMIC has been advanced by Queen's University and is now nearing conclusion and finalisation of the detailed designs, RIBA Stage 3, and its associated report. The planning application for construction of the 'Factory for the Future' at Global Point is also being progressed. The invitation to tender for the prime contractor for the project is also expected to be published this month.
- 3.6 The Global Innovation Institute is proceeding through to RIBA Stage 3 in the coming months. There has been ongoing industry engagement to inform the process and a review of the commercial model is being carried out. The iREACH project continues to move through RIBA Stage 2, is considering in further detail its site proposals and commercial model and has

been undertaking significant stakeholder engagement on final proposals.

- 3.7 The Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology project is considering early procurement of equipment for the Royal Victoria Hospital Living Lab and revisions to the OBC are likely to be required to reflect this potential change of scope.
- 3.8 Construction work on Studio Ulster commenced on site in October 2022. Following the publication of the Prior Information Notice on 18th November, the procurement for the appointment of an operator and equipment for Studio Ulster has progressed to the next stage of the Competitive Dialogue tender process, with the tender opportunity for Studio Ulster published on 21st December.

#### Digital

- 3.9 Since the last update to the Committee, the OBC for the Venture Fund element of the Innovation Challenge Fund has progressed well, with a Strategic case review completed with key Government and partner stakeholders in December. Members also previously approved the commencement of a separate business case for the Augment the City pilot project in October 2022. Since then and following consideration by the Digital Advisory Board a draft business case has been shared with the Department for the Economy and the Belfast City Innovation team are currently reviewing the feedback received. Members will be kept updated as this project progresses. It was previously reported that the Digital Twin project led by Digital Catapult UK, received Ministerial approval on 28th October 2022 and it is now awaiting DoF supply approval.
- 3.10 The i4c Innovation Centre project, led by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, received approval from the Economy Minister in Spring 2022 and following intensive engagement with the Department for the Economy the OBC has now been updated and was re-submitted on 22nd December 2022. The updated OBC includes an additional financial contribution, approved by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, to address the challenges previously identified. Once final consideration by Casework Committee has been completed, the project will proceed for DoF supply approval.

#### Tourism and Regeneration

- 3.11 Carrickfergus Regeneration, Bangor Waterfront, Newry Regeneration and Mourne Mountain Gateway, either have or are progressing towards having a signed Contract for Funding

and Funding Agreement in place. These projects are now ensuring that the required project resources are in place, governance is being established and the development of procurement documentation is ongoing, with a number of procurements for Integrated Design Teams expected to go live over the next few months.

- 3.12 The OBC for Destination Royal Hillsborough is being progressed for DoF supply approval. The contract for funding is being drafted alongside the supply approval process, to ensure that this can be agreed as quickly as possible following DoF approval.
- 3.13 The Gobbins attended casework in February 2022 and following extensive engagement between the Department for Economy, Tourism NI, BRCD PMO and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council a paper is to be submitted to Casework for re-endorsement, to enable OBC approvals to be progressed. The project team are continuing to develop the Integrated Consultancy Team procurement documentation for this project and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have agreed to progress the procurement, whilst OBC approvals are being obtained.
- 3.14 Belfast Stories, the Council's flagship project, continues to progress against the agreed programme with OBC submission and casework review anticipated later this year. The procurement of professional services has commenced, with an encouraging level of interest in the prequalification stage which is now nearing completion. A public consultation has now been completed which received positive feedback and will inform the design brief for the project. A Belfast Stories Benefits Framework is in also in place and will continue to be refined as the project evolves and opportunities to maximise social value including employability, skills and education are being considered at each project stage.

#### Employability and Skills (E&S)

- 3.15 As Members will be aware, the E&S pillar developed and trialled a skills assessment process to understand the labour and skills implications of the city deal investment projects. Analysing the employment potential of the city deal investments, the prevalent labour and skills conditions and reviewing to what extent the existing employability and skills ecosystem is equipped to respond. The first assessment focusing upon the construction opportunities arising through the city deal investment has recently been completed. Findings from this process which are being reviewed by the

E&S Board, highlight the key challenge in terms of labour and skills availability the sector is currently facing and identify a number of practical recommendations that could be taken forward by the city deal, its associated partners and wider stakeholders.

- 3.16 A further assessment is also underway for the advanced manufacturing sector aligned to AMIC, as well as wider manufacturing focused city and growth deal investment projects, it is expected this assessment will be completed in February/March 23. Recognising the potential of this model to undertake Northern Ireland wide assessments spanning across the four city and growth deals, it has been agreed that a Cross Deal Skills Group should be established in order to oversee and manage a series of skills assessments at a Northern Ireland level, focusing upon key sectors where city deal investment is aligned. The group will comprise of representatives from across each city deal in Northern Ireland and also representatives from relevant government departments. BRCD is playing a leading role in the development of this group, developing terms of reference and its initial work programme, as well as fulfilling the role of secretariat.
- 3.17 In relation to the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund the business case has been submitted to Invest Northern Ireland, the project is currently undergoing economic appraisal with the view to progressing to casework. Concurrently Newry, Mourne and Down District Council who will lead the delivery of the project are progressing with critical with pre-development work to establish the application and funding process for businesses applying to the fund, which will enable the project to mobilise quickly post departmental approval.
- 3.18 Work continues to maximise efforts to deliver inclusive growth and to create access to the opportunities arising through the deal. Engagement is underway with the Construction Employers Federation to explore a joint event aimed at raising awareness of future procurement opportunities and profiling the employability and skills support available to contractors, the need for which was one of the findings from the recent construction skills assessment.

#### Infrastructure

- 3.19 Work is continuing on three Infrastructure projects, Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2, the Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge and the Newry Southern Relief Road. There are no significant updates from this pillar since the last meeting.

**BRC D Council Panel**

- 3.20 A hybrid meeting of the BRC D Council Panel is due to be held on 25th January which will be hosted by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The Panel Members will be considering a detailed programme update and will receive presentations on the BRC D investments in Newry, Mourne and Down and on Communications and Engagement, which will include an overview of the newly developed BRC D Website.
- 3.21 The minutes of the previous Panel meeting hosted by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council will be considered at the Panel meeting on 25th January and will be included for notation in the next update report to this Committee.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.22 All costs associated with the BRC D are within existing budgets.

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

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

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**SOLACE NI Report on Strategic Funding Alignment -  
Mapping of Investment Fund Opportunities in Northern Ireland**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on work undertaken on behalf of the SOLACE to examine and identify funding opportunities available to Northern Ireland and associated ‘Investment Mapping Tool’ developed for use by councils.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i endorse the covering report and Investment Mapping Tool produced by Ekosgen;**
- ii agree that Council officers use this report and the Investment Mapping Tool as a 'live' tool which should be updated as may be required, to guide and inform a corporate approach to funding opportunities;**
- iii agree that officers design a process to continuously review and update the investment mapping tool, investment/funding opportunities and approved/committed projects internally and link this as appropriate to projects across the wider local government sector. Mindful that there will be resource implications by introducing and maintaining this process;**
- iv agree that officers design an internal process to continuously review and update the investment mapping tool populating it with funding opportunities and approved/committed projects internally and also across local government; and**
- v note that the final report may be shared on behalf of the Council and also the wider local government sector via SOLACE NI, with relevant partner organisations in Central Government, Community Planning Partnerships and City and Growth Deal Boards.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Members may be aware that Ekosgen had been commissioned by SOLACE NI last summer to undertake a scoping exercise of the existing funding landscape and to identify potential sources of investment/funding opportunities available to councils in Northern Ireland.**

**3.2 The aims of this project were to:**

- i provide councils and SOLACE NI with a clear understanding of the existing funding landscape and to inform the strategic alignment within and between councils and partners of investment funds in Northern Ireland;**

- ii **inform council officers of the timeframes that exist within these funds including engagement sessions, fund opening submission dates, fund award and fund closing dates; and**
        - iii **where possible, outline the range of different projects that are currently within the pipeline in Northern Ireland delivered through these investment funding vehicles.**
- 3.3 The study focused on identifying and alignment of the various thematic areas eligible for the available/emerging funds and the associated priorities, timings and bid submission dates. Within the context of the growing fiscal pressures facing local government. SOLACE identified the importance for councils to understand what funding opportunities may exist and how such funding opportunities align with existing sectoral and strategic priorities.**
- 3.4 SOLACE also recognised the importance of this work in providing an opportunity for each council to explore how as a local government sector and individual councils we can scope out existing (and potential future) partnerships to maximise the drawdown and benefit of these funding opportunities.**
- 3.5 The report presents the findings of an investment mapping exercise conducted by Ekosgen. The purpose of this report is threefold:**
  - i to provide an overview of the range of different sources of investment available to local authorities in Northern Ireland;**
  - ii to identify any potential areas of synergy or potential overlap across funding themes and potential projects; and**
  - iii to inform users of the content and use of the Investment Mapping Tool which has been created for the purposes of detailing the strategic fit of the Northern Ireland Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) programmes Interventions List against the investment themes, projects, and missions of other funding programmes currently active in Northern Ireland.**
- 3.6 The Committee should note that the baseline funding programme set out within the Mapping Tool is interchangeable and, for example, the Peace Plus programme could substitute the Shared Prosperity Fund to demonstrate strategic fit against the investment themes, projects, and missions of other**

funding programmes as required by each Council. The wider aim of this tool is to establish synergies that could be gained from acknowledging that investment funds in Northern Ireland have similar aims and objectives, and thus can be exploited for wider collaboration across the funds.

- 3.7 The mapping tool can be used in the decision-making process of councils and across wider funding partners to identify potential areas of complementarity between their projects and other investment funds.
- 3.8 The mapping tool can and will be used by each council or in conjunction with sub-regional partners to align their strategic objectives against emerging funding opportunities. The tool can be tailored and designed to assess and map the funding needs of each Council, including Belfast, aligned to emerging priorities. The application and ongoing maintenance and analysing of the mapping tool will be important and will help inform future decision-making processes of elected Members.
- 3.9 If the Committee agrees, officers will design a process to continuously review and update the investment mapping tool, populating it with funding opportunities and approved/committed projects internally and also across local government. The resource implications of this will be considered within existing service areas.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.10 None associated with this report. This report was commissioned by and will be paid through SOLACE NI on the basis of equal contribution by each Council of £1,310.

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

- 3.11 None associated with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**APSE 2030 Commission Report**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 **Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight to the Committee the findings and recommendations of the APSE 2030 Commission, and to note that NILGA is engaging with APSE to seek, and jointly organise, a NI launch of the Commission’s Report.

This report can be accessed at:  
<https://www.apse.org.uk/index.cfm/apse/research/local-government-commission-2030/commission-report-findings/>

## **2.0 Recommendations**

### **2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i note the contents of the report produced by APSE following the publication of its ‘Local by Default report’ which followed the work of the APSE 2030 commission; and**
- ii agree that officers continue to engage with colleagues in NILGA and APSE in terms of the outworking’s of this report to ensure our corporate interests and priorities are promoted alongside any associated lobbying of this report.**

## **3.0 Main Report**

### **3.1 The Committee will recall that a report was presented to the Committee in February 2020 which endorsed key areas of interest for the Council on which officers could engage with the APSE Commission. These included:**

- enhanced devolution to local government including regeneration, planning, skills investment and planning, and local transport planning;**
- enhanced local investment powers, to ensure that councils have the fiscal levers to tackle issues at community and city level; and**
- the introduction of legislation/measures that strengthen the relationship between central and local government, including a duty to collaborate to provide for responsive and integrated public services delivery at regional, city and community level.**

### **APSE 2030 Local Government Commission Summary**

### **3.2 The APSE Local Government Commission (ALGC) 2030 was set up to explore what the next decade could hold for a revitalised local government. The final report recently published by ALGC, issued a drastic warning to UK Governments to ‘reset the system’ to avoid local councils failing the communities they serve.**

- 3.3 The ALGC 2030 received hundreds of pieces of evidence, including oral witness testimonies from local councils and NILGA, during the course of its 18 months of work, and found that UK local government is facing its biggest economic, political, and social challenges since the Second World War.
- 3.4 Alongside multiple public policy crises in finance, adult care, housing and climate change, the Commissioners found that the system of local government itself has been hindered significantly by a lack of powers, resources, and the centralisation of decision making, which mistrusts and obstructs local councils, and ignores their democratic legitimacy.
- 3.5 APSE Chief Executive, Mr. Paul O'Brien, noted that 'Evidence to the Commission, almost without exception, exposed frustration at a system which has, over a number of decades, relied upon the fanciful concept of all-seeing all-knowing central administrations, and yet local government, with the right powers and resources, can be a force for good, bringing about positive change at a community level and be best placed to understand and deliver on local economic, environmental, and social wellbeing for local areas. That is why we are calling for a fundamental reset to the system, including a new financial and constitutional settlement, for local government.'
- 3.6 The detailed report sets out calls for a new relationship between central administrations across the UK and local government, challenging them to recognise that the levelling-up agenda cannot be delivered whilst local councils are forced to act as by-standers. The Commission warns the alternative will be the continuation of communities being disenfranchised by a system of local government, that is constrained and no longer fit for purpose.

Key Theme 'Local by Default'

- 3.7 The theme of the report 'Local by default' suggests that powers and responsibilities should sit with local government unless the evidence or a reasoned argument shows it to be wholly inappropriate. This is not to endorse a naïve localism but instead recognises that different policy issues and contemporary challenges are best resolved by different parts of government working in collaboration. To ensure this, the report calls for local government to be assured of a new settlement, which enshrines its powers and responsibilities over local areas, with the right resources to deliver meaningful change.

3.8 The Commissioners recognised the binary opposition often drawn between central and local government, and the report advocates the move towards a mature relationship which clearly defines the roles and responsibilities between different spheres of government, accepting both as integral and equal parts of the system of governance.

3.9 The report finds that the absence of any clarity over the constitutional status of local government has contributed to a piecemeal and damaging systemic drift towards legalism in relation to central-local relations, which it is argued means representative localism remains stilted and at the whim of ministers.

3.10 **Report Recommendations**

The 'Local by Default' report makes 29 recommendations which centre upon:

- A new relationship with local government
- Adopting the principle of 'local by default'
- Revitalising local government
- The roles and powers of local government
- A sustainable financial settlement for local government
- Local democracy, representation, and accountability
- The local government workforce
- Addressing inequalities and engaging communities.

Further detail in relation to the ALGC recommendations are contained within the Commission's report.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

3.11 None associated with this report.

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

3.12 None associated with this report."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Update on Workstyles Policy**

The Committee noted the contents of a report providing information on a new Council Workstyles Policy [here](#), which would be implemented on a pilot basis for 18 months from 1st April, 2023.

**30U30 Northern Ireland Climate  
Change-Makers Programme**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 To inform the Committee of an approach to the Council for support for the 30U30 (30 under 30) Northern Ireland Climate Change-Maker’s programme. The programme is coordinated by two lead partner organisations, namely Podiem and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, and is currently supported by DAERA, Pinsent Masons, Pacem and Danske Bank, with a request for local authority involvement being addressed through this approach to the Council.**

**1.2 The 30 under 30 programme is a climate focused programme, where young leaders from Northern Ireland have the opportunity to take part in an international learning programme, led by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and Podiem. The current cohort of young leaders has already been recruited and there is a request to the Council to support the programme of activity they will undertake. All of the 30U30 modules are being delivered in Belfast City Centre and the majority of the participants either reside or work within the Council’s footprint. The cohort is strengthened by its diversity with a broad range of backgrounds and interest/expertise areas represented. Over 55% of the group are female and there is a mix of those in education, employment and currently economically inactive.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Committee is recommended to approve a contribution of £8,750 plus VAT to the overall programme costs of approximately £100,000 in total. This will resource three modules, taking place in February and March 2023, including the finale event on Thursday 30th March.**

**2.2 Should the Council support the initiative, the Climate Unit will explore opportunities to align with our existing climate programme and the work being undertaken with young leaders through Belfast Climate Commission and within other projects such as Belfast One Million Trees and the UPSURGE project.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 30U30 (30 Under 30) is a programme designed develop 30 'exceptional potential leaders' in NI under the age of 30 with a focus on addressing climate change. These leaders have been competitively selected from a diverse range of industries, sectors and educational backgrounds. As mentioned above the majority of participants are from the Belfast area with over 55% of the group being female. There is a mix of those in education, employment and currently economically inactive.**

**3.2 Within the modular programme participants will learn from globally renowned thought leaders and performers across a range of relevant topics. These topics have been carefully crafted to create a cohort of leaders who will return to their fields of expertise with the tools to become planet positive change-makers in the short/long term. Speakers and facilitators include individuals such as:**

- Alice Thompson - an international speaker and social business leader who co-founded Social Bite in Edinburgh and helped to establish 'The Worlds Big Sleepout' which took place in 52 cities around the world.**
- Gerry Hussey - Ireland's leading health, wellbeing and performance coach, who has worked with many leading sports people and teams, and author of 'Awaken Your Power Within'.**
- Philip Hesketh - an international authority on influence and persuasion, who has worked with clients such as the BBC, Nestle, Walt Disney, Nike, Microsoft and Bank of America among others.**
- René Carayol MBE - has worked with leaders such as Mikael Gorbachev, Nelson Mandela, Sir Richard Branson, Bill Clinton, and Kofi Annan, and authored the book 'SPIKE'. He has been Chairman, CEO and MD of businesses and served on the boards of Marks and Spencer's and Pepsi. He is an authority on inclusivity and leadership.**

**3.3 The programme includes an international element which will encourage and enable the NI climate change-makers to build relationships and collaborations with climate change-makers from other parts of the world through the 30 under 30 programme currently run by the North American Association for Environmental Education.**

**Potential Benefits for the Council**

- 3.4 The programme coordinators will ensure that the Council will be positioned as championing (along with the other partners) the creation and development of the next generation of local leaders who will lead work to address climate change in Northern Ireland. This will support the cities ambition, articulated in the Belfast Resilience Strategy, to ‘transition to a low-carbon economy in a generation’. It will also build on work undertaken by the Council Climate Unit with young people through the Belfast Climate Commission and Council funded research on young people’s perceptions of the climate crisis undertaken during COP26 in 2021.
- 3.5 In terms of profile, the Council brand will be prominent at the three modules (including the finale event) and a Council representative will be included within photographs at each of the three modules.
- 3.6 There is an opportunity for a member of the Council’s Climate team to present on how a city is playing its part in helping to avert a climate crisis. The cohort will feature some of NI’s finest future leadership talent (including those from the local government sector), so this content will be very useful and relevant to the participants.
- 3.7 There is an opportunity for the Lord Mayor of Belfast to greet the group and hear how they are planning to create meaningful impact as a direct consequence of the programme. This would form part of the 30U30 graduation.
- 3.8 There is also an opportunity to host one of the remaining modules, potentially the finale on 30th March, in the City Hall.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.10 £8,750 plus VAT - which will be allocated from existing City and Organisational Strategy budgets.

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

- 3.11 None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Energy One Stop Shop Implementation  
Plan – Consultation on Policy Options**

The Committee considered the following report and accompanying response in respect of the Department for the Economy's consultation on the Plan for the Implementation of the Energy One Stop Shop:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 To update the Committee on the Energy One Stop Shop Implementation Plan – consultation on policy options. The closing date of the consultation has been extended from 20th January to 31st January, 2023 at 5 p. m.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Committee review the following summary of the DFE Energy One Stop Shop Implementation Plan – consultation on policy options and the attached officer response, which will be submitted prior to 31st January, on the basis that it is subject to Council ratification:**

- While broadly welcoming the Energy One Stop Shop principles, objectives, services and phased approach we have requested alignment with both regional and local targets and initiatives including the Belfast net zero targets of 66% reduction in scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2025, 80% reduction by 2030, and 100% reduction by 2050, the development of the Belfast Local Area Energy Plan and the development of the Belfast EV Strategy. We have also encouraged a tailored communication and engagement approach to the most vulnerable in society, and that research be undertaken to understand the needs of the most vulnerable, our communities and partners, such as the Council, in supporting the energy transition and ensuring a just transition.

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 One of the key actions in the NI Energy Strategy is that the Department for Economy (DFE) establish an Energy One Stop Shop to provide impartial information, advice and support aimed at helping to overcome the barriers that consumers face in moving to sustainable technologies and may provide a number of benefits and advantages. In the consultation document DFE have set out a series of principles, strategic objectives and services which could be provided by the One Stop Shop.**

### **3.2 Energy One Stop Shop Principles**

The suggested principles underpinning the work of the Energy One Stop Shop are that it will:

- **Be consumer centric – the One Stop Shop will focus on delivering positive outcomes for consumers;**
- **Provide tailored services – the One Stop Shop will meet the needs of individual consumer groups to ensure domestic and non-domestic consumers have access to the adequate types and levels of information, advice and support that they need;**
- **Have adequate sectoral and technical expertise – the One Stop Shop will provide up to date, accurate and factual information and advice on existing and upcoming products, technologies and services;**
- **Deliver a trusted service – building consumer trust will be a key priority for the One Stop Shop;**
- **Provide impartial information and advice – the One Stop Shop will only provide factual, accurate and independent information; and**
- **Deliver service in partnership with other bodies and organisations – the One Stop Shop will create partnerships with other organisations to ensure a presence across Northern Ireland and to maximise the benefits to consumers.**

### **3.3 Energy One Stop Shop Strategic Objectives**

DFE has identified a set of strategic objectives for the Energy One Stop Shop which are that it will inform, advise and support people, businesses and communities to enable them to transition to affordable, smart decarbonised solutions for their energy efficiency, power, heat and transport needs, with special regard to those who may be least able to with a focus on:

- **Domestic consumers with vulnerable characteristics (e.g. low income, of pensionable age, digitally excluded, living with chronic ailment or disability and in rural areas);**

- All other domestic consumers;
- Small businesses (up to 50 employees); and
- Larger businesses (over 50 employees).

3.4 The Council response welcomes the principles and strategic objectives set out above however encourages the Energy One Stop Shop to align with and support the delivery of both regional and local net zero targets such as the Belfast target of a 66% reduction in scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2025, 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2050. Council have also encouraged the Energy One Stop Shop to be aware of and support initiatives such as the development of a Belfast Local Area Energy Plan and Belfast EV Strategy both of which are due to complete in 2023.

3.5 Energy One Stop Shop Services

It is proposed that the Energy One Stop Shop services will include the following:

- A single point of contact service that makes available and delivers energy information and advice in an easily accessible manner through a suitable range of communication channels;
- Signposting and warm referrals to relevant organisations and service delivery partners;
- Encouragement of behavioural change through information and awareness campaigns and measures such as developing net zero kitemark certifications;
- Wrap around support to hand-hold certain consumer groups from decision-making through implementation and follow-up support to ensure the best outcomes for them; and
- Non-financial support such as training, outreach activities, carrying out energy audits and developing support networks.

3.6 Potential additional activities have been identified within the consultation, which include:

- To lead in the production of national and sectoral statistics to meet reporting obligations, guide policy and inform investment decisions;

- To undertake a programme of energy and behavioural research;
- To support energy education in schools;
- Provide support to businesses and public authorities including grants, financial support, energy audits, training, toolkits and kitemark certification;
- Provide support to sustainable energy communities including financial support;
- Deliver or administer financial support schemes, especially targeted to those who need it most;
- Monitor compliance and raise awareness of labelling and eco-design regulations.

3.7 The Council is broadly in agreement with the suggested services, however, it has suggested a potential programme to understand and meet the needs of the most vulnerable in society, communities and partners such as the Council. We have also suggested a tailored communication and engagement plan may support this activity within the wider communication approach outlined in the consultation documents.

### 3.8 Implementation Timeframe

The consultation document outlines the intention to develop a project plan in 2023 and to initiate a 3-year pilot as soon as possible, subject to funding.

Phase 1 services within the pilot would include:

- Establishing a dedicated website, social media channels and freephone helpline;
- Free and independent information to consumers and business by phone;
- Detailed information online and through social media, with the initial focus on energy efficiency;
- Signposting to other organisations who are sources of energy advice; and
- Raising awareness of energy issues and energy.

**3.9 Phase 2 services include:**

- Free and impartial advice to consumers and businesses by phone, face to face, video-conference, messaging services;
- Outreach activities and information campaigns;
- Warm referrals to service delivery partners;
- Non-financial support identified by the pilot as being asked for by consumers;
- Create and develop service delivery partnerships; and
- Develop and undertake a programme of energy and net zero consumer behavioural research.

**3.10 Beyond the 3-year pilot, in year 4 onwards it is proposed that the service includes:**

- Wrap-around support to certain consumer groups from decision-making through implementation and follow-up support;
- Kitemark certifications;
- Support networks and community champions; and
- Compilation of NI and sectoral statistics to comply with any future net zero monitoring and reporting requirements required by the NI Executive.

**3.11 The attached draft Council response supports the above phased approach, however, it suggests that could any service be accelerated into an earlier phase it should be done so at the earliest opportunity.**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

**3.12 None**

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

**3.13 None.**

**Draft Energy One Stop Shop Consultation Response**

**QUESTION 1** – Do you agree with the Energy One Stop Shop underpinning principles?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, we agree with the identified principles as set out in the consultation document. In addition, we would encourage the Energy One Stop Shop to align with and support regional and local targets where feasible, for example the Belfast target of a 66% reduction in carbon emissions by 2025 based on 2020 baselines, 80% reduction by 2030, and 100% by 2050 which have been adopted by the city and were recommended in the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap.

**QUESTION 2** – Do you agree with the definitions for each of the proposed principles?

Belfast City Council response: Yes.

**QUESTION 3** – Do you agree with the proposed strategic objectives for the Energy One Stop Shop?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, we welcome the strategic objectives and the focus on people, businesses and communities, decarbonisation, and the regard to those who may be least able to afford to make changes in relation to energy efficiency, power, heat and transport. As set out above we would encourage the Energy One Stop Shop to align with and support regional and local targets and initiatives, for example in Belfast a Retrofit Hub has been established which is working to develop a retrofit programme for the city and we would welcome advice, guidance, and input from the Energy One Stop Shop in that and other initiatives such as the development of a Belfast Local Energy Plan and development of a Belfast EV Strategy which are both underway and due to complete during 2023.

**QUESTION 4** – Do you agree that the Energy One Stop Shop should provide advice, information and support to domestic consumers, micro, small and medium businesses and community energy groups?

Belfast City Council response: Yes. We would also encourage the reach and uptake of information to be analysed to identify areas or groups which are not availing of the support and information provided.

**QUESTION 5** – Do you agree that the Energy One Stop Shop should take account of the needs of vulnerable domestic consumers, in particular those with low incomes, of pensionable age, digitally excluded, living with chronic ailment or disability or in rural areas?

**Belfast City Council response:** Yes, we welcome this focus on vulnerable domestic consumers and would encourage this to be a key part of the communications and service delivery plans of the Energy One Stop Shop. Belfast City Council would be keen to work with the new One Stop Shop to explore opportunities for alignment with existing programmes in Belfast.

We would welcome a referral pathway from the Council into the One Stop Shop for vulnerable domestic consumers and vice versa. The most vulnerable in our community will require financial support, however the current grant schemes available have limited funding and are oversubscribed due to the demand, especially within Belfast. We would like to see additional information around the resources to support both the Energy One Stop Shop and local provision by the likes of Belfast City Council.

**QUESTION 6** – Do you agree with the types of services and support that the Energy One Stop Shop should deliver?

**Belfast City Council response:** Yes.

**QUESTION 7** – Should the Energy One Stop Shop deliver any other services or activities? If so, list your priorities.

**Belfast City Council response:** In addition to the suggestion “to undertake a programme of energy and behavioural research” we would welcome research and stakeholder engagement on the needs of the most vulnerable in society, the needs of communities, and the needs of partners such as Council in relation to making the energy transition and achieving a just transition. The Belfast Community Planning Partnership may be of assistance in looking at the above in a Belfast context. We would also welcome a role on identifying and disseminating best practice from other locations to key stakeholders.

With regards to the most vulnerable in society, home visits to these customers could be advantageous. Face-to-face interaction and additional hand holding may be required for some and visiting vulnerable customers in their own home can assist with building up a relationship and highlight the need for signposting and onward referrals.

**QUESTION 8** – Do you agree with the proposed initial list of consumer engagement channels for the Energy One Stop Shop?

**Belfast City Council response:** Yes, we agree with the suggested communication channels however given the focus on vulnerable communities and individuals it may be helpful to develop a tailored communication and engagement plan to support this work.

**QUESTION 9** – Do you agree with the proposed approach to refine and improve consumer engagement?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, however as noted above it may be helpful to develop and tailored communication and engagement plan to support this work.

**QUESTION 10** – Do you agree with the proposal to commence the operation of the Energy One Stop Shop with a Pilot and that it should launch as soon as possible?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, in addition should any support be required during the project plan development, or 3-year pilot phase please contact the Climate Unit, Belfast City Council.

**QUESTION 11** – Do you agree with the proposed Energy One Stop Shop Implementation Roadmap?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, as above should any support be required during the project plan development, or 3-year pilot phase please contact the Climate Unit, Belfast City Council.

**QUESTION 12** – Do you agree with the proposed services that would be available in Year 1 of the Pilot?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, we agree with the proposed phasing of services, however, should it be possible to accelerate the inclusion of services (due to funding or operational need) this should be considered.

**QUESTION 13** – Do you agree with the proposed additional services that the Energy One Stop Shop Pilot would introduce in Years 2 and 3?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, we agree with the proposed phasing of services, however, should it be possible to accelerate the inclusion of services (due to funding or operational need) this should be considered.

**QUESTION 14** – Do you agree with the proposed services that the Energy One Stop Shop may consider introducing from Year 4 onwards?

Belfast City Council response: Yes, we agree with the proposed phasing of services, however, should it be possible to accelerate the inclusion of services (due to funding or operational need) this should be considered.

**QUESTION 15** – Do you agree with the proposal to create a new brand for the Energy One Stop Shop?

**Belfast City Council response: Yes, we feel that this would support consumer and partner awareness.”**

The Committee endorsed the foregoing response for submission to the Department for the Economy.

**Our Place in Space Commissioning Agreement**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the final stage of the *Our Place in Space* project, as part of the UNBOXED festival of creativity.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- i note the contents of this report and the successful delivery of the *Our Place in Space* project; and**
- ii approve the variations to the original commissioning agreement as set out at in paragraph 3.13.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Festival 2022 is an initiative funded by the UK Government, in partnership with relevant departments in the devolved governments. The focus of Festival 2022 is a celebration of creativity and innovation in STEAM, with a global outlook. The project recognises the role of the arts and creative sectors in:**

- Bringing people together and fostering civic pride**
- Helping to attract inward investment**

**3.2 The Programme has brought together creative teams of scientists, artists, engineers and technologists to create ten large-scale extraordinary, public engagement projects.**

**3.3 Of these ten commissions, six have been driven by collaborations from across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and contracted by Festival UK 2022 Ltd; the special purpose vehicle established to curate, manage and**

promote the Festival. However, the remaining four commissions were delivered by Strategic Delivery Bodies and led by creatives from each of the four areas.

- 3.4 Following a meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in October 2020 it was agreed that the Council would act as the Strategic Delivery Body for Northern Ireland, alongside equivalent organisations in England, Scotland and Wales.
- 3.5 In this role the Council agreed to:
- Receive a proportion of the Festival funding via Department for Communities, awarded by the UK Government through Barnett consequentials;
  - Commission and contract a creative team of local practitioners to work internationally to produce a single large-scale project;
  - Support that creative team with producing the commission to the brief of open, original and optimistic;
  - Coordinate communications activity;
  - Work with the other Strategic Delivery Bodies and Festival UK 2022 Ltd to coordinate the Festival’s overall programme, creating balance across the ten commissions; and
  - Actively participate to ensure all commissions showcase creativity and innovation and have a clear global dimension.
- 3.6 The Council delivered on the above activities, including administering funding from the Department for Communities and acting as co-commissioner of the *Our Place in Space* project that was selected following a competitive commissioning process.
- 3.8 Centred around an epic scale model of the solar system designed by the artist Oliver Jeffers with scientist Professor Stephen Smartt and a creative team led by Nerve Centre, *Our Place in Space* is a 10km sculpture trail of the solar system, interactive AR app and learning and events programme.
- 3.8 In 2022, the 10km *Our Place in Space* sculpture trail landed on the banks of the River Foyle in Derry~Londonderry (22 April - 22 May) before moving to Divis and the Black Mountain in Belfast (11 June - 10 July). It then travelled to Cambridge

(30 July - 28 August) followed by Liverpool (14 October – 6 November).

- 3.9 The trail will return to Northern Ireland at the Ulster Transport Museum and North Down Coastal Path on 24 February – 26 March 2023.
- 3.10 A final evaluation is currently being completed however to date the *Our Place in Space* project has delivered the following benefits:
- Reaching over 1 million people through the sculpture trail in 4 cities;
  - Engagement with 28,000 young people and 2,200 teachers through the creative learning programme, including production of 5 learning resources;
  - Attendance of 150,000 people at associated events;
  - App downloaded in 150 countries; and
  - Creation of unique Minecraft world
- 3.11 Due to the addition of a fifth site for the *Our Place in Space* project, Liverpool, the original timeline has been extended with the final installation of the *Our Place in Space* trail now taking place in the Ulster Transport Museum in February 2023.
- 3.12 The UK based special purpose vehicle set up to deliver the festival that *Our Place in Space* was part of is due to dissolve in February 2023. In advance of this there are a number of proposed variations to the original commissioning agreement of which the Council is a signatory and, therefore, these require an updated approval by the Committee.
- 3.13 These variations are:
- An additional £500,000 of funding from Festival UK 2022 Ltd to the Nerve Centre to deliver the extended scope of the project including the additional locations. There is no additional contribution from the Council or the Department for Communities; and
  - To note the closure of Festival UK 22/UNBOXED as an entity, and the ongoing/extension of the relationship between BCC and Nerve Centre to continue until June 2023 to allow for the completion of the delivery of the original agreement, the Ulster Transport Museum installation as the final location that was delayed due to the delivery of an extended programme.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

3.14 There are financial implications to this report.

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

3.15 None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Physical Programme and Asset Management**

**Asset Management**

**Cliftonville Playing Fields**

The Committee approved the assignment of the Council’s leasehold interest in a portion of land which has been encroached on to the rear of 14 Glenard Brook, with the Council to receive a premium of £110.

**North Foreshore**

The Committee noted that a deed of variation had been agreed between the Council and Invest NI to release approximately 7.2 acres of land from European Regional Development Fund/Invest NI funding conditions to allow for a lease of the land to Belfast Harbour Commissioner for the Phase 2A Film Studios extension.

**Balmoral Estate**

The Committee approved the extension of the current term of the ground lease at Plot 72, Balmoral Estate to a term of 125 years from 1st May 2022, amended the rent review pattern from 25 yearly to 5 yearly and noted that the Council would receive a single premium payment of £5,000.

**Update on Area Working Groups**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the East Belfast Area Working Group of 12th January, including the recommendation relating to the expansion of the Belfast Bikes Scheme that Connswater Community Greenway be selected for the Castlereagh Road area and that, for the Upper Newtownards Road area, a visit be arranged to view the proposed sites and the suggested options of Sandown Road and Bloomfield Collegiate.

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**Update on Contracts**

The Committee:

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- approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a, as detailed in Table 1 below;
- approved the award of Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 2 below; and
- noted the award of retrospective Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 3 below.

**Table 1: Competitive Tenders**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Proposed Contract Duration</b>	<b>Estimated Total Contract Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Short description of goods / services</b>
Procurement of the Belfast WiFi Service	Up to 3 years	£536,581	P Gribben	The Belfast WiFi service is required to deliver public WiFi services across over 100 council sites as well as external, city centre locations.
Provision of a daily media monitoring service	Up to 4 years	£92,000	L Caldwell	To effectively protect the image and reputation of Belfast City Council it is necessary to have a daily media monitoring service to alert the marcomms team to coverage related to the organisation. This service also assists with monitoring and evaluating KPIs for the organisation.
The development and management of the HUB-IN Open Challenge Call	Up to 12 months	£50,000	J Tully	This fund will enable creative industry organisations to develop pre commercial products or services for the Maritime Mile.

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A visitor photography service at Belfast Zoo	Up to 3 years	£210,000 (income)	J Greer	Photographer photo service at summer camps/ workshops etc. This is an income/ concession type contract.
Management Services to support stakeholder/industry engagement and to provide technology expertise to assist with the delivery of the Augment the City Project	Up to 18 months	£170,000	D Colville	BCC is seeking to engage a suitably qualified organisation to assist with the design, development and delivery of the Augment the City grant competition. Ensuring the transfer of learning to City Deal partners on competition design, technological disruption in the visitor sector etc.
St Patrick's Day Parade	Up to 6 months	£100,000	J Greer	To deliver a commission for the St Patricks Day parade 2023. Service contract to be awarded to Beat using the previous run Design Contest (competitive process).
St Patricks Day music programme	Up to 6 months	£50,000	J Greer	To deliver a music programme city wide for the St Patricks Day celebrations 2023. Service contract to be awarded to Feile using the previous run Design Contest (competitive process).

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Music for St Patrick's Eve Concert	Up to 6 months	£80,000	J Greer	To deliver a commission for the music element of St Patricks Eve concert 2023. Service contract to be awarded to Duncairn using the previous run Design Contest (competitive process).
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**Table 2: Single Tender Actions**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Total Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
T2335 Procurement of a Local Area Energy Plan for Belfast and Queens Island	Up to 11 months	£180,000	J Tully	Approved by SP and R in Sept 2022 for a period of 6 months. Following further discussions with the supplier and their proposal an updated contract period of 11 months is required. No change to value.	Energy Systems Catapult

**Table 3: Retrospective Single Tender Actions**

<b>Title of Contract</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
Oracle Site License for 1000 named users	Up to 1 year	£37,418	P Gribben	Proprietary software and licenses from Oracle for multiple applications. This is necessary for the operation of key corporate systems, which depend on	Oracle Digital Renewal Centre

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				Oracle databases. Therefore, an absence of a valid Oracle license would mean that normal council functions would be put at severe risk. The license can only be procured directly with Oracle.	
Delivery of a comprehensive domestic and sexual violence and abuse awareness raising and training programme (Fully Funded)	Up to 7 months	£38,000	D Sales	Women's Aid are the only organisation operating within the market who can deliver this project. This was previously carried out under a funding agreement but following legal advice they have now advised we get an STA as this needs to be a contract for services.	Women's Aid

**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 9th January, including the recommendations:

**PEACE IV**

**CYP 1 - Tech Connects – Insights Element (Belfast Metropolitan College)**

- to extend the project to 31st March 2023, subject to provisions for the Council's closure period.

**CYP 3 - On the Right Track Sports Element**

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- to explore project closure, subject to agreement with Council management and the Special EU Programmes Body; and
- to agree that the £5 per completed participant underclaimed by the Active Communities Network be reviewed and eligible payment progressed.

**CYP 5 - NIHE Local Area Network Partner Delivery**

- to note the preliminary level of achievement; and
- to delegate authority to the CYP and BPR Thematic Chairs and Programme Manager to progress discussions with the Special EU Programmes Body, with a further report to be presented to the Partnership in February, 2023.

**SSS Theme**

- to approve the reallocation of funding for the resource allocation.

**BPR 1 - NIHE**

- to note the preliminary level of achievement;
- to delegate authority to the BPR Thematic Chair and Programme Manager to progress discussions with the Special EU Programmes Body, with a further report to be presented to the Partnership in February, 2023; and
- to extend the BPR1 project to 28th February, 2023 to maximise the achievement of targets, subject to agreement with the Special EU Programmes Body.

**BPR 3 – NICVA**

- to note the on-the-spot verification which had taken place on 7th December, 2022.

**BPR 5 - LINCS**

- to note that the project had completed with a small, localised event on 9th December, 2022.

**BPR 5 - ROMA**

- to note that the final event was held at Ormeau Bowling centre on Monday 19th December 2022.

### **GOOD RELATIONS**

#### **Good Relations Audit:**

- to submit both the Good Relations Audit and accompanying Good Relations Action Plan to The Executive Office for delivery during 2023/24.

#### **Good Relations Action Plan**

- to note the update for Quarter 3 2022/23.

### **PEACEPLUS**

- to approve the process for finalising the Stage 1 report, including the Partnership's participation in an in-person workshop on 19th January.

### **Equality and Diversity: Equality Screening And Rural Needs Outcome Report**

The Committee noted the contents of a report providing a summary of equality screenings and rural needs impact assessments for the period from July to September, 2022.

### **Operational Issues**

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

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

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 6th January, as set out below:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
<b>2023 EVENTS</b>						
Blackie River Community Groups	23 February 2023	<b>Discrimination in Sport review</b> relating to people with disabilities, ethnicity, gender in various sports.  Numbers attending – 60	D	No charge as community group	Yes, tea and coffee reception as community group	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for tea and coffee</i>
Royal Town Planning Institute	23 March 2023	<b>NI Annual Dinner</b> The RTPI is the leading professional body for spatial planners in the UK and annual dinner invites leading figures in the planning and construction profession.  Numbers attending – 150	B	No (Charity)	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No Hospitality
UKinbound	21 September 2023	<b>Annual Conference and Awards for Excellence Gala Dinner</b> for guests attending their 2-day conference taking place in ICC. UKinbound is a leading travel trade association, focuses solely on the interests of the UK's inbound tourism sector. This event will showcase	A and B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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		Belfast to to over 70 of the UK's leading inbound tour operators.  Numbers attending – 300				
Queens Graduates Football Club	14 October 2023	<b>Queens Graduates Football Club 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration-</b> Drinks Reception, Awards, Dinner and entertainment.  Numbers attending – 250	C and D	No Charge as voluntary group	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
Image Nation NI	4 November 2023	<b>Belfast Diwali Celebrations –</b> an evening of food and entertainment to celebrate one of the biggest celebrations in Hindu Calendar.  Numbers attending – 100	C	No charge as not for profit group	Yes, Soft drinks reception.	Approve No Charge Soft Drink Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Levelling Up Fund**

At the request of Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed, in light of the failure by the Council to secure Round 2 Levelling Up Funding for 2 Royal Avenue and to submit any applications under Round 1, that a report be submitted to its next monthly meeting outlining the lessons learned and providing feedback on the unsuccessful application.

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**Dual-Language Street Signage**

At the request of Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed that a report be submitted to its next monthly meeting outlining the reasons for the delay in processing the significant backlog of applications for the erection of dual-language street signs which had been received since the implementation of the revised Policy.

**Bin Collection**

The Chief Executive apologised to the Members and to the public for the issues which had arisen over the Christmas period around missed bin collections and provided an assurance that work was underway to ensure that, in future, the service met the needs and expectations of all users.

Chairperson

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# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 27th January, 2023

## SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

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

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;  
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;  
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services  
Ms. L. Caldwell, Director of External Affairs, Marketing and  
Communications;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

An apology was reported on behalf of the Chairperson (Councillor McDonough-Brown).

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Restricted Items**

#### **Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24**

The Director of Finance reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 20th January, it had agreed the cash limit for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2023/24, as well as the recommended cash limits for the City Growth and Regeneration, People and Communities and Planning Committees.

He reported that those Committees had, on 25th January, agreed their respective cash limits and, accordingly, he submitted for the Committee's consideration a report recommending that it:

- i. confirm the cash limits which had been agreed by the Committee, at its meeting on 20th January 2023, as follows:

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Friday, 27th January, 2023**

- a. a cash limit of £50,355,486 for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2023/24, including £3,270,000 for Belfast Investment Fund and £3,000,000 for City Deal;
  - b. a cash limit of £98,901,629 for the People and Communities Committee for 2023/24;
  - c. a cash limit of £20,445,354 for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for 2023/24;
  - d. a cash limit of £1,624,167 for the Planning Committee for 2023/24; and
  - e. a Capital Financing Budget of £22,274,022 for 2023/24;
- ii. agree that the increase in the district rate for 2023/24 should be 7.99%, based on an estimated penny product of £6,602,540 meaning a non-domestic rate of 29.3221 and a domestic rate of 0.3847 and that the amount raised through the district rate in 2022/23 will be £187,441,540;
  - iii. note the Chief Executive's statement on the adequacy of the Council's reserves position and the robustness of the revenue estimates, as required by the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011;
  - iv. note the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, as required by the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011; and
  - v. agree that the aforementioned decisions should not be subject to call-in, as this would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

After discussion, the Chairperson put the recommendations to the Committee.

On a recorded vote, thirteen Members voted in favour of the proposal to adopt the recommendations and three against, with two 'no votes' and it was declared carried.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Friday, 27th January, 2023**

<b><u>For 13</u></b>	<b><u>Against 3</u></b>	<b><u>No Vote 2</u></b>
Aldermen Dorrian and Haire; and Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Garrett, Groogan, McLaughlin, Murphy, Spratt, Thompson, Verner and Walsh.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly; and Councillors Long and McMullan.	Councillors Heading and Lyons.

Chairperson

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## People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 10th January, 2023

### HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

Also attended: Councillors Gormley and McKeown.

In attendance: Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;  
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;  
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and  
Civic Services;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior 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 McCusker.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 6th December, 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

It was reported that the minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 9th January.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were reported.

#### **Deputation**

#### **Installation of Gates at Crescent Park**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Members that this matter had been deferred from the December meeting to enable the Committee to hear deputations from representatives of the Friends of Crescent Park, South Belfast and also from a delegation of those opposing the possible gating of the Park.

**People and Communities Committee,  
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Accordingly, the Chairperson welcomed Mr. Hetherington, Ms. Bonhomme, Mr. Mulgrew, Ms. Hayles and Ms. Johnston to the meeting.

Mr. Hetherington and Ms. Bonhomme (representing Friends of Crescent Park) commenced and thanked the Members for the opportunity to address the Committee.

Mr. Hetherington (Chair of Friends of Crescent Park) advised that Crescent Park, which was owned by Belfast City Council, was an invaluable park to the people who resided on or near the Crescent and to many other users daily. He advised the Members that for many years the park had suffered as a hotspot from incidents of anti-social behaviour, highlighting that these problems were much worse at night-time, particularly with substance abuse and drinking and he provided a detailed overview of the ongoing issues.

He advised that approximately six years ago some improvements had been made to the park, including improved lighting, the pruning of shrubbery and a better maintenance programme. The representative continued, however, that, since the pandemic, things had again deteriorated and Friends of Crescent Park (FoCP) had been looking at what measures could be taken to try and improve the park to try and reduce the ongoing incidents of antisocial behaviour (ASB).

The Members were advised that, following a scoping exercise, FoCP had produced 'Improving the Crescent', which considered proposed actions to try and address anti-social behaviour and increase the attractiveness of the park to all members of the public. One of the actions recommended was the installation of gates at the four entrance points of the park, with the Council taking on the responsibility for the daily opening and closing of the gates. The representative continued that, whilst the installation of gates was a sizable structural project, following local consultation they had received majority support from residents and businesses supporting the proposed work.

Ms. Bonhomme, who had resided in the park? since 2018, then provided a detailed overview of the antisocial behaviour that she was subjected to daily which made her feel unsafe in her own home at night-time, this included details regarding groups of aggressive and loud individuals inhabiting the park, drug dealing, alcohol and drug misuse, knife crime, littering and urination in shrubbery.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for their input and then asked Mr. Mulgrew and Ms. Hayles to address the meeting.

Mr. Mulgrew thanked the Committee for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. He advised that he worked near to the park and very much enjoyed using it as did many others. He stated that, in recent years, much work had gone into making Crescent Park the area that it now was and noted that these were all very welcome measures. He continued that, whilst he appreciated that there were issues with ASB, he did not feel that simply 'locking' the park with the use of gates would resolve all the problems. Instead he would rather see the ASB problems addressed and he suggested that the Council should be taking a lead role, to bring together the various stakeholders with a view to working together to try and further enhance the park and encourage its use which might ultimately help to decrease ASB incidents. He also stated that he did not feel the railings around the park were sufficient to stop people trying the climb over them to gain access to the park.

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The representative referred to the Council's feasibility study regarding the lighting of its parks across the city, which might enable longer opening hours for some parks, and he sought clarity as to the status of this study prior to a decision being taken regarding Crescent Park.

Mr. Mulgrew concluded his contribution by advising that this position was supported by the Forward South Partnership.

Ms. Hayles and Ms. Johnston (Representing Crescent Arts Centre) were then welcomed by the Chairperson.

Ms. Hayles advised that the Park was a muster point for Crescent Arts Centre in the event of an evacuation being necessary . She advised also that evenings were the busiest time for the Centre, the facility was open until 10.00 p.m. Monday – Saturday, with up to 300 people using it daily. She stated that, given that park currently formed a huge part of any evacuation procedures, she asked the Council to ensure that this was factored into any decision taken from a health and safety perspective as any alternative would involve crossing a busy road. She also concurred with Mr. Mulgrew in that Crescent Arts Centre would be keen to work with the various statutory agencies to try and keep the park open and accessible to all and welcomed its use for the book festival and she encouraged its further enhancement as a civic space.

Detailed discussion ensued between the Members and representatives, during which it was apparent that more work needed to be done with the various stakeholders prior to any decision being taken. A Member noted that it might be preferable to look at further enhancing and animating the park, with alternatives to gates such as CCTV also being explored.

The Members noted that the request needed to be considered in a citywide context.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to defer the decision to enable wider consultation to be undertaken with the various stakeholders, including the PSNI, with a further report to be submitted to Committee in due course considering all options available.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives, and they left the meeting.

**Restricted**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following five 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 5 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.

**People and Communities Committee,  
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**Late night hot food premises  
opening hours on Ormeau Road**

The Committee was reminded that over the last number of months the Council had received complaints around noise, nuisance and disturbance emanating from the late-night opening of food premises on the Lower Ormeau Road.

At its December meeting, the Committee had agreed to receive a deputation from Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG) for a small delegation of residents to attend its January meeting to highlight the impact on the local neighbourhood.

Accordingly, the Chairperson invited Ms. J. Armstrong and Ms. J. Breen to address the Committee.

Ms. Armstrong provided detail about the large crowds that were gathering outside the premises in the early hours of the morning due to its late closure of 4.00 a.m. She advised that this was having a detrimental impact on her mental health as she could not sleep due to the continuous noise, and she urged the Council to try and implement an earlier closure of the facility.

Ms. Breen concurred and she advised that she had two children aged 8 and 12 who were not able to sleep due to the noise, including loud music, from the premises which was particularly bad from 1.00 a.m. – 4.00 a.m. She also referred to the noise created by the delivery drivers. She stated that in the morning there was often broken glass because of anti-social behaviour and a smell of urine from people having urinated in the street. The representative advised that, like Ms. Armstrong, both her and her children's mental health was suffering due to a continuous lack of sleep, this was now affecting her work as she often did not get any sleep until after 4.30 a.m. She stated that on numerous occasions she had tried to speak to the owner of the food premises, but he had refused to engage with her.

The Members noted that this was a popular area for students who were congregating in and outside the premises and as a result had exacerbated the levels of disturbance and, on some occasions, this had resulted in serious anti-social behaviour.

The Committee was advised that officers had previously written to those businesses allegedly giving rise to the disturbance seeking their co-operation to reduce that disturbance. Some measures had been introduced to try to resolve the issue, such as staff positioned outside the premises, but complaints continued.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services advised that Article 5 of the 1985 Order permitted a council to make a closing order with respect to any premises in its district to which this Article applied, if it was satisfied that it was desirable to make such an order to prevent residents in the neighbourhood of the premises being unreasonably disturbed either by persons resorting to the premises or by the use of the premises for the supply of meals or refreshments. It applied where meals or refreshments were supplied for consumption on or off the premises.

The legislation did not apply to licensed premises during the operating times of their licence.

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The Committee was advised that the hours specified in a closing order should commence not earlier than midnight and finish not later than 5.00 a.m. This could be for different hours on different days of the week.

She asked the Members to note that, if the Council proposed to make a closing order, it must serve a notice on the business giving its reasons for seeking to make the order. The business operator then would then have 28 days to make representations to the Council. They might request the opportunity to make oral representations and if they did so the Council must give them an opportunity of appearing before and of being heard by the Committee.

The Committee noted that a closure order would take effect within 21 days of the decision and lasts for 3 years, although it may be varied or revoked at any time. The business operator might appeal a closure order to the County Court, if they chose to do so the order would have no effect until the appeal had been determined.

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

The Committee agreed that it was minded to make a closure order and agreed that the business operator be afforded the opportunity to make representations at a future meeting of the Committee, prior to a final determination.

It was noted that the residents affected by the disturbance would also be invited to make representations at the same meeting.

### **Resources and Fleet Waste Update**

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

The Director of Resources and Fleet updated the Committee on Waste Collections Management and Performance. This included an overview and update in respect of the following key issues:

- Waste Performance and City Recycling Rates – 2021/22 and 2022/23 Year to Date at Q2;
- Waste Framework Update;
- Inner City Recycling Scheme Update;
- Carpet Recycling Scheme;
- Reuse of Laptops and Electrical Equipment Scheme;
- Pre-loved Toys Scheme;
- Diversion of (Bulky Household) wooden items from landfill;
- Feasibility studies for Brown Bin and Glass Collection expansion;
- Community Repaint Scheme,
- Update in terms of Infrastructure and Behavioural Change;
- Update in regard to information Technology including the Report-it App, Elogii App and QRT App;
- Operational Update;
- HVO fuel trial; and

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- Inter Council / DAERA Collaboration.

A Member welcomed the HVO fuel trial, specifically the fact that the HVO would not include palm oil.

Following a query in regard to the Council's kerbside recycling collection schemes, the Director confirmed that a feasibility study on Option 5 was currently underway and advised that Party Group Briefings would be held in due course, prior to a report being submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Following questions regarding the promotion of the laptop recycling scheme and the need to progress the pedestrianisation of Palmerston Road Recycling facility, the Director advised that update reports would be submitted in due course in respect of both matters.

The Director also drew the Members' attention to the proposed Community Repaint Scheme at HWRCs. She explained that the Community Repaint Scheme was a UK wide paint reuse network, sponsored by Dulux, that aimed to collect leftover paint and redistribute it to benefit communities, charities and individuals in need at an affordable cost. She advised that the first stage in establishing the project was the drafting of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and she drew the Members' attention to a copy of the SLA which had been attached as an appendix to the report.

The Members noted that subject to agreement of the SLA, discussion would take place regarding the practicalities of introducing a scheme, along with consideration of the potential financial assistance with a view to commencing the scheme at the start of April 2023.

Discussion also ensued regarding the operational decision that had been taken to cancel some bank holiday collections over the Christmas period due to difficulties experienced with lower than usual driver numbers to cover the holiday period. The Director assured the Members that a full and through analysis of the problems was currently being undertaken with a view to ensuring that similar problems were avoided in the future.

During discussion a Member raised the problematic parking of vehicles in streets which was also creating issues with missed bin collections.

The Committee noted that it had been agreed at the January meeting of Council to call a special meeting of the People and Communities Committee to discuss to discuss issues around waste collection and it subsequently agreed to invite representatives from both the PSNI and DfI to a special meeting to discuss the difficulties created through the problematic parking of vehicles.

The Members were advised that this issue was on the agenda as a separate item and would be discussed further in the meeting.

The Committee noted the comprehensive update report and:

- approved the SLA for the Community Re-Paint scheme; and
- noted that it had been agreed at the January meeting of Council to call a special meeting of the People and Communities Committee to discuss to

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discuss issues around waste collection. The Committee subsequently agreed to invite representatives from both the PSNI and DfI to this meeting to discuss the difficulties created through the problematic parking of vehicles.

**Review of Belsonic and Recent  
Stakeholder Engagement Session**

(Ms. C. Taggart, Neighbourhood Manager for Community Services and Community Programming, attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that a review report had been presented to the Committee in August 2022 and, although the Members had been largely content with the improvements, they had abstained from approving the 2023 event agreeing that it would be useful to have a further meeting with the various stakeholders in advance of considering a multiple year request.

The Committee was advised that the first of these sessions had been held last month and this had been specific to the Belsonic event. Following the positive feedback from all involved, the Council had committed to this ongoing engagement process and would continue to amend the methodology for delivery as required. This would also be replicated where necessary across the City with regards to other large promotor events at Council venues.

The Neighbourhood Services Manager addressed the Committee and advised that invitees to the engagement sessions would include:

- Community Provision;
- Building Control;
- Community Safety;
- Regulatory Services;
- PSNI;
- Elected Representatives from the local DEA's;
- Resident and Community Organisations operating in the local area; and
- Youth practitioner organisations operating in the local area.

She reported that the community sector organisations and local resident groups had welcomed this new approach and had noted that this seemed the best way to have their concerns heard and to contribute their ideas and solutions to the problems. Those in attendance at the Belsonic session had noted that it was refreshing to finally be invited to take part in the discussions and indicated their hope that the approach would be adopted for all future large-scale events at the site.

The Committee was advised that officers were planning an initial community stakeholder event for the Boucher Playing Fields 2023 event programme in the New Year, this would include engagement with local Elected Members to agree the timeframe and invitees.

The Committee noted that the Belsonic Promotor had sought permission for the 2023 concert and future concerts within a separate report. If permission was granted work with the

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promotor, the new stakeholder approach would commence early in the New Year to inform the series of concerts requested to commence in June 2023.

A Member referred to his previous request for enhanced accessibility and the provision of changing places facilities for attendees with disabilities and stated that he was disappointed that more had not been included in this regard.

The Neighbourhood Services Manager assured the Member that this area of work was being progressed and would be looked at in more detail within the context of the Event Management Framework review.

The Director also undertook to liaise with the other relevant Directors in this regard as the review of the Framework was a corporate review and he undertook to discuss it further with the Member directly.

The Members also discussed other areas that could be further discussed at the stakeholder meetings which included the gridlock on the Lower Ormeau Road, the need for adequate portable toilet provision at identified hotspots, clarity on the new Social Value Fund and how this would be administered and allocated and a messaging campaign around events to promote awareness of consent and sexual assault and to highlight the support systems available for vulnerable young people. It was also noted that minutes of the stakeholder meetings would be useful.

The Committee noted the update and the positive outcome from the recent work carried out by the Promotor, Council officers and partnering community and resident organisations

**Request for the use of Parks for 2023 Events**

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

- Belsonic – Ormeau Park – June 2023; and
- Planet Love Festival – Boucher Road – 15th and 16th September 2023.

The Committee granted authority to each of the applicants for the proposed events on the dates outlined and delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services:

- to negotiate a fee where appropriate which recognised the costs to Council and endeavoured to minimise any negative impact on the immediate area and take account of the potential wider benefit to the city economy, in conjunction with the Council's Commercial Manager; and
- 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 Committee also granted multiple year approval for Belsonic to host concerts at Ormeau Park in June of each year for a 3-year period (2023 – 2025), with the provision that all events with a multiple year approval would be subject to annual review. The Director of Neighbourhood Services was granted authority, under the scheme of delegation, to remove the permission for subsequent years, if necessary, based on findings from annual reviews and upon officer recommendation.

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

**Fair Funding 2% Salary Uplift 2022/23**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that, as the Members would be aware, the Department for Communities (DfC) provided an annual grant to the Councils to help with the delivery of the Community Support Programme (CSP).

He also reminded the Members that, in March 2022, the Committee had agreed to accept additional funding for the Department for Communities (DfC) to allow for improvements in the terms and conditions for those working in the Community and Voluntary Sector to offer 'fair pay' and associated conditions. This funding had specifically related to those organisations that used Council Community Development grants towards staff related costs and was proportional to the Council's contribution.

The Director continued that DfC had now made an additional provision in the 2022/23 Community Support Programme Letter of Offer, a 2% uplift towards salary related costs. The additional allocation was £69,798.59.

The Director proceeded to outline the proposed approach for allocation of the uplift. The agreed 2% uplift would be applied to identified staffing budget lines and payment for this amount would be issued to organisations for the 2022/23 financial year. Belfast City Council would ask organisations to ensure that this funding was used in the spirit of the 'Fair Funding' uplift to offer "fair pay" and associated conditions for those employed in the Voluntary and Community Sector to enable those employed in the Sector to receive real living wage rates.

The Members noted that the allocations provided by DfC would cover the total budget for applying this uplift, therefore there would be no need for additional funding from Council to implement this change.

Following a query from a Member, the Director confirmed that currently this was only an 'in year uplift' and that no confirmation of funding at been received for future years.

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The Committee approved the outlined approach for implementing the 2% 'Fair Funding' uplift which had been provided through the Community Support Plan.

**Committee/Strategic Issues**

**Anti-Social Behaviour within BCC Parks**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided the Members with an overview in respect of the levels of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) within Council Parks over a 3-year period.

He highlighted that, as previously advised, within Community Safety and OSS over the last 3 years there had been significant pressures upon staffing resources, with new staff (temporary and permanent) having been appointed, this had further been exacerbated by sickness absence and annual leave requirements, all of which had impacted upon the consistent recording of data. In addition, throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery phases, the limited OSS and community safety staff had been at the front line delivering essential services to the public. The redeployment of staff to cover essential services had therefore impacted upon services within parks which had also contributed to an inconsistent capturing of data on ASB.

The Director referred to the APP-CivicaDatabase which captured information collated by Council staff and complaints made in relation to ASB in the City.

He referred to the table below, which detailed the ASB figures recorded over the last 3 years across 52 Council parks and also a more detailed breakdown of these figures that had been attached as an appendix to the report:

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	3 Year Combined
169	769	291	1229

He reiterated to the Members that the figures might not provide an overall accurate picture of ASB within Parks and outlined that their usefulness in terms of determining patterns or hotspots was extremely limited for the following reasons:

- residents complaining about ASB in Parks state that they don't always report every incident;
- the Capturing information on ASB within Belfast City Council parks lies within the responsibility of Park Wardens, ASB Officers, and Safer Neighbourhood Officers. However, Safer Neighbourhood and ASB Officers are not located within parks but are rather deployed in the City centre and neighbourhoods;
- a team of Park Wardens is located in each quadrant of the City and each Park in the City is patrolled daily, with the more problematic parks receiving more targeted patrols than others;
- the Park Warden Service operates within the current Parks closing times (dawn to dusk). However, the Department and the PSNI do plan and carry out interventions outside these hours in response to large events in Parks, reports of ASB and underage drinking.

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The Director continued that, along with the resource pressures, officers had also identified that there had been a variety of ways in which the teams had captured data (if at all) which presented challenges in obtaining reports that had accurate data and from which conclusions could be drawn. In addition, he advised that a short review of current recording mechanisms of ASB within Parks would be completed by January 2023 to ensure there was a standardised and robust approach to capturing ASB data across all parks going forward. This would include a review of how members of the public could report ASB in parks.

He also drew the Members' attention to the PSNI figures below relating to incidents of ASB across the City, comparing April – September 2022 to the same period last year. This noted an overall reduction in recorded incidences in all areas.

	April – Sept 2021	April – Sept 2022	Change	% Change
Lisburn Road	3571	2770	-901	-22%
Strandtown	1781	1422	-259	-20.2%
Tennent Street	2859	2265	-594	-20.8%
Woodbourne	1804	1494	-310	-17.2%
Belfast City	10015	7951	-2064	-20.6%

Several Members stated that they were aware that underreporting was an ongoing issue and, whilst they welcomed the update, they acknowledged and agreed with the need for a more robust and accurate way of recording the data for incidents of ASB data across the City.

A Member referred to the Customer Hub and the need to ensure that there was a standardised process for the collection of the reported data.

Discussion also ensued regarding the skill set and training of Council officers in both dealing with incidents and ensuring that they were accurately recorded.

Several of the Members referred to specific cost to the Council in repairing the damage created because of ASB and requested that a report detailing these costs be submitted to a future meeting.

A Member referred to successful community intervention measures that had been undertaken in other Council parks, specifically Dunville Park, and stated that rather than focusing on closing parks earlier or introducing further control mechanisms, for example, additional fencing or gates, they would be keen to explore positive intervention measures to encourage use and community ownership of Council parks.

Another Member asked for a report detailing the cost of completing the remaining required lighting in Falls Park.

A further Member suggested that, in terms of looking at how problems and incidents of ASB were recorded, additional signage/posters could be erected throughout the parks (not just at the entrances) providing a direct telephone number for the reporting of incidents/problems which might encourage members of the public to report problems.  
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Discussion ensued, following which the Committee noted the content of the report and agreed the following actions:

- officers to liaise with Digital Services, the Customer Hub, Business Support and relevant CNS staff to develop a system to better capture ASB within BCC parks;
- in the interim period, the Council would aim to train all staff that worked within Parks to record ASB through the Flare system to ensure a more standardised recording system was in place from January 2023, with reports brought to Committee on a regular basis. This review would also consider concerns around the under reporting of ASB and how this could be improved;
- noted that further work was required to review the roles of Park Wardens and Safer Neighbourhood Officers in regard to preventing and addressing ASB across the city;
- noted that, when a more robust system for consistently capturing ASB data was in place, then it might be possible to use this information to develop and target Council interventions in problematic sites;
- noted that Springfield Avenue Play Park was not on the list and agreed to have it added;
- agreed that a subsequent report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee that would give consideration to successful interventions that had been previously untaken in other Council parks, in particular Dunville Park, and how similar initiatives might be applied to other Council parks with ASB problems;
- agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting that would detail the costs to the Council of undertaking repair works to parks that had been damaged because of ASB; and
- agreed that the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services would liaise with the Director of Physical Programmes to ascertain the cost of completing the remaining required lighting in Falls Park with an update report to be submitted to a future meeting of Committee.

**Active Belfast Partnership and Funding Update**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 Members will be aware, as part of a previous update report presented to Committee in April 2022, that approval was sought and given for the Active Belfast partnership to develop a participatory budgeting pilot in 2022/23. This report provides an overview of progress to date, outlines the planned timeframe for application, assessment and award and notes that further spend against delivery of the PB pilot will occur in the 23/24 financial year.**

1.2 A further report will be brought to Committee in March/April 2023 which will outline the broader work undertaken by Active Belfast in 2022/23, as well as outlining the partnership's proposed plan for 2023/24.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of the report – particularly the work undertaken to date in developing the PB Pilot approach and the planned timeframe for promotion, application, assessment and delivery; and
- To agree that part (26K) of the overall BCC contribution (90K) to Active Belfast in 23/24 is utilised towards covering the costs of project delivery (i.e. allocation of funding awards) in 23/24 – alongside 38K of the PHA allocation (146K) for 23/24.
- Active Belfast partnership intends to hold a planning session early in the New Year to identify and agree priorities for 23/24, alongside associated spend profiles, for the remaining budget (172K) – which is currently subject to Council discussions and decisions on discretionary spend, and thus a further report will be brought to committee in March/April 2023.

3.0 **Main report**

**Background**

3.1 Active Belfast (AB) is a multi-agency partnership supporting physical activity and healthy eating in Belfast. It is jointly funded by BCC (£90,000) and Public Health Agency (£146,000) per annum. Thus, the overall funding allocated for work in support of Active Belfast is £236,000 per annum. Physical activity and healthy eating remain priority areas within the refreshed Belfast Agenda as well as wider health-focussed strategic documents. Active Belfast therefore, both as an approach and as a partnership, is vital in relation to us being in a position to work collaboratively with key partners to take forward relevant actions and to test out novel approaches and ideas.

**In-year Progress against PB Pilot action**

3.2 Both Belfast City Council and the Belfast Community Planning Partnership (BCPP) are committed to enhancing civic engagement and participation. This commitment is articulated in both the Belfast Agenda and the BCC Corporate Plan as well as other key

documents such as the inclusive growth and consultation and engagement frameworks.

- 3.3** In December 2020, Council launched a new engagement platform, Your Say Belfast, which offered greater opportunity for ongoing and deliberative methods of engaging. However, it was also recognised that more participative and innovative methods are required to be developed across our services. Council's 2022-23 Improvement Plan includes a commitment to piloting Participatory Budgeting (PB) within Belfast. PB is a democratic process in which citizens decide how to spend part of an allocated public budget. It began in Brazil but is now used across the world as a mechanism to encourage people to get involved in local decision making and democracy. It helps increase levels of involvement and community empowerment by bringing people together at local events or online and giving them a direct say about what happens in their community.
- 3.4** At the People and Communities Committee People meeting held on 10th May 2022, members agreed to pilot PB in collaboration with the Active Belfast Partnership. Unfortunately, we significantly underestimated the amount of work that had to be put in, in advance of actually being in a position to implement the PB approach. Therefore, action in-year has focussed on learning more about PB – raising awareness, exploring best practice, skilling up staff, securing external support and designing relevant processes, systems and paperwork, etc.
- 3.5** Staff within the Belfast Health Development Unit leading on this initiative, assisted by colleagues in community planning, engaged Community Places to provide expert advice and design support both in-year through to November 2023. Community Places has the experience of designing and facilitating Participatory Budgeting (PB) processes locally and regionally.
- 3.6** General awareness briefing sessions, facilitated by Community Places, were held on 23 August 2022 and 7 September 2022 with the aim of increasing awareness of what PB is and how it can be used in Belfast. This was followed by the set-up of an Active Belfast Design Team made up of a small team of representatives who are overseeing the design and implementation of the Active Belfast Participatory Budgeting Pilot in 4 geographical areas of Belfast.
- 3.7** The Design Team has agreed a theme 'Move More and Eat Well – To Feel Better' and drafted a shared purpose, as follows:
- Empower and support communities to have a voice in decision making in their areas

- Reduce barriers to participation and increase access to funding
- Promote agreed Active Belfast messaging
- Promote eating healthy message
- Test something new, collaborate and learn together from the process
- Raise awareness of PB

The broader approach for the Active Belfast Participatory Budgeting Pilot is outlined as follows:

### **3.8 Project Application Criteria**

- Safe, Legal & Feasible (timeframe and budget)
- In keeping with the theme - one or both parts (move more and/or eat well)
- Benefiting people within the Belfast City Council area
- Attendance at the Celebration Event (attendance at this will be used to monitor the outcomes/benefits to the local community).

### **3.9 Who can apply?**

- Both constituted and non-constituted groups can apply
- Non-constituted groups will require a sponsor organisation
- Anyone under the age of 18 will need a sponsor adult to assist them through the process and to hold funding
- A maximum of two applications can be received from each group.

### **3.10 General principles**

- Applicants will complete a short application form detailing their project idea. Applications will open on Monday 6 February 2023 for 6 weeks and will close on Monday 20 March 2023. Information sessions will be arranged, and it is suggested that there are 2-3 Information Sessions per area, plus online sessions.
- Design Team agreed that groups can self-select the area in which they want to submit their application – choosing the area where their project idea will be delivered and be of benefit. This will be particularly important for groups who are located on the edge of one area but serve the needs of people in an adjacent/wider area.
- Criteria Check w/c 20 March 2023 and selected groups will be given notice and invited to Decision-Making Events.
- Selected groups will be invited to Market Stall Decision-Making Events in each geographical area in April 2023

where the community will vote for the projects they want to progress.

- Successful groups will be issued a Letter of Offer along with Terms & Conditions which they must formally accept and return.
- Each award could be up to the value of £1,000.
- 90% of the award will be paid upfront with the remaining 10% being paid on completion of the Project outlined in the group's application and confirmation of attendance at the Celebration Event in Autumn 2023.
- Attendance/presentation at the Celebration Event is mandatory and will form part of project monitoring as monitoring returns will not be required.
- Utility costs, core salary costs, commercial events, purchase of alcohol, political activities, religious activities, memorials, high risk activities e.g., bouncy castles, fireworks will not be funded.
- A sample of groups will be selected for vouching, and this will be on a risk-based approach i.e., groups that have not received funding from BCC will be selected for vouching.
- Administration and support will be provided by the Design Team, BHDU and CNS Finance.

### 3.11 Timeline

<b>Nov 22 – Feb 23</b>	<b>Soft launch and ongoing promotion</b>
<b>Feb 23 – Mar 23</b>	<b>Monday 06 February: applications open for 6 weeks Information Sessions will be arranged during first 2 weeks of February 2023 Applications close on Monday 20 March</b>
<b>Mid-End Mar 23</b>	<b>Criteria checks will commence w/c 20 March 2023 and successful groups will be given notice and invited to Decision-Making Events w/c 27 March (in advance of the Easter Break)</b>
<b>Mid-End Apr 23</b>	<b>Decision-making event dates will commence on 17 April 2023 or the beginning of the following week commencing 24th April 2023</b>
<b>May – Oct 23</b>	<b>Project delivery (6 months)</b>
<b>Oct/Nov 23</b>	<b>Showcase and Celebration Events</b>
<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Learning and evaluation</b>

3.12 Given that this is piloting a new approach to awarding funding for Council, The Design Team will continue to liaise closely with Belfast City Council colleagues in Finance, Legal and Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) in relation to the project design and processes.

3.13 Up to date information on the initiative can be found at:

<https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/hub-page/participatory-budgeting>



### Financial and Human Resource Implications

- 3.14 Subject to Council and PHA approval/agreement (and specifically discussions ongoing within Council around discretionary spend), a budget of £236,000 will remain available to support this work in 22/23.
- 3.15 Belfast City Council's £90K contribution towards the £236K total will be included within the revenue estimates for 2023/24 and therefore does not represent any growth. In relation to the ongoing review of discretionary spend, Officers would make the case that our ability to contribute £90K towards Active Belfast is vital to ensure that PHA continue to contribute £146K enabling evidence-based work and projects to be developed in support of Council, Health and most importantly Community Planning priorities which would otherwise not be able to be achieved/supported.
- 3.16 Officers are requesting member approval to earmark £64K (26K BCC/ 38K PHA split) of the 236K total towards delivery/ implementation of the PB pilot in 2023/24. This will enable £16K to be allocated per area – North, South, East and West and a minimum of 16 projects (up to 1K per project available) to be supported per area.
- 3.17 Active Belfast partnership will be holding a planning session early in the New Year to look at other priorities and resourcing requirements and a further report re. same will be brought through to committee.
- 3.18 Kim Kensett (PHA) and Grainne McMacken (BHSCT) will continue to lead on this work within the BHDU. Oversight will continue to be provided at organisational level by Kelly Gilliland within BCC and David Tumilty within PHA, as well as at a partnership/thematic level with the stakeholders involved in the Active Belfast Partnership.

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

- 3.19 Equality screening has been completed.
- 3.20 PB should have a positive impact across the various Section 75 groups as it strengthens and promotes inclusive civic voice and participation. Positive steps will be taken to ensure the PB process is promoted amongst all section 75 groups, but particularly those who are under-represented in traditional consultations (i.e. young people, older people, disabled people, new [ethnic and migrant] communities).”

The Committee adopted the recommendations as outlined at points 2.0 and 2.1 of the report.

**Update from the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group**

The Committee was advised that a meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group had been held on 12th December 2022 and the Director of City Services highlighted some of the specific issues that had been considered:

- Update on Bereavement Service Operations; and
- Update on the new Crematorium Development.

The Committee:

- The Committee adopted the minutes from the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group meeting held on 12th December 2022;
- endorsed the recommendation of the Working Group to increase the time frame for the submission of cremation documentation from 12 noon the day before cremation to two working days; and
- endorsed the recommendation of the Working Group to write to the relevant Permanent Secretary encouraging a workable solution to be found allowing the electronic transfer of documentation relating to burials and cremations to continue on a permanent basis, given that the current Coronavirus Act Provisions that currently enabled the process were due to expire on 24th March 2023.

**Department for Communities Private  
Tenancies Act (NI) 2022 -update on  
Powers for Council commencing April 2023**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

1.1 To update Members of the new provisions of the Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022 commencing on 1st April 2023 and to set fixed penalty levels for certain offences under said Act.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the new legislative powers for Council’s in relation to the private rented sector.

And

- Agree the proposed fixed penalty levels at £500.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key issues**

3.1 Members were previously appraised at their November 2021 Committee of the new provisions contained in The Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022 which has received royal assent on the 27th April 2022. It amends the Private Tenancies Order (NI) 2006 with 11 substantive clauses and three schedules aimed at making the private rented sector a safer and more protected housing option. This report provides the details of the elements of the new Order that will come into effect on the 1st April 2023, however it should be noted that there are still a number of provisions which require further consultation and members will be provided with an update when we receive the Department for Communities (DfC) consultation papers.

3.2 The Act creates new offences for which the Council will have powers to issue fixed penalty notices. The fixed penalty payable in respect of an offence is an amount determined by the Council, being an amount not exceeding one-fifth of the maximum fine payable on summary conviction of that offence which is currently £2500. Therefore, the maximum level of fixed penalty fine that the Council can set for the new offences is £500. The Council has previously set the fine level at £500 for failure to register as a landlord under the same legislation. Therefore, it is proposed that the fines for the new offences are set at the same level of £500 as detailed below.

3.3 The Act will provide additional powers to Councils in relation to the regulation of the private rented sector as follows:

### Tenancy Information Notice

Tenancy Information Regulations 2022 require a landlord to give a tenant a Tenancy Information Notice containing specified information within 28 days of the commencement of a tenancy. A Tenancy Information Notice is an important legal document which provides the landlord and tenant with information on their respective rights and responsibilities. It can help to minimise disputes, as information, such as, the rent payable, deposit details, duration of tenancy, responsibility for repairs and notice of termination are given in writing. The Notice also provides tenants with the landlord's (and, if appropriate, agent's) contact information.

If the landlord has previously given a tenant a Notice which substantially meets the specified requirements, this would be deemed compliant.

If the landlord commits an offence, the council will have the power to issue a fixed penalty notice, not exceeding £500. If the landlord is convicted by a court, the penalty will be a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale (currently £2,500).

The maximum fixed penalty notice fine level which can be issued by Council is £500.

It is proposed that the fixed penalty level offence is set by the Council at £500.

### Receipts

- 3.4 It is now a requirement for a landlord to provide a written receipt for any payment made in cash in relation to a tenancy. A receipt is a method of documenting cash payments that a tenant pays to a landlord under a tenancy. A receipt is beneficial to both tenants and landlords offering tenants documented proof of cash payments and landlords a record of cash payments. For tenants who pay their rent in cash a rent receipt may be the only written evidence they have of their payments

Any written receipt must detail:

- the payment date;
- what the payment was for; and
- the amount paid, including:
  - if any amounts remain outstanding, and
  - if the payment was made in full.

If the landlord or his/her representative/agent commits an offence by failing to provide the receipt for cash payments, the Council may issue a fixed penalty notice not exceeding £500. If the landlord is convicted by a court the penalty, the fine will not exceed level 4 on the standard scale (currently £2,500).

The maximum fixed penalty notice fine level which can be issued by Council is £500.

It is proposed that the fixed penalty level offence is set by the Council at £500.

#### Changes to Tenancy Deposits

- 3.5 A landlord cannot ask for or retain a tenancy deposit that is more than one month's rent.

If a landlord has unlawfully requested or retained a tenancy deposit of more than one month's rent, they are guilty of an offence. A council can issue a fixed penalty notice or fine for this offence. The amount of the fixed penalty notice will be determined by councils and cannot exceed £500. If the landlord is convicted by a court the penalty will be a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale (currently £2,500). If a landlord is convicted of requiring or retaining a deposit in excess of one month's rent, the court may order the excess to be repaid to the person who paid it.

The maximum fixed penalty notice fine level which can be issued by Council is £500.

It is proposed that the fixed penalty level offence is set by the Council at £500.

#### Increase in time for requirements relating to tenancy deposits

- 3.6 The time limit for a deposit to be protected in an approved scheme has changed from 14 days to 28 days and landlords have additional time to provide the prescribed information to the tenant as this has changed from 28 days to 35 days.

If a landlord or agent fails to protect the deposit or notify a tenant of the deposit information, then they will be guilty of an offence.

The Council may issue a fixed penalty three times the value of the deposit taken.

If convicted of this offence, they may be liable for a fine not exceeding £20,000

**Removal of the 6-month time barrier to prosecution of tenancy deposit offence**

- 3.7 The Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 makes the failure to protect a tenancy deposit a continuing offence and removes the 6-month time limit on prosecutions. This legislation provides that those offences continue to be committed throughout any period during which the failure to protect a deposit, or supply the required information to the tenant, continues. The result of this is that there will be no time barrier on prosecuting a person who fails to comply with the requirements.

**Change in length of notice to quit:**

- 3.8 From 5th May 2022, the Private Tenancies Act 2022 introduced the following notices to quit period for landlords and tenants:

Depending on the length of the tenancy, the landlord must give their tenant a minimum notice to quit period as indicated in the table below.

Length of tenancy	Notice to quit
Tenancy not been in existence for more than 12 months	No less than 4 weeks' written notice
Tenancy has been in existence for more than 12 months but not more than 10 years	No less than 8 weeks' written notice
Tenancy has been in existence for more than 10 years	No less than 12 weeks' written notice

Depending on the length of the tenancy the tenant must give their landlord a minimum notice to quit period.

Length of tenancy	Notice to quit
Tenancy not been in existence for more than 10 years	No less than 4 weeks' written notice
Tenancy has been in existence for more than 10 years	No less than 12 weeks' written notice

The Council will seek to publicise the new legislative provisions in advance of the start date on 1st April 2023 using our media outlets.

- 3.9 **Financial and Resource Implications**

The Private Tenancies Act will provide Councils with new enforcement powers to deal with issues in the Private Rented sector which will place additional resources demands on our existing resources. There is no financial support available from

**the Department for Communities (DfC) to assist Councils with these additional powers. The fixed penalty regime introduced for some of the new offences may provide some income but it will not cover the additional staffing and administrative resources required. Setting the fixed penalty fine to the maximum of £500 for each offence is a key consideration in the absence of any financial support to implement this important legislation.**

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

**None associated with this report.”**

A Member stated that, whilst the powers were welcome, he did not think that they went far enough. He continued that, as outlined in the report, the Act had created new offences for which the Council now had powers to issue fixed penalty notices and he queried whether the Council had received any additional funding for these added duties.

The Director of City Services advised that no additional funding had been received from the Department for Communities (DfC) and that any additional costs and resources would have to be absorbed by the Council.

The Member reiterated the potential additional resources implications and costs for the Council at a time when the Council was already under significant financial pressure, he asked that this be highlighted to DfC and also that the additional costs be monitored and reported upon in due course.

During discussion a number of Members stated that they felt that both the fixed penalty fine (£500) and the summary conviction fine (£2500) were low and queried whether these could be raised.

The Director advised that the maximum fixed penalty notice fine level which could be issued by the Council was £500. In addition, if a landlord was to be convicted the penalty fine would not exceed level 4 on the standard scale which was currently £2500 and that increasing this was a matter for the Department for Communities (DfC).

The Committee:

- noted the new legislative powers for Council's in relation to the private rented sector and agreed the proposed £500 fixed penalty level; and
- agreed to write to the Permanent Secretary in the DfC to detail the additional resource implications on the Council and to seek additional funding for its regulation and also to ask for a review of the maximum fine payable on both the maximum fixed penalty notice (currently £500) and on summary conviction (currently £2500).

**Physical Programme and Asset Management**

**Orangefield Pavilion Artwork**

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 work with community partners and a group of young men in the Orangefield area, and to seek approval for a piece of artwork on the wall at Orangefield Pavilion.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- **Approve the intent to install a piece of artwork on the wall at Orangefield Pavilion and agree the approach for codesigning the image.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Background**

**3.1 East Belfast Alternatives have been working with a group of young men, supported by Eastside Greenways and Belfast City Council parks outreach team. This group of young men lost a friend at the start of the year to ongoing battles with mental health and substance misuse. This prompted a number of tributes and graffiti being sprayed on the walls at the pavilion.**

**3.2 East Belfast Alternatives have been using the pavilion every Thursday evening to work with the group of young men. They have undertaken training sessions around mental health including a wellness initiative created by the Trauma Resource Institute as well as emergency first aid and defibrillator training with the Red Cross. The group are keen to continue working together to support mental health initiatives, develop increased use of the pavilion for the community and take a bit of positive ownership of the space around the pavilion.**

**3.3 The group have requested approval to create a piece of artwork on the wall and produce something that would be a more fitting tribute to their friend as well as celebrate his work as a local artist. We believe this will also reduce any further graffiti or damage to the building and give the group a sense of ownership of the space. To date, the group have worked with a local east Belfast artist and have produced an image which council officers have advised might be unsuitable.**

- 3.4 Officers have discussed and shared the PHA guidance on memorials which outlines some circumstance where memorials can have a negative effect on people, and also the importance of considering other park users - all who interpret images differently.
- 3.5 Officers are keen to support the work with this group of young men and continue to build on the positive outcomes for both the young men involved and the council's work to create safe, welcoming spaces and increase community and resident capacity for development and participation.
- 3.6 This project aligns with priorities set out in the Belfast City Council's Cultural Strategy, *A City Imagining*. One of the key themes of the strategy is 'A City Belonging', which proposes that through active participation, citizens will gain a sense of cultural belonging. Citizens should be supported to creatively express their identity and ensure they themselves and their creativity is reflected, welcomed and celebrated in their city.
- 3.7 The Orangefield Pavilion is a perfect example of this active participation as a group of young men have organised and engaged in creative expression on an issue that is important to them and is a positive message to the wider community (musical talent in Belfast and how creativity can help our mental health). Our cultural strategy positions citizens to be active agents of change and co-creators of cultural activity. These young men have taken on this role by engaging with artists, community organisers and local stakeholders – reinvigorating their local area in a collaborative and creative way.
- 3.8 Belfast recently gained UNESCO City of Music status and the story of what music means in Belfast is an important one to celebrate, which citizens have previously and repeatedly highlighted through consultation. This planned project celebrates a local artist who was part of initiatives such as HotBox Entertainment, a music studio based in East Belfast on Ravenhill Road which empowers young people to create and record their own music.
- 3.9 The mural and the work that these young men and all community groups involved are doing is carrying on the legacy of a local musician and advocating for what creativity can mean for people's mental health, their sense of belonging in their community and their ability to actively participate in and shape their city.
- 3.10 To achieve the Cultural Strategy, we have an ambitious year-long celebration of creativity planned for 2024. As part of *Belfast 2024*, the creative sector, city stakeholders and citizens across Belfast

will be co-designing and participating in the creative programme of events, exhibitions, performances and more.

- 3.11 It is essential that, to achieve this level of participation, we are investing in and building relationships with communities where they are supported to realise their ideas and visions for creativity in their local areas, such as the mural for Orangefield Pavilion.

Approach for agreeing the image

- 3.12 Officers recommend a co design approach with the group of young men, supported by the local artist, and including input from council's Culture and Arts team, local elected members, and a specialist input from a local mental health charity or art therapy service.

We will use guidance previously agreed through committee on producing public animation/art around the centenary and ensure that we bring in expertise on the subject and ensure further engagement with other stakeholders.

Community/Partner consultation on the image

- 3.13 Officers recommend that the young men would undertake a consultation process with the new agreed image. This would include pop up engagement with park users, as well as partners such as Eastside Greenways, Eastside Arts, EBCDA, East Street Team, People of Orangefield Park, Bloomfield Football Club, Park Run, Bloomfield Wildlife, People of Orangefield Park, Bloomfield Community Association, Adopt a Spot groups, Orangefield Community Garden group, elected members. This engagement could be supported by Eastside Greenways team.
- 3.14 In addition to the image, the young men would like to include a QR code as part of the design which links the user to Spotify, and 7 of the artists songs. Also, a QR code beside the defibrillator which links the user to the East Belfast Health Hub App developed by EBCDA.
- 3.15 Officers from our communications team will check and approve the content before installation.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.16 No financial cost to council. This project would be funded by East Belfast Alternatives and their Communities in Transition funding.

Officers would advise that the permanency of the artwork be up to two years and then reviewed.

**The group could be supported with the DPCSP graffiti packs to remove any unwanted tagging themselves which will further support the level of ownership felt by the group.**

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

**3.17 There are no associated impacts.”**

The Committee approved the intent to install a piece of artwork on the wall at Orangefield Pavilion and agreed the approach for codesigning the image.

**Pitch Partner Agreements Short Term Extensions**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Members that in 2017/18 the Council had agreed to enter into Partner Agreements with local clubs at 6 Council sites. Originally, the Agreements had been agreed for an initial period of 5 years with an option to extend, subject to satisfactory performance by the Agreement holders. He advised that the Department had subsequently extended all of the Agreements for a further 2 years beyond the initial 5-year period.

The Director highlighted that a number of the agreements were due to expire before the end of the 2022/2023 financial year, as listed below:

Facility	Club	Expiry Date
Shore Road Playing fields	Grove United FC	8 December 2022
Woodlands	Co. Antrim GAA	15 December 2022
Orangefield Park	Bloomfield FC	15 December 2022
Dixon Park	Sirocco FC	7 February 2023

He reported that, to ensure continuity of service, he had extended the Agreements under the Scheme of Delegation.

The Members were reminded that the Council was currently developing a new policy regarding the management of assets within the community, with a pilot being delivered across a number of sites. He continued that, as the Members were aware, one of the sites included in the initial pilot had been Ulidia Playing Fields. He advised that, at the October 2022 meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had endorsed the recommendation of the People and Communities Committee to transfer the existing Partner Agreement at Ulidia to a long-term lease.

He advised that it was anticipated, following review of the CAT pilot process, that a number of the sites listed above might also be made available for consideration under new management arrangements, however, until this had been agreed, and to ensure continuity of service provision, it was intended that the remaining existing Partner Agreements would continue until the new arrangements had been established.

The Committee noted:

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- That, under the Scheme of Delegation, the Director had extended the current Partner agreements for the sites at Shore Road Playing Fields, Woodlands, Dixon Park and Orangefield Park until 31st March 2023; and
- that a further report would be submitted to Committee in due course to seek any further extension for all agreements following the confirmation of 2023/24 budgets and that this would be linked to the timeframe and outcome of the CAT pilot.

**Community Management of Assets Update**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to the appointment of consultants to pilot an approach to the Community Management of Assets at the six agreed sites. At the October meeting of the Committee a Member had asked for consideration to be given to removing the Willowbank Park site and replacing it with Lenadoon Park, subject to the groups confirming their willingness.

The Director confirmed that the local groups were content with this arrangement.

The Committee agreed that Willowbank Park be removed from the pilot and replaced by Lenadoon Park.

**Operational Issues**

**Proposal for naming new streets and continuation of existing streets**

The Committee approved the application for naming a new street and applications for the continuation of existing streets in the City as set out below:

<b>Proposed Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
Lady Ishbel Boulevard	Off Hospital Road, BT8	Alskea Ltd

<b>Proposed Continuation of Existing Street</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
Ishbel Gardens	Off Lady Ishbel Avenue, BT8	Alskea Ltd
Ishbel Mews	Off Haddo Crescent, BT8	Alskea Ltd

**Consultation response to Food Standards Agency on the proposed changes to the Food Law Code of Practice in relation to a new Food Standards delivery model**

The Committee considered the undernoted report.

**1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1** The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is seeking views and comments from stakeholders on the proposed changes to the Food Law Code of Practice (Northern Ireland) in relation to the introduction of the new Food Standards Delivery Model.

**1.2** The proposals presented in the consultation are the introduction of a new method of determining the food standards risk posed by a food business, and a new frequency schedule for the delivery of food standards official controls. These changes will require significant changes to the Food Safety Unit's current information management system (CIVICA) for recording and reporting of food standards interventions and for the migration of existing premises to the new scheme.

**1.3** The Council's Food Safety team have reviewed the FSA consultation questionnaire and have prepared a draft response for committee approval which indicates general support for the implementation of the new food standards delivery model. However the draft response comments on a number of technical points in relation to implementation, in particular the availability of financial assistance from the FSA for the necessary amendments to the IT systems used by the Food Safety Unit.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1** The Committee is requested to:

- Approve the draft consultation response.

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1** In Northern Ireland, district councils (DCs) are Competent Authorities responsible for verifying compliance with food law in the majority of food businesses. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is responsible for providing advice and guidance on the approach that DCs should take, and this is set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code). DCs have a duty to have regard to the provisions in the Code in relation to the delivery of Official Controls.

**3.2** Food standards interventions focus on food matters such as food labelling, provision of allergen information to consumers, food composition and food fraud. Working in collaboration with Councils and other key stakeholders, the FSA have developed a new delivery model for food standards official controls and interventions. This updated model provides a more flexible

approach for DCs to better target resources at food businesses presenting the greatest risk.

- 3.3** The main proposals involve fundamental changes to the current Food Standards Delivery Model, and associated content within the Code of Practice, namely the introduction of:
- a new Food Standards Intervention Rating Scheme that officers will use to evaluate the risk posed by a food business; and
  - a new Decision Matrix to determine the frequency at which food standards official controls should be delivered in line with the outcome of the risk assessment
  - changes to sections of the Code relating to the delivery of food standards interventions.
- 3.4** Food Safety Officers within Belfast City Council have expressed support for the new scheme within the draft response but have noted a number of concerns regarding the initial work required for migration from the current risk rating scheme, particularly with regard to the IT solutions and associated costs.
- 3.5** The proposed scheme was recently piloted by one council in NI however the proposed scoring element relating to control of allergens and provision of allergen information to consumers was not included in the pilot scheme. The Council involved in the pilot exercise has noted that this element would need to be further evaluated in order to determine the impact on the overall number of food standards inspections required each year in each Council area.
- 3.6** Allergen information provision continues to provide a challenge to food businesses and there is the potential for the revised scoring model to identify more premises into the priority category, thereby requiring revisits every month until compliance is secured. This may pose additional challenges for service planning within the Council's Food Safety service, due to the reactive nature of the new model. It will be difficult to estimate the numbers of planned interventions as a premises requiring a priority intervention may then require further multiple interventions within the same year.
- 3.7** Belfast City Council Food Safety Officers also anticipate that training will be required in excess of the FSA's estimations and have asked for specific training with regard to the application of scores to ensure consistency with other DC's, similar to that provided to the pilot council.

**Finance and Resource Implications**

- 3.8 Financial support is being sought from the FSA to assist with the changes necessary to the Food Safety Unit's IT systems (Civica) to allow for the recording of food standards interventions under the new risk rating scheme and this is reflected in the consultation response.

**Asset and Other Implications**

- 3.9 None.

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

- 3.10 None."

The Committee approved the draft consultation response available [here](#)

**Request from GBBCA to extend their legal  
Agreement with the Council for Grey Lag  
Goose Control in Victoria Park**

The Committee considered a request from The George Best Belfast City Airport (GBBCA) regarding bird strike management at Victoria Park, along with a request from them to present to the Committee.

The Committee agreed to defer the request from the George Best Belfast City Airport (GBBCA) seeking to extend their current Greylag goose licence with BCC to enable GBBCA representatives to attend the February meeting of Committee to make a short presentation, which should include specific data from the last two years around Greylag goose activity in Victoria Park, details of recent egg control measures taken, along with an up-to-date copy of the Airport's Wildlife Action Plan.

**Issues Raised in Advance by a Member**

**Missed Bin Collections – Councillor Flynn**

The Director provided a comprehensive update in respect of the measures being taken to ensure that all waste collections were returned to normal routines by the week commencing 9th January, advising that maximum overtime was being worked to ensure the recovery of the missed bin collections.

She advised that the primary problem had been a shortage of drivers, particularly drivers with a Category C (HGC) type licence, as the Members were aware this had previously resulted in the suspension of glass collections during the summer/autumn period of 2022 and she provided a comprehensive update on the various measure being taken to try and ensure that there was adequate capacity going forward, including details in regard to recruitment, training and contingency measures.

**People and Communities Committee,  
Tuesday, 10th January, 2023**

Following a query, the Director apologised to the Members for the lack of communication with the Elected Members and for the delay in getting up-to-date information transmitted and advised that a further report in this regard, including proposed updated measures would be submitted in due course.

It was noted that the Chief Executive had agreed at the January meeting of Council to re-establish the Cleansing Task Force to consider the various issues to help mitigate against missed bin collections over future holiday periods and she advised that a meeting of this Group would take place in the near future.

The Members welcomed the re-establishment of this Group and suggested that an Update on Staffing Issues should be included as a standing item on the agenda.

A further Member suggested that a campaign could be organised encouraging the training and recruitment of woman to driver positions.

The Director concurred and advised the Members that the recruitment and retention of drivers was also being considered cross departmentally, as a shortage of drivers was having an impact Council wide. She assured the Members that management were looking at all options, including the retention and training of its current staff to ensure it remained competitive with the private sector.

The Members agreed that reconvening the Cleansing Task Force was essential to help mitigate against missed bin collections over future holiday periods and that a meeting of this Group needed to take place as soon as possible.

**Strangford Park – Councillor McAteer**

At the request of Councillor McAteer, the Committee agreed that a report would be submitted to the February Committee in regard to access paths to the Strangford Playing Fields from Glenveagh Special School and seeking approval for a deputation to attend the March meeting of the Committee.

Chairperson

# People and Communities Committee

Wednesday, 25th January, 2023

## REMOTE MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murray (Chairperson);  
Alderman McCoubrey; and  
Councillors Bunting, Bower, Canavan,  
Cobain, M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, de Faoite,  
Flynn, Garrett, Maghie, McMullan, Newton,  
O'Hara and Verner.

In attendance: Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance; and  
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;  
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and  
Civic Services; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

No apologies were reported.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were reported.

### **Restricted Item**

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following item as, due to its 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.

### **Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24**

(Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance, attended in connection with this item).

The Committee considered a report, which had been prepared by the Director of Finance, in relation to the establishment of the District Rate and the compilation of the Estimates of Revenue Expenditure for the year 2023/2024.

**Special People and Communities Committee,  
Wednesday, 25th January, 2023**

The Director outlined that the paper would not be subject to call-in as it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council and the public's interest in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

He referred to the cash limit for the People and Communities Committee for 2023/2024, as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 20th January, and outlined the next steps in the rate setting process leading to the setting of the district rate by Council at its meeting in February 2023.

Following consideration, the Committee noted the next steps in the rate setting process and:

- agreed a cash limit for the People and Communities Committee for 2023/24 of £98,901,629 and the individual service cash limits; and
- agreed that the decision would not be subject to call-in, given that it would cause unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

Chairperson

## City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 11th January, 2023

### HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

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

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

#### **Apologies**

No apologies were reported.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 7th December 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 January.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

#### **Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the report associated with the following three items was restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.**

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

**Future City Centre Programme:  
Vacant to Vibrant**

The Committee was provided with an update on the Vacant to Vibrant Grant Programme and an overview of the applications which had been completed, together with the recommendation from the assessment panel.

The Committee:

- Noted the update in relation to the city centre Vacant to Vibrant pilot capital grant scheme; and
- Agreed to the recommended grant awards as outlined within Section 3.12 of the report.

**Business Cluster and Community  
Grant Programme**

The Committee was provided with an overview on the Business Cluster and Community Grant Programme Tranche 3 and the assessment of applications for consideration.

The Committee:

- Noted the current status of the Business Cluster and Community Grant Programme Tranche 3;
- Approved the award of Business Cluster and Community Grants that had been assessed to date for Tranche 3 of the programme as outlined in Section 3.8 of the report; and
- Agreed that the Business Cluster and Community Grant scheme would not be reopened to new applications, and that any realised underspend be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for reallocation.

**Cathedral Buildings - Business Support**

The Committee was provided with an update on the ongoing work to support the recovery effort following the recent fire at Cathedral Buildings.

The Committee:

- Noted the update and the work which had been undertaken to support the recovery efforts following the fire at Cathedral Buildings; and
- Approved funding for those tenants who were ineligible for the Department for Communities hardship support, a total of £50,000.

**Positioning Belfast to Compete**

**Update on Dublin - Belfast Economic Corridor and Action Plan**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting in August 2022, it had received an update on the progress to support the development of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC), including finalisation of the strategy and action plan. Since that meeting, the work had continued, and the strategy had now been completed and agreed by all DBEC partners. It aimed to articulate a vision for the partnership to enable sustainable economic growth across the region and to provide an evidence base for action, identifying areas of focus for the partnership to address future opportunities and seeking to address any gaps in existing provision.

The Director of Economic Development reported that Members of the DBEC political advisory group had met in Dundalk on 14th October, 2022 to discuss the emerging findings and to consider the strategy and emerging action plan.

The strategy had a vision of becoming a leading economic corridor in Europe, achieving sustainable growth through collaborative research and development, a highly skilled workforce and enabling infrastructure. This included an ambition to be world-renowned as a major international centre in growth sectors like Professional Services, Advanced Manufacturing, ICT, Life Sciences and Advanced Agriculture.

The strategy articulated a number of strategic objectives for the partnership, including;

- Increased skills and training to meet the labour requirements of the region, building on and expanding the existing workforce;
- Advocated for cross-border infrastructure to strengthen connectivity and access to markets and labour;
- Enhanced cross-border collaboration in Research and Development and Innovation, targeting investment in high growth sectors and the green economy;
- Promoted sustainable and climate conscious growth along the corridor, aligned with councils' development plans and wider policy objectives;
- Align with and support economic development partners to increase trade and investment along the corridor; and
- Market the region and elevate the DBEC brand so that the region becomes globally renowned as an attractive place to live and do business.

The next steps for this work were to develop a detailed action plan in order to focus resources and bring forward priority interventions. The partnership recognised that this would require dedicated resources and had agreed, in principle, to the recruitment of two staff resources (as previously advised). The recruitment process for these posts was

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,  
Wednesday, 11th January, 2023**

currently under way and staff would be housed within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The Director of Economic Development advised that, as with all elements of the work to date, the eight councils had been co-funding the research activities. The indicative budget for development work and resourcing in 2023 was €260k. In line with previous agreements, this would be resourced by the eight councils based on population share. The Belfast proportion was £35,805.83. The Committee were reminded that, at its meeting in April 2022, a budget of £15,000 had been agreed as an initial contribution. In order to progress the action plan, the Committee was asked to approve a further allocation of £21,000. The budget would be held by Newry Mourne and Down District Council through their role as Chair and Secretariat of the DBEC partnership. Belfast City Council's contribution would be allocated from existing budgets.

***Shared Island Fund update***

It was reported that the strategic objectives for the DBEC work included enhancing cross-border collaboration in Research and Development and Innovation, targeting investment in high growth sectors as well as infrastructure that strengthened connectivity and access to markets and labour. To progress this work, the partnership had applied for funding through the Irish Government's Shared Island Initiative. They were successful in attracting funding of €150,000 in September 2022 to carry out a feasibility assessment to develop a network of regional innovation hubs within the corridor region. These locations would support current or emerging business clusters in particular locations, to the benefit of the entire region. The project would look at pairing up locations based on sectoral strengths and clusters, such as Fintech in Dublin and Belfast.

The Director of Economic Development highlighted that the proposal also incorporated an ambition identified by the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission to support growth sectors such as Fintech and capitalise on linkages with cities such as Dublin.

He stated that a procurement exercise was underway to secure external expertise to carry out this work, aiming to commence in January 2023. This was being led by Fingal County Council and Belfast City Council officers would participate in a project steering group.

In addition, Dublin and Belfast City Council were awarded €250,000 to carry out feasibility research on capital projects to support the circular economy. There had been extensive work with colleagues from both councils involved in preparing the terms of reference for a procurement exercise, with Dublin City Council as lead partner. This was expected to be finalised in January and Belfast City Council would work closely with Dublin officials at all stages.

The Director of Economic Development pointed out that opportunities for funding from the Shared Island Fund, as well as other interventions such as Peace Plus, were being actively explored in order to bring forward some of the interventions identified through the DBEC strategy and emerging action plan.

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The Committee:

- Noted the progress to date to develop the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor; and
- Approved Belfast City Council's contribution of £21,000 to Newry Mourne and Down District Council to enable the delivery of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor Action plan in 2023.

**Belfast Positioning - Tourism Ireland US  
City of Music Showcase & Fleadh Cheoil  
Showcase**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

**1.1 To update members on the international cultural showcase Council is delivering in partnership with Tourism Ireland taking place in two major US Cities, Boston, and New York in February 2023. This showcasing opportunity will highlight Belfast's music, as well as our city's wider contemporary cultural offering to a range of influencers, major tour operators, media, and other travel operators. This activity is part off our UNESCO City of Music commitments and provides an opportunity to showcase Belfast artists on an international stage.**

**1.2 Elected Members will be aware that in September 2022, Committee approved permission for Council to proceed for a bid for the Fleadh Cheoil in 2024. In March 2023 a vote takes place to confirm the location for the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann for 2024. Several voting members are resident in the United States being part of the executive committee for the United States Comhaltas. As part of the bidding process, it is normal that bidding towns and cities visit the US Comhaltas as well as the Great Britain Comhaltas in conjunction with their bidding partners to discuss their bid with the voting members. To benefit from efficiencies, we are seeking members approval for the attendance of Ards CCE members and Council officers to organise and attend an event in New York to discuss our bid with US Comhaltas vote holders as part of the US Tourism Ireland Showcase schedule.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Provide permission to financially support accommodation, event, and travel costs for the 8 Members of Ards CCE relating**

to Belfast City Councils bid to host the Fleadh. This will be funded from existing departmental budgets up to a value of £20,000

2.2 Approve the attendance at the US Showcase by the Lord Mayor (TBC) and the following Council Officers/Chief Officers,

- John Walsh, Chief Executive (TBC)
- John Greer, Director of Economic Development
- Erika Clark, Creative Programme Manager 2024

3.0 Main report

3.1 Purpose & Context

In May 2021 Council agreed for the submission of an application for Belfast to receive the UNESCO City of Music designation. This reflected our commitment within our 'A City Imagining' Cultural Strategy to bid for UNESCO City of Music status by 2021.

3.2 Our 'City Imagining' strategy commits to recognising the transformative power that music has to spark a new relationship with ourselves as individuals, within our communities and with the city

3.3 In developing our Music Strategy an economic impact assessment was completed by specialist consultancy, Sound Diplomacy. It found the Gross Value Added (GVA) for the cultural and creative industries in 2017 was £1,088 million in 2017, representing 2.7% of Northern Ireland's total GVA, accounting for 25,000 jobs, representing 3.1% of total employment. The jobs created by the sector in Belfast in 2019 reached 7,376, representing 3.22% of total employment in the city.

3.4 The music sector in Belfast generated a direct output of £180 million and an estimated direct GVA of £84.3 million and it was responsible for 1,781 direct jobs. When including the indirect and induced effects, music supported 3,130 total jobs, output of £346.8 million and a GVA of £171.4m.

3.5 Belfast's music, cultural, hospitality and tourism organisations have been damaged by the restrictions stemming from COVID-19. There is a recognition that these sectors require ongoing support and investment to minimize the potential long-term damage to them.

- 3.6 After extensive engagement we have received an offer from Tourism Ireland to partner with Council to deliver a US sales mission and showcase Belfast music and culture in February 2023. The cultural showcase will be accompanied by a tourism sales mission to highlight the rich tourism offering in Belfast and will take place in Boston & New York. This offer provides an opportunity for Belfast to benefit from Tourism Irelands extensive resources, international networks, organisational capacity and to share the costs for the showcase with Tourism Ireland.
- 3.7 The aim of the showcase is to celebrate Belfast's cultural vibrancy, our up-and-coming year of culture in 2024, new and up and coming artists and the awarding of UNESCO City of Music Status to Belfast and highlight contemporary Belfast to an audience of media, VIPs, tour operators and selected guests. In addition, the showcase will also provide an opportunity to highlight upcoming tourism and civic projects such as Belfast Stories. The proposed artists attending will also benefit from a dedicated industry showcase where they will have an opportunity to meet with US agents, producers, distributors, and labels to promote their work

**Alignment to strategic objectives**

- 3.8 Council launched their ambitious new strategic plans – *A City Imagining* Cultural Strategy and *Make Yourself at Home* Tourism plan – in 2020 and 2021 respectively. To coincide with this Council has undergone a staff restructure to create a new approach to delivering on Culture and Tourism for the city of Belfast, the new Culture and Tourism unit are working together to position Belfast as a culturally vibrant city, both nationally and internationally.
- 3.9 **Make Yourself at Home – Positioning Belfast, Tourism Plan:** The Belfast Agenda sets out the belief that Belfast can be a city that people dream to visit. A place that is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable. Our Tourism Plan sets out long-term goals to grow the value of tourism exponentially and to recognise that tourism plays a vital role in the city's economy, its employment opportunities, especially for the young, and its support for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- 3.10 **A City Imagining – A City Exploring, Cultural Strategy: A City Exploring** is a core pillar of our cultural strategy and aims to strengthen our place in the world by building upon our cultural networks and partnerships locally, regionally, and

internationally. Belfast will facilitate, support, and maintain international networks and collaborative partnerships on a range of levels to ensure our connected city welcomes inwards investment and visitors whilst also supporting our creative and cultural entrepreneurs to make their own global connections.

3.11 **Belfast 2024** – our celebratory year of culture will be the manifestation of our strategic determination to showcase the cultural vibrancy and creative ambition of our city. It will focus on principles of co-design, public space, pushing creative boundaries as well as inclusivity and sustainability. This year will showcase to the world what Belfast has to offer, attracting a high number of out-of-state visitors.

3.12 **UNESCO City of Music** – After 3yrs of co-design and development with the city and sector Belfast was granted membership of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network with our new City of Music Status in November 2021. A core ambition of our UNESCO bid was to celebrate our contemporary music offer internationally and raise our international profile, through music, via the UNESCO Creative Cities Network globally. This status carries significant acclaim and recognition internationally.

3.13 **Concept & Approach**

Tourism Ireland and Belfast City Council partnership will deliver a cultural showcase, via a contemporary and vibrant lens. As City of Music Patron for Belfast, Hannah Peel as agreed to act as our Curator for the showcase. Hannah Peel is Northern Ireland's most successful contemporary musician and composer, having won an Emmy for her work on Game of Thrones and being nominated for the Mercury Music Prize in 2020.

Hannah Peel's approach to this showcase is to create a truly unique and contemporary experience for the attendees – showcasing the best we have to offer culturally by mixing stories, literature, food, and music into an immersive experience.

3.14 **Us Showcase Line Up**

- Curator: Hannah Peel (Emmy Winner, Mercury Prize Nominee) Curator & Headline Performer

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- **Host: Tara Lynne O’Neill – Derry Girls/ award winning Belfast actress**
- **Robocobra-Quartet (NI Music Prize winner 2022, represented NI at Glastonbury) Contemporary Jazz Performance**
- **Winnie Ama (BBC Radio Ulster artist of the year/Presenter/ NI Ghanian DJ) Contemporary R&B & electronica**
- **Joshua Burnside (NI Music Prize Winner 2018) Irish Folk Singer/Songwriter**
- **Kwame Daniels (BBC Radio Ulster DJ) Ambience DJ pre-post showcase**

<b>Date</b>		<b>Itinerary</b>
<b>Monday 20th February</b>	Fly out	Delegation fly to Boston – from Dublin or London
<b>Tuesday 21st February</b>	Boston	Showcase at <b>Langham Hotel</b> Boston 6pm – 9pm
<b>Wednesday 22nd February</b>	Boston – NYC	Travel via coach from Boston to New York
<b>Thursday 23rd February</b>	NYC	Showcase at <b>Virgin Hotel Manhattan</b> New York 6pm – 9pm
<b>Friday 24th February</b>	NYC	Industry Networking Event at <b>Dead Rabbit</b> 5pm – 8pm
<b>Saturday 25th February</b>	Fly back	Delegation fly back to Dublin/London

**3.15 Benefits**

The showcase provides an opportunity to continue to re-position Belfast as a city synonymous with music, culture, food, and unique authentic experiences. In addition, it is envisaged that the showcase will support the recovery of the sectors by,

- **Supporting our local tourism and hospitality organisations to return to pre-pandemic levels and eventually to grow beyond those levels**
- **Provide opportunities to grow jobs for those that are furthest from the labour market.**
- **Provide a showcasing opportunity for local musicians, artisans, and artists, and provide opportunities for them to develop their businesses**

**Fleadh Cheoil na Éireann partnership with TI US Showcase**

- 3.16 Members will be aware that in September 2022, Committee approved permission for Council to proceed for a bid for the Fleadh Cheoil in 2024.
- 3.17 On 3rd December, members of the Ulster Comhaltas visited Belfast to review proposed venues and performance locations. A visit of the Comhaltas Executive Committee is to be scheduled for early February, ahead of the final bid in March.
- 3.18 A further event identified for attendance at September Committee was the North American Convention (New York) - April 2023. It has now become clear that this event will take place too late to garner support for the Belfast / Ards vote. Consequently, and ahead of the final vote, we are now seeking Member's permission to send a delegation of 8 from Ards CCE to the US as part of the Tourism Ireland showcase event planned for February to maximise use of resources.
- 3.19 The proposed dates of the visit are Wednesday 22nd to Saturday 25th February.

The proposed itinerary is as follows:

- Travel out to New York
  - Day 1 – Northern Ireland Bureau event
  - Day 2 - music event either 'Dead Rabbit' or Irish Cultural Centre with invitations to be extended to Fleadh Voting members
  - Day 3 –Irish Ambassador Event
- 3.20 This visit will provide an opportunity for Ards CCE/BCC to meet and network with voting members of the Ardchomhairle who will travel to New York from across the US. This is critical to building support for the Belfast / Ards bid.
- 3.21 At September Committee, permission was also granted to allow Council / Ards CCE to attend at a range of events key to the ongoing bid ahead of the vote.

Council also agreed to provide a Letter of Offer of £7,500 to Ards CCE recognizing that the Ards Comhaltas is a voluntary organisation. This funding was to cover costs including travel and subsistence associated with our bid. However, this funding will not meet the costs of the US trip. Consequently, we are seeking Member's permission to financially support

accommodation, event, and travel costs for the 8 Members of Ards CCE. This will be funded from existing departmental budgets up to a value of £20,000.

3.22 The Director of Economic Development will also be attending a meeting with members of the GB Comhaltas in Glasgow, Scotland on Saturday January 14th in advance of the deciding vote in March. This activity will also be attended by Ards CCE and funded via the previously agreed £7,500 of funding supplied by Council.

3.23 Finance and Resource Implications

The allocation of up to £20,000 for the opportunity to showcase Ards CCE and network with US based members to support our Fleadh Cheoil bid will be drawn from existing departmental budgets approved by this committee in March 2022.

Costs associated with the US showcase will be drawn from existing departmental budgets.

3.24 Equality or Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Needs Assessment

The cultural strategy, A City Imagining has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA). Specific initiatives as required will be subject to a further equality screening.”

During discussion, the Director of Economic Development answered questions in relation to the bidding process, the economic return of hosting the Fleadh, work which had been undertaken with tourism stakeholders and the timeframe of the showcase events.

During further discussion, several Members raised concerns in relation to the number of officers that had been recommended to attend the showcase and the need for estimated travel costs for officers' attendance. The Director of Economic Development explained further the financial support required for the 8 Members of Ards Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the process for officers to travel and attend the showcase.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Whyte,

Seconded by Councillor Heading,

The Committee agrees that the proposed attendance at the US Showcase of 4 Council representatives be reduced to two representatives.

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Wednesday, 11th January, 2023**

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

Accordingly, the Committee:

- Agreed to provide financial support for the accommodation, event, and travel costs for the 8 Members of Ards Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann relating to the Council's bid to host the Fleadh. This would be funded from existing departmental budgets up to a value of £20,000; and
- Approved the attendance at the US Showcase by the Lord Mayor (TBC) and the following Council Officers/Chief Officers:
  - John Walsh, Chief Executive (TBC)
  - John Greer, Director of Economic Development
  - Erika Clark, Creative Programme Manager 2024

and noted that the associated costs would be drawn from existing departmental budgets.

**Strategic and Operational Issues**

**Notices of Motion Quarterly Update**

The Committee was provided with a quarterly update on the Notices of Motion that it was responsible for, in line with the agreement of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that all standing committees receive regular updates.

It was reported that there were currently 11 Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance for which the Committee was responsible for and it was recommended that the Committee agree to close the following 3 motions and note the status updates for the remaining 8 motions which remained open:

***Category 1 Recommended Closures***

- Cut in Student Places announced by Queen's University (ID = 252);  
and
- Presentation: Community Finance Ireland (ID = 263)

***Category 2 Recommended Closure***

- Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (ID = 293).

The Committee:

- Noted the updates to all Notices of Motion that the Committee was responsible for as referenced in Appendix 1; and

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- Agreed to the closure of 3 Notices of Motion, as referenced in [Appendix 1](#) and noted in paragraph 3.4 of the report.

Chairperson

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# City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 25th January, 2023

## SPECIAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);  
Alderman Dorrian;  
Councillors Bunting, Heading, T. Kelly,  
Lyons, Maskey, McCabe, McDonough-Brown,  
McLaughlin, Murray, Nelson and Spratt.

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor;  
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;  
Mr. D. Orr, Business Support Manager;  
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration  
and Development;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

No apologies were reported.

### Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

### Restricted Item

**The information contained in the report associated with the following item 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 item 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.

### **Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24**

The Committee considered a report in relation to the establishment of the District Rate and the compilation of the Estimates of Revenue Expenditure for the year 2023/2024.

The Director of Finance outlined that the paper would not be subject to call-in as it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council and the

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public's interest in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

He reported the cash limit for the Committee for 2023/24 as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 20th January, 2023 and outlined the next steps in the rate setting process leading to the setting of the rate by Council at its meeting in February 2023.

Following consideration, the Committee noted the next steps in the rate setting process and:

- Agreed the cash limit of £20,445,354 for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for 2023/24 and the individual service estimates detailed in Table 3, 4.10 of the report; and
- Agreed that this decision should not be subject to call-in because it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

Chairperson

## Planning Committee

Tuesday, 17th January, 2023

### HYBRID MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Whyte (Chairperson);  
Alderman Rodgers;  
Councillors Bower, Carson, Matt Collins,  
Douglas, Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey, Hussey,  
Hutchinson, Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;  
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management);  
Mr. P. Fitzsimons, Principal Planning Officer;  
Ms. U. Caddell, Senior Planning Officer;  
Mr. D. O'Kane, Principal Planning Officer; and  
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 19th December 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 January, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Spratt declared an interest in relation to item 5b on the agenda, LA04/2021/1188/F: Provision for a 24-space car park, access road with lay-by and turning head. 2.4m Perimeter Fence. 425 Springfield Road, Belfast, in that he was related to one of the agents but stated that he would not leave the meeting while the item was being considered.

### **Withdrawn Items**

The Committee noted that the following item had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- LA04/2022/1284/F Erection of Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) development comprising 862 units with additional use of accommodation by further or higher education institutions outside term time, communal facilities, internal amenity courtyard, cycle stores, active ground floor uses including cafe and retail, and

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associated bin stores and plant and public realm improvements to surrounding footpaths. Lands bounded by Library Street (to south); Stephen Street (to west); Little Donegall Street (to north); and Union Street (to east), Belfast

**Committee Site Visit**

The Committee noted that site visits had taken place in respect of the following planning applications on 16th January, 2023:

- LA04/2021/2016/F: Demolition of existing multi-storey car park and the erection of 298no. build for rent apartments (19 storey) including ground floor commercial unit (A1/A2), car/cycle parking provision along with associated development. 21-29 Corporation Street and 18-24 Tomb Street Belfast.
- LA04/2021/2815/F: Erection of Discount supermarket, drive through cafe, landscaping, car parking, and associated site works. Vacant lands at access road to Olympia Leisure Centre directly opposite and approx. 70m East of nos. 9-15 Boucher Road Belfast
- LA04/2022/0002/F: Demolition of existing discount supermarket, erection of replacement discount supermarket, car parking, landscaping and associated site works. Improvements to green space to enhance its usability and amenity involving new landscaping and the creation of pedestrian walkway and sitting areas. 100-116 Stewartstown Road (Lidl) and land to the immediate south and southeast bounded by Kells Avenue Oranmore Drive 37-55 Suffolk Crescent (odds) and 28 Suffolk Drive Belfast.
- LA04/2021/1188/F: Provision for a 24no. space car park, access road with lay-by and turning head. 2.4m Perimeter Fence, 425 Springfield Road.

**Planning Decisions Issued**

The Committee noted the Planning decisions issued between 5th December 2022 and 9th January, 2023.

**Appeals**

The Committee noted the Appeals Decisions.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,  
Tuesday, 17th January, 2023**

**Planning Applications**

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

**LA04/2021/0651/F Erection of 6 x 1 bedroom  
apartments with associated amenity space,  
vacant land at corner of Dundela Avenue and  
Dundela Crescent**

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the application that included aerial view images, site location photographs and maps and highlighted the following key issues and assessment of the proposed development:

- Principle of development;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Impact on residential amenity;
- Impact on traffic and parking; and
- Impact on flood risk and sewage infrastructure.

He pointed out that three letters of objection had been received related to overdevelopment of the site and concern with regard to parking, road and pedestrian safety. He added that NI Water had also objected to the proposal due to the sewer network having been at capacity and, that whilst DfI Roads and Environment Health offered no objections, responses had not been received from DAERA or SES.

He explained that, whilst the density of the proposed development would be high and that the apartments would be located on a tight and confined site, on balance, the proposal would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area, with similar apartments with extant permission on adjacent land.

The Planning Manager stated that, having regard to the development plan, relevant policy context and other material considerations, which included the objections which had been received, the proposed development was, on balance, considered acceptable and that officers had recommended that full planning permission would be granted.

The Committee granted full planning permission, subject to conditions and there being no objection offered from DAERA or SES, and delegated authority for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,  
Tuesday, 17th January, 2023**

**LA04/2021/1188/F (deferred from December 2022  
Planning Committee) Provision for a 24no. space  
car park, access road with lay-by and turning head.  
2.4m Perimeter Fence, 425 Springfield Road**

The Planning Manager outlined the application to the Committee and the following key issues relevant to consideration of the application:

- Loss of zoned economic land;
- Loss of open space;
- Access, Movement and Parking; and
- Drainage and flood risk.

He pointed out that the Tree Officer had provided comments in relation to the application and that an additional condition had been recommended, to require further details of landscaping proposals and tree and hedgerow protection measures during construction.

He explained that the proposal would address the issues around poor access and parking arrangements at Springfield Primary School which had been causing congestion during peak hour and compromising highway safety and the wellbeing of safety of pupils, guardians, staff and visitors to the primary school.

He added that Policy OS1 of PPS 8 permitted an exception to be made where there were substantial community benefits that decisively outweighed the loss of open space and that the special justification for the new car park and access had been considered to satisfy the test and officers were recommending that the application would be approved.

The Chairperson informed the Committee that Mr. G. Dodds and Mr. S. McKee from Turley were present, along with Mr. S. Osborne, School Principal, to answer questions from the Members.

In response to a question from a Member with regards to a lack of cycling infrastructure in the proposal, Mr. Dodds stated that it would be addressed, should it be made a condition of planning permission.

The Committee approved the application, subject to conditions and delegated authority for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions, with an additional condition to be included to require cycle infrastructure provision.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,  
Tuesday, 17th January, 2023**

**LA04/2021/2016/F Demolition of existing multi-storey car park and the erection of 298no. build for rent apartments (19 storey) including ground floor commercial unit (A1/A2), car/cycle parking provision along with associated development. 21-29 Corporation Street & 18-24 Tomb Street Belfast**

The Senior Planning Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the application and outlined the key issues in the assessment of the application, that included:

- The acceptability of the proposed use at this location;
- The acceptability of the design;
- Impact on surrounding context;
- Access, parking and traffic management; and
- Environmental Considerations - Drainage, Contamination, Noise.

She informed the Committee that the proposed uses had been considered acceptable in the location and that the proposal had been the subject of a Pre-application Discussion (PAD) and that the Urban Design Officer and Historic Environment Division had been content with the proposal.

She pointed out that NI Water had submitted an objection to the application on the grounds of insufficient wastewater drainage infrastructure capacity and foul sewage network capacity but that it would be considered unreasonable for the Council to withhold planning permission for the proposed development given NI Water's pre-existing commitments to connect to significant levels of un-implemented development across the city that included the extant permission on part of the site.

She added that Royal Mail had also submitted an objection to the proposal and that Environmental Health had considered the Noise Impact Assessments accompanying the application and had no objection, subject to the recommended conditions relating to noise mitigation controls.

She stated that, having regard to the development plan, relevant policy context and other material considerations, that included the representations, the proposed development was considered acceptable and it was recommended that full planning permission be granted subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. C. Shanks, Agent, Mr. J. Mulholland from Todd Architects and the Applicant, Mr. M. Adams to the meeting.

Mr. Shanks explained that the proposal was a substantial investment in the city which would sustain 400 construction jobs over a 24-30 year ? build which would bring further spending power and benefit.

He stated that the application was focused on a very high quality of design in response to the site's context and setting and would create a variety of unit sizes to attract a wide mix of

**Meeting of Planning Committee,  
Tuesday, 17th January, 2023**

tenants and that 86% of the units exceeded the space standards which demonstrated the quality of the accommodation offer.

He pointed out that the application was aligned with the Council's key vision of encouraging and directing a focus on city living and would deliver a highly sustainable, high quality, new residential community that would see transformation in the physical linkages and connectivity from the city centre to City Quays and Sailortown and would bring vitality to the area with increased footfall which would help to sustain and boost existing and emerging new businesses.

In response to a question from a Member with regard to ground floor parking and residential lounges creating dead frontage rather than active frontage and the composition of open space provision and its shadow analysis, the Senior Planning Officer stated that the ground floor parking did provide non-active frontage but that it had been considered that the proposed design of the steel fretwork which would be linked to historic references from the area was an appropriate design solution and that the Senior Urban Design Officer had been satisfied with the solution.

She added that the residential lounges would be glazed areas which would be activated by the movement of residents in and out of those spaces and provided the Committee with a breakdown of the composition of the amenity space provision in the proposal. With regard to a shadow analysis, she stated that the applicant had provided a 3D model which had been interrogated by officers who were satisfied that there would be adequate levels of light in the internal courtyard and no adverse impacts on the development in that regard.

A Member enquired as to the exposure to wind on the rooftop amenity spaces. In response the Senior Planning Officer stated that microclimate studies had been provided and considered by the Council's Landscape Team which had offered no objection.

The Chairperson put the officer recommendation to the Committee and upon audible dissent, called for a vote, with four Members voted for the recommendation and ten against and it was declared lost.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Garrett,  
Seconded by Councillor Maskey and

Resolved - That the Committee defers consideration of the application for further exploration of the provision of affordable housing within the scheme and to address concerns regarding open space and amenity standards.

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**LA04/2022/0002/F Demolition of existing discount supermarket, erection of replacement discount supermarket, car parking, landscaping and associated site works. Improvements to green space to enhance its usability and amenity involving new landscaping and the creation of pedestrian walkway and sitting areas. 100-116 Stewartstown Road (Lidl) and land to the immediate south and southeast bounded by Kells Avenue Oranmore Drive 37-55 Suffolk Crescent (odds) & 28 Suffolk Drive Belfast**

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the proposal to the Committee and explained that it included improvements to the existing adjacent area of open space to enhance its usability and amenity involving new landscaping and the creation of a pedestrian walkway and sitting areas.

He outlined the following key issues of the application:

- The acceptability of the proposed use at this location;
- Retail Impact of the proposal;
- Open Space considerations;
- The acceptability of the design;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Compatibility with adjacent uses;
- Access, Parking and Traffic Management; and
- Environmental Considerations (Drainage, Contamination, Noise, Air Quality, Natural Environment).

He explained that, as part of the application fell within an existing area of open space, the applicant had proposed to mitigate the loss of open space with the provision of a financial Developer Contribution of £281,482.75 to fund improvements to two open space areas in close proximity to the site, along with proposed improvements to the existing area of open space at Kells Avenue/Oranmore Drive.

He stated that officers had considered that the proposed open space improvements would bring substantial community benefits that decisively outweighed the loss of open space and that the proposal complied with Policy OS 1 of PPS 8.

He informed the Committee that NI Water had objected to the application on the grounds of insufficient wastewater drainage infrastructure capacity but that it was considered unreasonable for the Council to withhold planning permission for the proposed development given NI Water's pre-existing commitments to connect to significant levels of un-implemented development across the city, and that NI Water had not provided evidence that the proposed development would have a direct and detrimental impact on waste-water infrastructure or environment, particularly in the context of impacts over and above what has already been committed across the city.

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He added that no other consultees had offered an objection and that one third party objection had been received in relation to the proposed improvements at Carnanmore Park/Suffolk Playing fields.

He stated that, having regard to the development plan, relevant policy context and other material considerations the proposed development was considered to be acceptable and that officers recommended that planning permission would be granted subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement to secure the financial Developer Contribution to mitigate the loss of open space.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. E. Poots MLA to the meeting, Mr. Poots explained that he had been working with the Suffolk Community who had requested assistance and that they had significant concerns with regard to the application. He stated that the local community had been in agreement to the provision of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) but that the size of the proposed MUGA had changed and would no longer serve the needs of the local community needs.

He reported that a community consultation had taken place with regard to a larger sized MUGA, however, the application implied that a smaller MUGA would be provided.

He asked that an amendment would be made to the application to provide for the larger sized MUGA of 60x40 metres, which had been consulted upon and agreeable with the local community, rather than the 20x40 metre MUGA which was contained within the application.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Poots for his representation and welcomed Mr. D Monaghan, MBA Planning, Ms. E. Greenlees, traffic engineer from AECOM and Mr. A. Mains, the applicant's representative in respect of community engagement, to the meeting.

Mr. Monaghan, in response to the points raised by Mr. Poots, stated that the loss of open space would be minimal and that the developer had offered a considerable contribution to mitigate against the loss and provide a 20x40 metre MUGA and that if the community wanted a larger MUGA then the additional funding would need to be sourced.

Mr. Mains informed the Committee that he had engaged with the local community since 2020 and that many options had been discussed and that a 20x40 metre MUGA was considered as a viable option. He stated that, following engagement with Council officers, Lidl had agreed to increase its Developer Contribution, and that the officers would assist in fulfilling the request of a 60x40 metre MUGA.

The Committee granted planning permission, subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement to secure the financial Developer Contribution to mitigate the loss of open space and granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of conditions and the Section 76 planning agreement, and deal with any other issues that might arise, unless they were substantive, in which case the application would be reported back to the Planning Committee.

(Councillor Douglas retired from the meeting)

**LA04/2021/2862/F Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with storage capacity up to 50MW, associated electricity substation / transformer compound, improvement to the existing access, landscaping and associated ancillary development/ site works. Lands approximately 700m north of 28 Colinglen Road, Dunmurry, Belfast**

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the application and highlighted the following issues to be considered in the case:

- The principle of the development at this location (beyond the settlement development limit);
- Scale, Massing and Design;
- Impact on rural character visual amenity;
- Impact on Built and Archaeological Heritage;
- Impact on Ecology and Natural Heritage;
- Provision of Landscaping and Screening;
- Traffic Movement and Parking;
- Human Health;
- Flooding and Drainage; and
- Health and Safety.

He presented area location plans, aerial photographs and viewpoint images to illustrate the impact of the application on the proposed site.

He stated that no objections had been received and, having regard to the Development Plan and other material considerations, the proposed development was considered, on balance, to be acceptable.

The Committee granted planning permission, subject to conditions, and delegated authority for the Director of Planning and Building Control finalise the wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2021/1964/F Re-cladding of and front extension of office building, erection of four additional floors of office accommodation and public realm enhancement works, Carlton House, 1-6 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast**

The Planning Manager outlined the application for the recladding of the existing office building and the erection of four additional floors of office accommodation.

He pointed out the following main issues relevant to consideration of the application:

- The principle of development;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Impact on the setting of Listed Buildings;
- Impact on amenity;

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Tuesday, 17th January, 2023**

- Access and parking;
- Drainage;
- Waste-water infrastructure; and
- Ecology.

He reported that NI Water had objected to the application on the grounds of a lack of wastewater capacity and that the objection had been considered and the application had been found to be acceptable. He added that DAERA and SES had been consulted as a result of the objection from NI Water, and that responses had not yet been received.

He stated that the design of the cladding proposals and extension were considered acceptable, that there would be no harmful impact on the setting of Listed Buildings and that there would be no adverse transportation impacts.

He informed the Committee that, having regard to the Development Plan and relevant material considerations, it was recommended that planning permission would be granted.

The Committee granted planning permission, subject to no objections from DAERA NIEA and SES, with delegated authority for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of conditions

**Miscellaneous Items**

**Update on Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) and issue referred from People & Communities Committee**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 An item was referred from the People and Communities Committee (November 2022) to the Planning Committee to give consideration to extending Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) across the city. This was the subject of a verbal report to the Planning Committee in December 2022, when it was agreed to revert with a report on the TPO process and ongoing work in this area.**

**1.2 This report sets the context and procedural arrangements for TPOs across the city and provides a summary of the current situation and ongoing review of TPOs.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

- That the Committee notes the legal and regulatory requirements for TPOs.
- That the Committee notes and acknowledges the current reactive and proactive efforts of officers to promote tree

cover across the city and secure protection of important trees that may be under threat.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Background**

- 3.1 During discussion on the Council's draft Tree Strategy at the People and Communities Committee in November 2022, a Member raised the issue of Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) and whether these could be extended across the city. It was noted that this was within the remit of the Planning Committee and the matter was duly remitted to the Committee for consideration.

**Current Position**

- 3.2 The environmental importance of trees, including in terms of biodiversity, visual amenity, climate resilience and human wellbeing, is recognised in current policy, including in the Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan and draft Local Development Plan. However, the pruning, lopping or felling of trees does not generally require the Council's consent and is outside the scope of the planning system, unless the trees are specifically protected. Specified trees can be protected through a TPO, which requires a statutory process to be undertaken in accordance with planning legislation. In addition, trees that are within a Conservation Area also enjoy a level of protection and planning permissions can include conditions to retain specific trees where appropriate. In all of these cases, prior notification and/or consent is required from the Council before any works are undertaken to such trees.
- 3.3 There are currently 142 confirmed TPOs in Belfast, with a further two provisional TPOs currently being considered. A TPO can cover a single tree, groups of trees within an area or whole woodlands. The current area of TPOs is approximately 306 Ha. In addition, there are 13 Conservation Areas in Belfast where the trees are subject to protection similar to that of a TPO. These cover an area of approximately 444 Ha. Almost all TPOs and Conservation Areas are within the current settlement boundary, covering almost 8% of the built-up urban area. A publicly available map of all TPOs and Conservation Areas is on the Council's website: [Spectrum Spatial \(belfastcity.gov.uk\)](https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/spectrum-spatial).
- 3.4 Applications are made to the Council by persons wishing to carry out works to protected trees (TPOs, Conservation Areas or planning conditions), including pruning and minor surgery works as well as felling works. On average, the tree officers in the Planning Service deal with around 200 treeworks applications

annually. Where felling of trees is permitted, it is a normal requirement that a suitable replacement is planted to ensure no net loss of trees.

#### TPO Designation Process

- 3.5 All requests for a TPO are considered by the Planning Service and can be submitted via the new planning portal. In addition, the Council itself may initiate a TPO where considered expedient, for example, as a result of a planning application where there may be a significant threat of felling. The assessment of prospective TPOs is based on a number of key considerations set out in legislation. These include trees of special value in terms of amenity, history or rarity, which may be under threat. Other considerations include the health of the trees, public health and safety issues and the implications for ongoing tree management. The Council has published guidance on protected trees that provides further details on the main considerations for TPO requests and the required statutory process. This is available on the Council's website at: [Tree preservation orders \(belfastcity.gov.uk\)](https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tree-preservation-orders).
- 3.6 When a TPO is proposed, notice must be served on the landowner and any other relevant interests, including adjoining owners. Most commonly, a 'provisional' TPO is applied, which takes immediate effect and lasts up to six months. This allows time for a detailed survey to be carried out by an arborist to record exact positioning, tree species, age and health and any recommended actions. The Council's tree officers will take account of the detailed survey, any representations received and the aforementioned key considerations in resolving whether to confirm the TPO within the statutory six month period. Any provisional TPO and confirmed TPO are required to be referred to Land and Property Services for registering as a statutory charge on the relevant property.
- 3.7 Following local government reorganisation, the Council inherited the TPO records that were implemented by the former DoE. A comprehensive review of all these records identified a number of TPOs that were considered to be legally unsound due to apparent procedural or administrative errors. These issues have now been addressed and new TPOs were served where required. TPOs are subject to review as part of the ongoing work programme to manage these designations in respect of permitted works and current tree health. This review also ensures that unauthorised felling of protected trees can be identified and can result in enforcement action being pursued.
- 3.8 As outlined above, there is a statutory process for the serving of TPOs, including notification and legal procedures and obtaining an expert detailed survey. The process is not designed to provide

blanket TPO coverage as it must be applied to specified individual trees or tree groupings. Whilst a TPO can give protection to specified trees, it does not obligate any particular tree management measures. The TPO process and the consequent consenting process, alongside the ongoing review programme, are time and resource intensive and these duties are currently fulfilled by two tree and landscape officers in the Plans and Policy team. The tree officers also provide advice/comments on planning applications and assistance to the public with queries relating to trees and landscaping.

#### Supporting Work

- 3.9 It should also be noted that officers have prepared Supplementary Planning Guidance for 'Trees and Development' to support the new LDP policy approach to trees. This guidance will be of particular benefit to those considering development proposals in which trees and landscaping form part of the site, or where the proposals are within close proximity to such protected environmental assets. This will help developers, landowners, neighbours and the public understand why trees are important and how they can be integrated with development proposals. This represents part of a wider educational role that the tree officers offer in terms of providing general advice on tree matters, including appropriate species choice, tree health issues and good management practice.
- 4.0 Financial & Resource Implications
- 4.1 None.
- 5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
- 5.1 No adverse impacts identified."

#### Proposal

Moved by Councillor Groogan,  
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson,

That the Committee agrees to write to the Department for Infrastructure to ascertain its willingness to consider a review of TPO legislation and the systems in place to protect trees and the transfer of powers to the Council to vary or amend TPOs which had been granted by the Department for Infrastructure.

On a vote, three Members voted for the proposal, with eight against and one no vote and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Committee noted the update.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,  
Tuesday, 17th January, 2023**

**Restricted Items**

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following 2 items as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**Update on the replacement Planning Portal**

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an update on the project to replace the Planning Portal which went live on 5th December and outlined a number of issues which had arisen and the next steps that would be taken to address them.

The Committee noted the update.

Chairperson

# Planning Committee

Thursday, 19th January, 2023

## HYBRID MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Whyte (Chairperson);  
Alderman Rodgers;  
Councillors Bower, Carson, Matt Collins,  
Douglas, Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey, Hussey,  
Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;  
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management);  
Mr. P. Fitzsimons, Principal Planning Officer; and  
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

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

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Planning Application

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

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

### Proposal

Moved by Councillor Murphy,  
Seconded by Councillor Carson and

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to defer a decision on the application to enable consideration of a late consultation response from the Council's City Regeneration and Development Unit, and to provide more information to Committee in relation to the Inner Northwest Masterplan.

Chairperson

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# Planning Committee

Wednesday, 25th January, 2023

## REMOTE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Whyte (Chairperson);  
Councillors Bower, Matt Collins,  
Garrett, Groogan, Hutchinson,  
Maskey and Spratt.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;  
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance; and  
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Restricted Items**

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following item as, due to its 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.

### **Revenue Estimates & District Rate 2023/24**

(M. T. Wallace, Director of Finance, attended in connection with this item).

The Committee considered a report in relation to the establishment of the District Rate and the compilation of the Estimates of Revenue Expenditure for the year 2023/2024.

The Director of Finance outlined that the paper would not be subject to call-in as it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council and the public's interest in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

He reported the cash limit for the Planning Committee for 2023/24 as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 20th January, 2023 and outlined the next steps in the rate setting process leading to the setting of the rate by Council at its meeting in February 2023.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,  
Wednesday, 25th January, 2023**

Following consideration, the Committee noted the next steps in the rate setting process and:

- agreed a cash limit for the Planning Committee for 2023/24 of £1,624,167.00 and the individual service cash limits;
- noted the next steps in the rate setting process; and
- agreed that the decision would not be subject to call-in, given that it would cause unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2023.

Chairperson

## **Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee**

Monday, 16th January, 2023

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, Magee,  
McCann, Nelson, Newton and Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. J. Corkey, Chief Executive, ICC Belfast  
(Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.);  
Mr. I. Bell, Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate  
Services, ICC Belfast (Belfast Waterfront and Ulster  
Hall Ltd.);  
Mr. S. Daniels, Non-Executive Chairperson, Belfast  
Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development; and  
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor McAteer.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 14th November 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

### **Introduction to Mr. S. Daniels, Non-Executive Chairperson, BWUH Ltd**

The Director of Economic Development introduced Mr. S. Daniels, the new Non - Executive Chairperson of BWUH Ltd. Mr. Daniels provided the Committee with details of his background and career trajectory.

**Restricted Item**

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of the 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 –  
Performance Report for Quarter 2 Year to Date 2022/23**

The Chief Executive, ICC Belfast (BWUH Ltd) provided the Committee with highlights from Quarter 2 Year to Date 2022/23 and reported strong evidence of recovery and a return to business post pandemic. She reported that the application for the Autism Impact Award from Autism NI had been successful and the BWUH Ltd would be joining other key organisations in the city to have successfully trained team members in autism awareness. The team had appointed Autism Champions who were implementing an autism action plan which recently had seen the introduction of a sensory area and relaxed performances of the Pantomime.

She advised that BWUH Ltd continued to investigate opportunities for apprenticeship opportunities and leveraging the Higher-Level Apprenticeship programme as a way of identifying and developing new talent to support the hospitality and events sector. Senior leaders had recently conducted education outreach to promote the industry.

In relation to environmental activities, J. Corkey advised the Committee that BWUH Ltd's Green Team continued to work towards delivering the sustainability action plan.

The Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services provided the Committee with an update on Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.'s (BWUH Ltd.) financial performance for Q2 YTD 2022/23. He reported a higher level of ticket sales which were reflected in the revenue stream. In relation to the Risk Register, he reported some improvement. He concluded that the year-to-date position had been promising which was a testament to the team's hard work.

Chairperson

## Standards and Business Committee

Tuesday, 24th January, 2023

### MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor de Faoite (Deputy Chairperson);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Canavan, R-M Donnelly,  
Douglas, Duffy, Ferguson, Flynn, T. Kelly,  
Long, Lyons, McAteer, McCabe,  
McCullough and Verner.

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and  
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of the Chairperson, Councillor Hanvey and Councillor Gormley.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 5th January 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 January.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Long declared an interest in relation to item 2d on the agenda, in that he was a health service worker and stated that he would leave the meeting when the item was being considered.

#### **Motions**

The City Solicitor informed the Committee that four motions had been received in advance of the Council on 1st February.

The Committee considered each motion in turn and agreed the following:

#### **Support the network of WW2-era Pillboxes**

That the motion be referred, in the first instance, to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

**Standards and Business Committee,  
Thursday, 24th January, 2023**

**Winter Outdoor Preparedness Strategy**

That the motion be referred, in the first instance, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

**End Hostile Environment**

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

**Support for striking Health Workers**

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

Chairperson

## **End Hostile Environment**

“As a city of sanctuary, Belfast City Council recognises the need for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers to feel safe and welcomed in our communities. Moreover, the Council recognises the important cultural diversity and richness that newcomers to our communities bring, as well as all they contribute beyond this.

The Council further notes the important work carried out by community and activist groups across the City in working to ensure that people who move to Belfast are connected to services and supports where needed.

However, the Council acknowledges the detrimental and often damaging impact of Hostile Environment policies which are set by the Home Office but administered here locally. These include the ban on the right to work for asylum seekers, temporary accommodation facilities, such as Larne Detention Centre and hotels, ‘dispersals’ to regions in Britain, and punishing conditions designed to create a climate of fear and hostility, criminalising and impoverishing those who may find themselves without status.

The Council recognises that the Hostile Environment is a xenophobic policy of the UK Government which encourages an ‘othering’ of people who move here.

This Council, therefore, expresses its opposition to the Hostile Environment and calls on the Home Office to end this policy and immediately offer the right work and access services for people who arrive on our shores fleeing war or persecution. The Council further calls on the UK Government to put in place a right to remain policy, which is focused not on discouraging people to come here to better their lives, but ensuring the pathway is simplified and welcoming.”

Proposer: Councillor Ferguson

Seconder: Councillor Matt Collins

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## **Support for Striking Health Workers**

“This Council notes with concern that health workers in Belfast are once again forced to take strike action for fair pay.

Health workers have faced long-term deterioration in conditions, a series of below inflation pay offers, and the additional work due to staff shortages and the ongoing crisis within the Health Service.

The Council further notes that health workers are being offered an unsatisfactory pay offer in the midst of the cost-of-living crisis, as many who work full time are struggling to make ends meet.

In order to retain a vibrant and world class health service, it is vital that we reward staff fairly for the work which they carry out. High levels of agency usage, staff travelling to find better pay and conditions elsewhere, underfunding and privatisation is actively undermining this aim.

The pandemic has shown how important our health service and the workers who staff it, are. Yet many NHS staff still suffer poverty wages and are forced to consider leaving a job they studied and worked hard to achieve.

The Council resolves to write to the Department for Health and the Secretary of State, in the absence of a Minister for Health, to urge them to source and provide a fair, above inflation pay rise for health workers.

The Council further resolves to show public support for health workers on pickets and to send a message of solidarity on behalf of Councillors to Unison, The Royal College of Nurses and NIPSA, who are engaged in the action.”

Proposer: Councillor Matt Collins

Seconder: Councillor Michael Collins

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