

Council

ANNUAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall
on Monday, 3rd June, 2024 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Murphy) (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Groogan);
The High Sheriff (Councillor S. Douglas); and
Aldermen Copeland, Lawlor, McCoubrey, McCullough and Rodgers; and
Councillors Abernethy, Anglin, Beattie, Bell, Black, Bower, Bradley, R. Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Collins, de Faoite, Doherty, M. Donnelly, P. Donnelly, R. M. Donnelly, Doran, D. Douglas, Duffy, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Hanvey, Kelly, Long, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, F. McAteer, G. McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCormick, McDonough-Brown, McDowell, McKay, McKeown, I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin, Murray, Nelson, Nic Bhranair, Ó Néill, Smyth, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported for Councillors T. Brooks and McCusker.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Long declared an interest in item LA04/2024/0168/F within the Planning Committee minutes, in that he was the applicant.

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in the item “2024 Summer Community Diversionary Festivals (SCDF) Programme” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that the organisation for which she was secretary, had applied for funding under the Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT).

Alderman Copeland declared an interest in the item “2024 Summer Community Diversionary Festivals (SCDF) Programme” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that her daughter worked for the GVRT.

Councillor McCabe declared an interest in the item “2024 Summer Community Diversionary Festivals (SCDF) Programme” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that the organisation for which she worked, Feile an Phobail, had applied for funding.

Councillor I. McLaughlin declared an interest in the item “Invite to participate in Building Cultural Networks Convention on Cultural Expression” in that he worked for one of the organisations on the steering group.

As none of the abovementioned became the subject of debate, the Members were not required to leave the meeting.

Minutes of the Council

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 7th May, be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

Casement Park

Councillor Doherty stated that a Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) delegation would be visiting Belfast the following week to review plans for the hosting of the European Championships in 2028. He highlighted that the progress with the redevelopment of Casement Park was urgent and that the Executive needed to engage with the UK Parliament to expedite the re-build.

Condolences

Councillor Lyons extended his condolences to the family of Gerry Dawe, a great Irish poet, who had recently passed away. The Lord Mayor agreed that a letter would be sent to his family on behalf of the Council.

Welcome

Councillor Long and the Lord Mayor welcomed Councillor Abernethy to his first Council meeting and wished him well in his new role.

Congratulations

Councillor McCormick congratulated the East Belfast Football Club on winning the Northern Amateur Premier Division title for the first time in 30 years.

Alderman Lawlor and the Lord Mayor congratulated Councillor McCormick and his wife on the recent birth of their daughter, Sofia.

World Bicycle Day

Councillor Nelson advised the Council that it was World Bicycle Day and that Sustrans was running its Active Travel Challenge in June and he encouraged as many people as possible to sign up.

Little Amal

He also paid tribute to the officers and the Belfast 2024 Team who had contributed to the successful events which had been held across the City for “Little Amal”, a 12-foot puppet of a 10-year-old Syrian refugee child, which had been really positive.

Appointment of Positions of Responsibility for 2024/2025

The Chief Executive drew the Council’s attention to a report which identified the persons who had been selected by the Nominating Officer of each Political Party to hold the following Positions of Responsibility in year two of the current Council term:

Internal Positions of Responsibility	Councillor
Lord Mayor	Councillor Murray
Deputy Lord Mayor	Councillor McCormick
Chair – SP and R Committee	Councillor Murphy
Deputy Chair – S P and R Committee	Councillor Whyte
Chair - City Growth and Regeneration Committee	Councillor Nelson
Deputy Chair City Growth and Regeneration Committee	Councillor I. McLaughlin
Chair - People and Communities Committee	Councillor Verner
Deputy Chair - People and Communities Committee	Councillor Garrett
Chair – Licensing Committee	Alderman Rodgers
Deputy Chair – Licensing Committee	Councillor Smyth

Chair – Planning Committee	Councillor Carson
Deputy Chair – Planning	Councillor T. Brooks

Chair Climate and City Resilience	Councillor R. M. Donnelly
Deputy Chair Climate and City Resilience	Councillor McCabe

Chair Standards and Business	Councillor Lawlor
Deputy Chair Standards and Business	Councillor Magee

Chair Waterfront and Ulster Hall	Councillor Ferguson
Deputy Chair Waterfront and Ulster Hall	Councillor Bower

The Council agreed to appoint the Members to the positions of responsibility as set out above.

Request to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive advised the Council that a request to film parts of the Council meeting had been received from a number of media outlets.

The Council acceded to the request.

Expressions of Thanks

The Lord Mayor reviewed his year in office, which he stated had been one of the greatest honours of his lifetime. He stated that he had been privileged to have been invited to visit all four corners of the City and to celebrate the diversity within it. He paid tribute to the huge number of young people that he had met during his time in office and to those who were working to make the City better for everyone. He thanked his Political Party for nominating him to the role and his family, particular his wife, Bridgeen. He thanked the Deputy Lord Mayor, the two High Sheriffs which he had worked alongside, his staff, other Members and Council staff for all of their support and wished the incoming Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor every success for the year ahead.

The Deputy Lord Mayor referred to a number of memorable events from her year in office and paid tribute to the Lord Mayor, the High Sheriff, her Political Party, her family and Council staff for the valuable assistance which they had provided. She stated that she had been grateful to have worked with a number of important charities during her time in office, including Outburst Arts, Friends of the Earth, the Womens Resource and Development Agency and DKMS blood stem cell donation.

She wished the incoming Lord Mayor and Deputy Mayor well in their forthcoming term of office.

Tributes

Representatives of a number of Political Parties paid tribute to the Lord Mayor and the Deputy Lord for the manner in which they had fulfilled their duties during their year in office.

Installation of Lord Mayor

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that it had, earlier in the meeting, approved the Positions of Responsibility for 2024/2025 and that Councillor Murray had been nominated to serve as Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor Murray was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2025 and he subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Murray thanked his Political Party for nominating him to serve as Lord Mayor. He stated that he was honoured to be the first openly gay Lord Mayor of Belfast. He outlined his main priorities for the forthcoming year, which included a focus on breaking down barriers within the City and helping those who were homeless. He paid tribute to the previous Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor for the manner in which they had carried out their duties. He stated that he was looking forward to the year ahead and to working with the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff.

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

Installation of Deputy Lord Mayor

The Council was again reminded that earlier in the meeting Councillor McCormick had, under the Positions of Responsibility for 2024/2025, been nominated to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor McCormick was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2025 and he subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

He paid tribute to the previous Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, thanked his Political Party for nominating him to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor and outlined his main objectives for his term in office. He stated that he was looking forward to the year ahead and to working with the Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff.

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

Appointment of Members to Committees for 2024/2025

The Chief Executive drew the Council's attention to a report which identified the following persons who had been nominated by the Nominating Officer of each Political Party to the Council's Standing Committees for 2024/2025:

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

1		Sinn Féin	Chairperson	Councillor Ryan Murphy
2		SDLP	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Carl Whyte
3		Sinn Féin		Councillor Ciaran Beattie
4		Sinn Féin		Councillor Tina Black
5		Sinn Féin		Councillor Ronan McLaughlin
6		Sinn Féin		Councillor Róis-Marie Donnelly
7		Sinn Féin		Councillor Joe Duffy
8		Sinn Féin		Councillor Matt Garrett
9		Sinn Féin		Councillor Micheal Donnelly
10		Democratic Party	Unionist	Councillor Sarah Bunting
11		Democratic Party	Unionist	Alderman Frank McCoubrey
12		Democratic Party	Unionist	Councillor Ian McLaughlin
13		Democratic Party	Unionist	Councillor Fred Cobain
14		Democratic Party	Unionist	Councillor Bradley Ferguson
15		Alliance		Councillor Michael Long
16		Alliance		Councillor Jenna Maghie
17		Alliance		Councillor Sam Nelson
18		Alliance		Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown
19		SDLP		Councillor Séamas de Faoite
20		Green		Councillor Áine Groogan

People and Communities Committee

1	Democratic Unionist Party	Chairperson	Councillor Nicola Verner
2	Sinn Féin	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Matt Garrett
3	Sinn Féin		Councillor Conor Maskey
4	Sinn Féin		Councillor Micheal Donnelly
5	Sinn Féin		Councillor JJ Magee
6	Sinn Féin		Councillor Tina Black
7	Sinn Féin		Councillor Claire Canavan
8	Sinn Féin		Councillor Róis-Marie Donnelly

9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tomás Ó Néill
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sarah Bunting
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ruth Brooks
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ian McLaughlin
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Fred Cobain
14	Alliance	Councillor Christine Bower
15	Alliance	Councillor Jenna Maghie
16	Alliance	Councillor David Bell
17	Alliance	Councillor Hedley Abernethy
18	SDLP	Councillor Paul Doherty
19	SDLP	Councillor Gary McKeown
20	Green	Councillor Anthony Flynn

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

1	Alliance	Chairperson	Councillor Sam Nelson
2	Democratic Unionist Party	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Ian McLaughlin
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Joe Duffy	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Séanna Walsh	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tina Black	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ronan McLaughlin	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor McKay	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor Maskey	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Tracy Kelly	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman James Lawlor	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Andrew McCormick	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Davy Douglas	
14	Alliance	Councillor Fiona McAteer	
15	Alliance	Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown	
16	Alliance	Councillor Eric Hanvey	
17	SDLP	Councillor Séamas de Faoite	
18	SDLP	Councillor Dónal Lyons	
19	Green	Councillor Brian Smyth	
20	TUV	Councillor Ron McDowell	

Licensing Committee

1	Ulster Unionist Party	Chairperson	Alderman Jim Rodgers
2	Green	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Brian Smyth
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Pádraig Donnelly	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor McKay	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Caoimhín McCann	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Nichola Bradley	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Brónach Anglin	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tomás Ó Néill	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Tracy Kelly	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Davy Douglas	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Jordan Doran	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough	

14	Alliance	Councillor Fiona McAteer
15	Alliance	Councillor Hedley Abernethy
16	Alliance	Councillor Tara Brooks
17	SDLP	Councillor Gary McKeown
18	IND	Councillor Paul McCusker
19	TUV	Councillor Ron McDowell
20	PBPA	Councillor Michael Collins

Planning Committee

1	Sinn Féin	Chairperson	Councillor Arder Carson
2	Alliance	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Tara Brooks
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Matt Garrett	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ryan Murphy	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor JJ Magee	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Caoimhín McCann	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Bronach Anglin	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Geraldine McAteer	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman James Lawlor	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sammy Douglas	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Jordan Doran	
14	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Bradley Ferguson	
15	Alliance	Councillor David Bell	
16	Alliance	Councillor Eric Hanvey	
17	Alliance	Councillor Hedley Abernethy	
18	SDLP	Councillor Carl Whyte	
19	Green	Councillor Áine Groogan	
20	Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Jim Rodgers	

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

1	Democratic Unionist Party	Chairperson	Councillor Bradley Ferguson
2	Alliance	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Christine Bower
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Clíodhna Nic Bhránair	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Caoimhín McCann	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Geraldine McAteer	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tomás Ó Néill	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor McKay	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Claire Canavan	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Nicola Verner	

11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ruth Brooks
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sammy Douglas
13	Alliance	Councillor Jenna Maghie
14	Alliance	Councillor David Bell
15	SDLP	Councillor Paul Doherty
16	Green	Councillor Anthony Flynn
17	Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Sonia Copeland
18	PBPA	Councillor Michael Collins
19	TUV	Councillor Ron McDowell
20	IND	Councillor Paul McCusker

Climate and City Resilience Committee

1	Sinn Féin	Chairperson	Councillor Róis-Marie Donnelly
2	Sinn Féin	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Áine McCabe
3	Sinn Féin		Councillor Séanna Walsh
4	Sinn Féin		Councillor Bronach Anglin
5	Sinn Féin		Councillor Micheal Donnelly
6	Sinn Féin		Councillor Nichola Bradley
7	Sinn Féin		Councillor Geraldine McAteer
8	Democratic Unionist Party		Councillor Sarah Bunting
9	Democratic Unionist Party		Councillor Ruth Brooks
10	Democratic Unionist Party		Councillor Sammy Douglas
11	Democratic Unionist Party		Alderman Frank McCoubrey
12	Alliance		Councillor Michael Long
13	Alliance		Councillor Tara Brooks
14	Alliance		Councillor Christine Bower
15	Alliance		Councillor David Bell
16	SDLP		Councillor Dónal Lyons
17	SDLP		Councillor Paul Doherty
18	Green		Councillor Anthony Flynn
19	Ulster Unionist Party		Alderman Sonia Copeland
20	PBPA		Councillor Michael Collins

Standards and Business Committee

1	Democratic Unionist Party	Chairperson	Alderman James Lawlor
2	Sinn Féin	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor JJ Magee
3	Sinn Féin		Councillor Ronan McLaughlin
4	Sinn Féin		Councillor Micheal Donnelly
5	Sinn Féin		Councillor Ryan Murphy
6	Sinn Féin		Councillor Nichola Bradley
7	Sinn Féin		Councillor Geraldine McAteer
8	Sinn Féin		Councillor Pádraig Donnelly
9	Democratic Unionist Party		Councillor Tracy Kelly
10	Democratic Unionist Party		Alderman Dean McCullough

11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Andrew McCormick
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Davy Douglas
13	Alliance	Councillor Fiona McAteer
14	Alliance	Councillor Jenna Maghie
15	Alliance	Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown
16	SDLP	Councillor Séamas de Faoite
17	SDLP	Councillor Dónal Lyons
18	Green	Councillor Áine Groogan
19	Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Jim Rodgers
20	IND	Councillor Paul McCusker

The Council agreed to appoint the Members to the Council's Standing Committees for 2024/2025, as set out above.

Change of Membership on Outside Bodies

The Chief Executive advised the Council that notification had been received from the Alliance Party indicating that it wished Councillor Abernethy to replace Councillor McMullan on:

- the Fairtrade Steering Group;
- the Shared City Partnership; and
- the Eastside Partnership.

He also advised the Council that notification had been received from the Democratic Unionist Party indicating that it wished:

- Councillor R. Brooks to replace Councillor Bunting on the Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor;
- Councillor Verner to replace Councillor D. Douglas on the Community Planning Partnership; and
- that it wished to give up its position on ARC21 as it was unable to nominate a Member who could attend during working hours.

The Council approved the aforementioned changes.

Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th and 31st May, 2024, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Verner,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 2nd May, be approved and adopted.

**Blanchflower Stadium –
Preferential Use Agreement**

At the request of a Member, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Needs Based Assessment, which would be brought back for the Committee's consideration, would include an analysis based on gender.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor de Faoite
Seconded by Smyth and

Resolved - That the decision under the heading "Update on Events Social Value Levy Fund" be amended to provide that, in relation to the Ormeau Park fees, discussion be held between the Councillors representing the Botanic, Titanic and Lisnasharragh District Electoral Areas before going to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 2nd May were thereupon approved and adopted.

Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Nelson
Seconded by Councillor Duffy, and

Resolved- That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 8th and 29th May, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Carson
Seconded by Councillor Murphy, and

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

Minutes of Standards and Business Committee

Moved by Alderman Lawlor,
Seconded by Councillor Kelly,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 23rd May, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor de Faoite,
Seconded by Councillor Doherty,

That the decision under the heading "Official Announcements", be rejected.

On a vote by show of hands, six Members voted for the amendment and forty-eight against, and it was accordingly declared lost.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 23rd May were thereupon approved and adopted.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson