

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

15th April, 2025

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room, City Hall and remotely via Teams on Friday, 18th April, 2025 at 9.30 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. Restricted Items

- (a) Summer Community Diversionary Programme Assessments (To Follow)
- (b) Social Supermarket Fund 2025/26 (Pages 1 - 30)
- (c) Support for businesses affected by August disorder - update (Pages 31 - 34)
- (d) Medium Term Financial Plan Update 2025/26 – 2028/29 (Pages 35 - 42)
- (e) Organisational Reviews and Change Programme (Pages 43 - 50)

- (f) Update on Employees on Temporary Contracts and Agency Workers (Pages 51 - 70)
 - (g) Belfast Place Based Growth Proposition - Update (To Follow)
 - (h) Bonfire Update (To Follow)
 - (i) Belfast Stories Outline Business Case Update (Pages 71 - 78)
 - (j) Animation activity to support the Open Championship 2025 (To Follow)
3. **Matters referred back from Council/Motions**
- (a) Council Banking Arrangements/Ethical procurement framework (To Follow)
4. **Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**
- (a) Consultation Domestic rating measures (Pages 79 - 100)
 - (b) Smart Belfast: City Innovation programme (Pages 101 - 104)
 - (c) Extended Cultural Support Programme (To Follow)
 - (d) Planning Information (Pages 105 - 120)
 - (e) Horizon Cities@Heart Project (Pages 121 - 124)
 - (f) Summer Schemes additional needs (Pages 125 - 130)
5. **Physical Programme and Asset Management**
- (a) Physical Programme Update (Pages 131 - 158)
 - (b) Assets Report (Pages 159 - 174)
6. **Finance, Procurement and Performance**
- (a) Contracts Update (Pages 175 - 188)
7. **Equality and Good Relations**
- (a) Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting on 7th April 2025 (Pages 189 - 210)
8. **Operational Issues**
- (a) Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum (Pages 211 - 216)
 - (b) Requests for use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality (Pages 217 - 222)
 - (c) Use of the Cenotaph for Irish Guards (Pages 223 - 224)
 - (d) Minutes of the Meeting of the Disability Working Group 09.04.24 (Pages 225 - 226)

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Consultation on Domestic rating measures
Date:	18 th April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance
Contact Officer:	Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to approve the draft response to the Department of Finance Consultation on Domestic rating
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to:

	<p>(i) consider the draft consultation response which has been submitted as a draft response in-line with the closing date for consultation; and</p> <p>(ii) approve its formal submission, subject to any comments or amendments provided at Committee.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	On 7 th November 2023 on seven proposals on the revenue raising potential associated with the removal of rating measures. The Council responded to this consultation in January 2024.
3.2	In January 2025 the Finance Minister issued supplementary consultation on two domestic rating measures.
3.3	This consultation paper puts forward two preferred proposals for change. An elevation of the current maximum capital value of £400,000 to £485,000, and the reduction of the current level of Early Payment Discount from 4% to 2%.
3.4	Having reviewed the consultation document, it allows the council to provide a written response instead of completing the online questionnaire. On that basis a draft response has been included at Appendix 1 based on the Councils response to the Consultation on Non-domestic and Domestic rating measures to support budget sustainability by raising additional revenue.
3.5	Appendix 2 is the consultation document produced by the Department of Finance.
3.6	The closing date for this consultation is the 25 th of April 2025.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.7	None
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.8	To be determined by the Department of Finance.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Draft Consultation Response
	Appendix 2 – Supplementary Consultation on Domestic Rating Measures

Proposal 1. Should the maximum capital value be:

- 1) increased to the preferred option of £485,000 so that the highest domestic rates bill here is in line with the highest bill within the Council Tax system;**
- 2) removed in its entirety;**
- 3) increased, but not as high as a maximum capital value of £485,000;**
- 4) increased, but to a higher level than a maximum capital value of £485,000; or**
- 5) retained at a level of £400,000 (i.e. no change should be implemented).**

This Council notes that, for ordinary domestic Belfast rate payers, it is a struggle to make ends meet at present, especially with rates reaching 7.99% in 2023/2024. For the better off in society, rates are not such a struggle to pay.

There is a maximum capital value cap on Domestic Rates known as the Max Cap, which is currently set at £400,000, that limits the rates those in more affluent homes are compelled to pay. The Max Cap has not been altered since 2009. It is prescribed in legislation: The Rates (Maximum Capital Value) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007, as amended.

A rebalancing of the rates burden needs to take place so that all rate payers pay their fair share. There is no good reason for the poorer to pay more in percentage terms when they are struggling financially

Proposal 2. Should the Level of Early Payment Discount be:

- 1) reduced to the preferred option of 2%;**
- 2) reduced but to a level lower than 2%;**
- 3) reduced but to a level higher than 2%;**
- 4) increased;**
- 5) removed entirely via primary legislation; or**
- 6) kept at 4%**

The council's view is the discount should be removed immediately. Those affected can elect to pay by instalments. In an earlier consultation the DOF expressed the view that the removal of early payment discount would eliminate a major disincentive

in the take up of direct debit payment. If that is the case it should result in significant administrative savings for LPS.

It may increase the number of reminder notices and court actions, but the impact will be minimal



Land &
Property
Services
Seirbhísí
Talún agus
Maoine



Department of
Finance
An Roinn
Airgeadais
www.finance-ni.gov.uk

Supplementary Consultation on Domestic Rating Measures

JANUARY 2025



Contents

Ministerial foreword	03
Overview of current rating system	04
Executive summary	05
About this consultation	06
Proposal One	08
Questions on Proposal One	13
Proposal Two	14
Questions on Proposal Two	17



Ministerial Foreword

On 9 December 2024 I outlined my [Strategic Roadmap for the Rating system](#) to the Assembly.

I am determined to build a progressive rates system for both households and businesses. I want to do this based on the principles of fairness and equity, and to ensure that the rates system as a whole aligns with the Executive's policy objectives, stimulates our economy and supports the growth of our taxbase, while providing appropriate support for those who need it.

My immediate focus in this consultation paper is to consult upon my preferred short-term reforms, following that considered assessment. These measures are built on analysis of the consultation findings last year, along with supplementary engagement undertaken by my Department since I took up Ministerial office.

This consultation paper puts forward two preferred proposals for change. An elevation of the current maximum capital value of £400,000 to £485,000, and the reduction of the current level of Early Payment Discount from 4% to 2%. Both measures raise additional revenue, but in my view do so in a proportionate and progressive way, utilising the full features of the tax.

This supplementary consultation builds on the previous 14 week consultation for a

further period of 12 weeks bringing the total consultation period for these two policy areas over the last year to 26 weeks.

I am keen to ensure as much engagement with stakeholders and representative groups as possible in this period so that we can progress policy with as full an understanding of the impact on households. As part of that process, I also want to seek views and evidence on the draft impact screening work, published alongside this document, so that we can take any mitigation steps in that context.

Following this it will be for the Executive to make the final decisions on any changes.

After this consultation my plan is for further work to be progressed which will see a comprehensive rolling review of every single rate support measure within both the domestic and non-domestic taxbases.

It is important to stress that review does not mean removal. Critically at this time though, every pound government spends on rate support means reduced revenue for vital public services. As Finance Minister it is my job to make sure our rate supports are achieving desirable policy outcomes and deliver for our citizens and businesses.

Finally, and to complement this work, I also announced in my statement to the Assembly my intention to commence immediate preparatory work within Land & Property Services on the revaluation of domestic property. This would allow revised domestic capital values to come into operation in April 2030 and enhance fairness in the rating system.

I look forward to considering the views on the two domestic measures within this consultation paper, and in working with stakeholders on the wider process.

Overview of the current rating system

The rating system here is a devolved tax with no direct links to similar taxation systems in England, Scotland or Wales. There are two different rates levied here: a domestic rate for residential properties and a non-domestic rate for businesses.

The total amount of revenue collected through both domestic and non-domestic rates locally is now over £1.5 billion, with just over 45% of this being funded by domestic rating. This is used to pay for both local district council services as well as regional services delivered by the Executive such as education, health and roads.

Regional Rate revenue alone provides approximately 4% of the Executive's public spending. A high-level breakdown of total rating revenue raised in 2023/24 (the last full rating year at the time of writing) is provided in the following table:

SOURCE	REVENUE
Non-Domestic Rating	£827M
Domestic Rating	£683M
Total	£1,510M

In our rating system each domestic property has an individual capital value (CV) assessed, and ratepayers are charged rates based on these assessed values. The CV reflects the value of the property as at 1 January 2005, that is, the valuation date for domestic rating. To ensure the rate burden is distributed fairly and consistently, new property being valued for rates purposes is also valued at 1 January 2005 levels.

Land & Property Services (LPS), within the Department of Finance, administers the rates system and has little discretion in doing so as everything is governed by legislation

or case law, some of which goes back over 100 years. Rates paid by households and businesses make a vital contribution to funding the local public services delivered by the Executive and District Councils.

There is harmonisation with England, Scotland and Wales in relation to valuation practice and procedure for business rates, as far as legislation permits. However, the domestic rating system here is unique compared to England, Scotland and Wales where Council Tax, a banded valuation system of property taxation, is used and where households also pay additional, separate charges for water and sewerage.

The systems of reliefs and exemptions are similar in their policy intent, but different in the specifics of how they operate in practice. Many of our reliefs are tailored to mitigate the impacts of a system based on individual discrete capital values being applied to each domestic property. Reliefs, allowances, and exemptions are also seen as the main means through which the rating system can be used as a tool of social, economic and environmental policy. Those differences have developed over many years because of different policies and priorities set by Westminster and the Executive at various points in time.

Providing any rate relief means either foregoing revenue or charging other ratepayers more. An exemption or relief is often viewed from the perspective of who it benefits, but there is a real cost, as every pound raised through the rating system stays here as a resource to help pay for hospitals, schools, and other essential regional services.

Executive summary

In November 2023 the Department of Finance consulted on 7 rates proposals: 4 in the non-domestic sector and 3 in the domestic sector.

The consultation process was advertised in the local press and attracted a significant amount of coverage in local and national media, and social media; it launched on 7 November 2023.

The Department offered in-person consultation events and delivered 8 public briefings including with Councils, Chambers of Commerce and business organisations, and received valuable feedback. Online meetings were also held as part of the process.

1,406 written responses were received by the closing date for the consultation. Responses were received from individual ratepayers, district councils, businesses, voluntary and community organisations and professional bodies.

The associated summary consultation report was published on 10 September 2024.

[Revenue Raising Consultation Summary Report \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Despite the very specific scope of the consultation process, the process served to refresh and inform thinking to help assess how the domestic and non-domestic rating systems operate, and to gain fresh sectoral insights into changes that may be required. This paper now builds on that process, and the feedback to the Department received as part of it. It aims to garner additional

input, by way of supplementary consultation, in relation to two proposals refining policy proposals put forward previously.

The two proposals being looked at by the Department in this supplementary consultation are:

- an increase in the maximum capital value, as opposed to a full removal of the maximum capital value; and
- a reduction in the Early Payment Discount to 2% as opposed to a full removal of the Early Payment Discount.

Further resources

For more general information about the rating system here, the following document may be useful:

[A guide to rates | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

About this consultation

Who can respond to this consultation?

The Department of Finance is seeking views on these proposals from all interested parties, individuals and groups on the matters covered by this consultation.

Purpose of this consultation

The proposals set out here will have a direct impact on many people's lives. The Department of Finance recognises the need to keep the public informed on such important matters and to allow people the opportunity to comment on the policy proposals. This consultation therefore invites people to answer a number of questions in relation to the changes. The questions are posed at the end of each section

Scope of the consultation

The consultation applies to all, whether a member of the public, a business, organisations or professional bodies.

Duration of the consultation

As this is a supplementary consultation building on the 14 week consultation that took place in November 2023, it will run for a period of 12 weeks, bringing the total time for both consultations to 26 weeks.

The consultation will close to responses on 25th April 2025.

How to respond to this consultation

You can respond to this consultation online through the link to Citizen Space provided after the questions in each section.

You can also send your consultation responses to:

Domestic Rating Consultation
Land & Property Services
Department of Finance
Lanyon Plaza
7 Lanyon Place
Belfast, BT1 3LP

When responding, please state whether you are doing so as an individual, or representing the views of an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled. We will acknowledge your response.

The consultation document will be available in other formats upon request. You can email any queries to: ratingpolicy@finance-ni.gov.uk

Draft impact screening assessments have been made available on the consultation website. See Department of Finance (finance-ni.gov.uk) for all related papers, which can also be obtained in hardcopy on request, using the contact details above.

How we consult

Consultation principles

- consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage;
- the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit intelligent consideration and response;
- consultation is only part of a process of engagement;
- adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and
- government responses should be published in a timely fashion.

Confidentiality

Your rights

Under the Data Protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it;
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data;
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing;
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be ‘erased’;
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability; and
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

DoF Privacy Notice

The DoF Privacy Notice, explaining how we use your personal data, can be viewed at: [Department of Finance Privacy Notice | Department of Finance \(\[finance-ni.gov.uk\]\(http://finance-ni.gov.uk\)\)](#)

Proposal One

Increasing the maximum capital value cap (“the cap” or “max cap”) within the domestic rating system from £400,000 to £485,000



Policy Background

Domestic rate bills are calculated based on, among other things, the capital value of a property. LPS assesses capital values at a given date, currently 1 January 2005. Occupiers of domestic property with an assessed capital value of more than £400,000 are billed for rates as if the property was valued at £400,000.

This “maximum capital value” had a 2023/24 cost – in terms of revenue foregone – of approximately £11M, of which £5.4M is a cost to the Executive.

It applies to over 8,000 domestic properties here.

Parity

There is no direct parity with the position in England, Scotland and Wales as they have Council Tax rather than domestic rates. Council Tax uses a banded value system: with 8 bands in England and Scotland, and 9 bands in Wales. Both systems however are used to pay for government services by way of a tax linked to property.

Domestic rates here are instead assessed on individual discrete property values. The Council Tax banding system has the effect of putting in place a cap as every property in the highest band, regardless of what it is worth, pays the same amount of Council Tax “in each Local Authority area.

When it was introduced, the rationale for the cap was to ensure that no ratepayer here would pay more than the average highest band Council Tax bill. Currently, the highest domestic rate bill here is a maximum £4,444 per annum. The highest Council Tax assessment resulting from the banded system of values that applies in England, Scotland and Wales is £5,435 per annum.

Consultation on Revenue Raising

The overview of the points made in the previous consultation on the potential *removal* of the Maximum Capital Value were as follows:

In terms of the points in favour of the removal of the Maximum Capital Value these included that:

- it would make tax more progressive / equitable, and that the current capping of the rate makes the tax inherently regressive with the wealthy paying a lower percentage of their income on property tax;
- there was a view that the wealthiest will always want to live in the most sought-after homes regardless of cost, i.e. status competition would see rates paid;
- at a minimum there was scope for an alignment with highest bills in Council Tax;
- an annual inflationary increase could be applied to ensure capped bills track inflation.

In terms of the points against the removal of the Maximum Capital Value these included that:

- owners of larger properties do not avail of any extra services – and potentially less if rural/remote location;
- this could result in housing “crash” or long-term deterioration of housing stock at the top end of the domestic market;
- it could lead to cap properties broken up into multiple apartments or vacated to deteriorate and become derelict;
- there are genuine cases of people in cap properties with limited ability to pay increased charge with some being asset rich but income poor;
- there was a feeling of poor value for money in government services from councils and central government in current level of charge;
- there was a fear that this change would create “golden ghettos” where only the “super-rich” can afford to live due to rates charges;
- there were issues with average comparisons with England given wage gap, etc.

Policy Principles

The policy aim of the maximum capital value is to create an upper limit to the tax. This is in recognition of the fact that, although a property tax, it remains a mechanism utilised by the Executive, and more directly councils, to fund services.

The current cap of £400,000 had a stated policy rationale of aligning with the average bills in the highest taxation band within the Council Tax system.

The original cap of £500,000 had the policy rationale of aligning with the highest bills in the highest taxation band within the Council Tax system. It was then lowered by the Executive in 2009 through legislation which reduced it to the current £400,000 level.

Proposal

In determining an upper threshold for our rating system, the Department takes the view that comparison with Council Tax charges remains valid for the Executive in determining the upper level of the tax.

Acknowledging the progressive taxation principles which underpinned the development of the capital value system the Department is not proposing that the maximum capital value be removed entirely (as proposed in the previous consultation under the direction of the then Secretary of State).

Instead, it is limiting its proposal in this area to more closely align with the principle behind the original Maximum Capital Value that operated until April 2009. Due to intervening uplifts in the rate poundages here since a £500,000 cap was last implemented back in 2007, an alignment with the highest bill across England, Scotland and Wales in 2024/25 can be implemented by elevating the local maximum capital value from £400,000 to a threshold of £485,000.

There are around 3,600 properties with a capital value of between £400,000 and £485,000. That level of cap would set the highest bill here i.e. those with a £485,000 value (using poundage levels at the time of writing) at a range of between **£4,220** and **£5,389** per annum across the 11 District Councils.

Those remaining properties with a value in excess of £485,000 (there are around 4,500 of these) would also only pay the additional amount up to the new maximum threshold of £485,000, i.e. at a range of between **£4,220** and **£5,389** per annum depending upon the council area in which they are located.

This would bring the highest bill within the devolved domestic rating system to just under the highest bill within the Council Tax system, which in 2024/25 is an assessment of **£5,435¹** per annum.

At individual account level for a property rising from a £400,000 valuation to a £485,000 valuation (i.e. the maximum effect from the change) results in a maximum additional weekly cost of between **£14.23** and **£18.15**.

The change is estimated to generate in the region of £2M per annum in revenue savings for the Executive on the basis of current poundages (and an equivalent amount for District Councils distributed in relation to the location of the properties impacted by the maximum capital value). The precise level of savings will however only be determined once the change has fully interacted with other support provision within the rating system as increased costs may be incurred due to their mitigating function (see below).

While this generates a small amount of revenue in relative terms, the revenue raised per annum, by elevating the maximum capital value, could, for example be offset against general increases in the regional rate poundage that affects the whole taxbase, thus utilising the progressive features of a tax system underpinned by discrete individual capital values.

¹ In Wales <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Local-Government/Finance/Council-Tax/Levels/counciltaxlevels-by-billingauthority-band>

Continued application of existing mitigation measures

When the capital value system was introduced in 2007, it contained support measures designed as mitigations. The subsequent Executive Review of Rating also implemented further policy changes and made policy adjustments. The mitigating measures which operate alongside the system of capital value rating, and in addition to a maximum capital value at present are:

- means tested support for those of working age;²
- enhanced means tested support for pensioners (including the low income relief scheme for pensioners where capital/savings are permitted of up to £50,000);³
- a lone pensioner allowance of 20%;⁴
- a disabled persons allowance of 25%;⁵
- farmhouse allowance;⁶

It should be noted that means-tested and other forms of domestic support continue to operate regardless of a property's capital value and will continue to perform the function of mitigation for those on low incomes.

Where there is an increase in rates liability, other support provided will rise to take account of the new liability level.

A more detailed consideration of these points is also contained within the supplementary material provided with the Impact Screening work for this consultation.

Further information

[Valuation of domestic properties for rates | nidirect](#)

[How rate bills are calculated | nidirect](#)

² <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/how-much-housing-benefit-and-rate-relief-homeowner-can-get>

³ <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/help-rates-pensioners>

⁴ <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/lone-pensioner-allowance>

⁵ <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/disabled-persons-allowance>

⁶ <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/domestic-capital-value-farmhouses-questionnaire>

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

SHOULD THE MAXIMUM CAPITAL VALUE BE:

- 1** increased to the preferred option of £485,000 so that the highest domestic rates bill here is in line with the highest bill within the Council Tax system;
- 2** removed in its entirety;
- 3** increased, but not as high as a maximum capital value of £485,000;
- 4** increased, but to a higher level than a maximum capital value of £485,000; or
- 5** retained at a level of £400,000 (i.e. no change should be implemented).

Click to answer questions 

Impact screening

A fresh initial Draft Impact Assessment screening exercise has been conducted on this proposal in light of new taxbase analysis. That screening documentation has been published alongside this consultation document. Evidence from consultees is sought on this area to inform this work.

Proposal Two

Reduction in the Early Payment
Discount from 4% to 2%



Policy Background

If domestic ratepayers make payment in full, in a single amount, by a date specified on the rate bill, then a discount of 4% is applied to the rate bill.

This is a longstanding feature of the domestic rating system which was put in place to encourage ratepayers to pay in a single amount early in the rating year as this was administratively less complex and less expensive than managing installments. Over the years, payment by Direct Debit, which is the most efficient method of collection, has become a more popular payment method among ratepayers. In 2023/24, the last full rating year, over 163,000 ratepayers (18.7%) availed of the early payment discount.

The cost in 2023/24 was over £8M. It is paid for entirely by the Executive. The cost of this discount fluctuates from year to year, depending on how many ratepayers take advantage of it.

Parity

There is no central government equivalent discount in the Council Tax system. Some Local Authorities may choose to offer their own “lump sum incentive” but it is not a statutory feature of the system. Such an incentive is now rarely provided and those examples of it being applied have tended to sit at a level of 1.5%.

Prior Consultation on Revenue Raising

The overview of the points made in the previous consultation on this issue were as follows:

In terms of the points in favour of the removal of the Early Payment Discount (EPD) these included that:

- it was of no benefit except to ratepayers with more income/disposable income;
- most people cannot afford to take advantage of the discount;
- there was a significant overall cost to maintain the small discount at individual level;
- the scale of discount doesn't act as a real incentive;
- it costs less to administer Direct Debit once they are set up and so there should be no incentives for other payment methods.

In terms of the points against the removal of the Early Payment Discount these included that:

- the Executive and Councils would lose an immediate hit of revenue at outset of year;
- it would discourage the payment of rates early by those able to avail of the discount;
- it would create an administrative impact of having to administer an additional 163,000 monthly payments;
- the value of £1 today is worth more than the value of £1 tomorrow;
- this measure significantly helps people budget.

Proposal

The policy no longer aligns with modern accounting methods within government, and for some years the Department's publicly stated preferred payment method has been Direct Debit.⁷

The preferred policy option in relation to this measure is the reduction of the allowance to 2%.

The Department would intend to monitor the impact of that reduction carefully with a view to abolishing the discount entirely in future years via Primary Legislation.

The objective of the change is primarily revenue raising, generating an additional £4M per annum in revenue savings if implemented.

Continued application of existing mitigation measures

The Early Payment Discount is not intended as a tax relief, instead it is an incentive mechanism which dates back to a point in time when there was a benefit, in accounting terms, of receiving cash payment at an early stage.

The Department no longer wishes to retain this incentive, as Direct Debit is the preferred mechanism by which to collect rates due to the lower administrative cost to the Department and Councils. The mitigation in relation to people moving off Early Payment Discount is the retained ability in the system to make installment payment across 10 months. This permits households affected by the change in the allowance to budget across the course of the rating year instead of by the discount cut off date if they so wish. At individual level the proposed reduction of 2% is worth an average of £25 per annum.

Further information

[Rates discount deadline approaching | nidirect](#)

Interaction with other support measures







There is no direct interaction with other support measures. The early payment discount is applied after any other allowances or supports which the ratepayer may be entitled to. The early payment discount has no bearing on the underlying tax regime.

It is accepted that some ratepayers may be affected by both the changes proposed in this supplementary consultation paper, should they benefit from the maximum capital value of £400,000 and then utilise the Early Payment Discount mechanism. The mitigating step of the right to payment by instalment remains open to these ratepayers as it does to all others in respect of any revised liability.

⁷In terms of that preferred payment method of Direct Debit ("DD") of the 846,745 domestic properties in the taxbase, 332,344 pay by DD Instalment this represents 39.2% of the whole taxbase. If DD single payment cases are included, the percentage paying by this method increases to 43.7% (a total of 369,739 properties paying by DD Single or Instalment).

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

SHOULD THE LEVEL OF EARLY PAYMENT DISCOUNT BE:

- | | |
|---|---|
|  1 reduced to the preferred option of 2%; |  4 increased; |
|  2 reduced but to a level lower than 2%; |  5 removed entirely via primary legislation; or |
|  3 reduced but to a level higher than 2%; |  6 kept at 4% |

Click to answer questions 

Impact screening

A fresh initial Draft Impact Assessment screening exercise has been conducted on this proposal in light of new taxbase analysis. That screening documentation has been published alongside this consultation document. Evidence from consultees is sought on this area to inform this work.



Land &
Property
Services
Seirbhísí
Talún agus
Maoine



Department of
Finance
An Roinn
Airgeadais
www.finance-ni.gov.uk





Subject:	Smart Belfast: City Innovation programme update
Date:	18 April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Mark McCann, City Innovation Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek approval to accept a Contract for Funding to deliver Phase 2 of Belfast 5G Innovation Regions programme; and to update on a number of inclusive innovation opportunities.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve that Belfast City Council's acceptance of a £1.3 million contract for funding from the Dept for Science, Innovation & Technology (DSIT) to deliver Phase 2 of Belfast 5G Innovation Regions programme and to note the related work strands. 2. Note Belfast City Council's proposed contribution to a bid by Newcastle University's i30 team to the Economic and Social Research Council to deliver a £85,000 programme to inform approaches to inclusive innovation by City Deal and similar innovation investments.
3.0	Main report
3.1	The Smart Belfast Urban Innovation programme encourages collaboration between government, industry, SMEs, academia, and communities. The aim is to harness digital innovation to address public policy challenges, while at the same time encouraging greater investment in innovation to stimulate economic growth. The approach seeks to leverage significant third-party funding.
3.2	<p>Contract for Funding to deliver Phase 2 of the Belfast 5G Innovation Regions programme</p> <p>The Department of Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) has offered a Contract for Funding to Belfast City Council for £1.3 million to deliver phase two of the Belfast 5G Innovation Regions programme.</p>
3.3	Members will recall that under Phase 1, Belfast City Council was awarded £3.8m to deliver a twelve-month programme. The majority of this funding was issued by Belfast City Council as grants to third-party organisations to deliver a range of 5G projects which were showcased at City Hall on 5 March. In addition, £50,880 was contracted via the G-Cloud public procurement framework for grant design services, while a further £401,400 was procured via the NI Dept of Finance's Public Shared Services Network to deliver programme management and Enablement Services for Phase 1.
3.4	<p>For Phase 2 a revised approach has been accepted by DSIT that will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for a Belfast City Council programme manager a 12 month period. • £650,000 for 'Public Services innovation hub' based at Cecil Ward / 9 Adelaide which will deliver a small number of 5G-enabled projects focused on issues such as dynamic occupancy management, energy management, environmental monitoring, etc. Work is underway to identify those projects most likely to contribute to Council's efficiency programme. • A £300,000 grant scheme for Belfast region organisations (including SMEs and local councils) to deliver their own 5G-enabled use cases. The City Innovation Office are also engaging with Belfast Region City Deal partners to consider leveraging additional funding from the Digital pillar to increase this total.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DSIT funding will also fund 'Solution Designer' services for organisations and companies to identify project proposals for the grant scheme.
3.5	Members are asked to approve acceptance of the Contract for Funding. Following signing of the contract the programme will run through to 31 March 2026.
	Towards an Inclusive Innovation approach
3.6	In January, in collaboration with the Innovation Commissioner, Adrian Johnston, the City Innovation Office hosted a workshop for Members and city stakeholders to consider approaches to inclusive innovation. Following that event CIO has continued to engage with local and national experts and practitioners in order to inform future Council, City Deal and ICB approaches to inclusion.
3.7	The Council has been approached by one of the participating organisations at the conference. 'i30' - a collaboration between Newcastle University, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Oslo and EAFIT University. i30 has been particularly interested in how 'City Deal'-type investments have supported inclusive innovation ambitions in cities in the UK and elsewhere. Their work is helping Newcastle City Council to shape its social inclusion strategy, while their work with Pittsburgh is ensuring that that their city's innovation district is having wider social impact.
3.8	i30 has submitted a £85,000 proposal to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) that seeks to build on their existing work to deliver a range of tools, policy guidance and practice that can support cities in delivering their inclusive innovation outcomes. i30 is keen for Belfast to be part of this bid and has requested a £2,999 financial contribution to their bid plus officer time from both Belfast City Council and the Innovation Commissioner. Funding for this has been identified in the City Innovation Office budget. Members are asked to note that a decision from ESRC is expected in late April and, if successful, further information on the i30 programme will be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.9	Resources for the initiatives have been identified within the existing departmental budgets.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.10	Not at this stage.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Planning Information
Date:	18 April 2025
Reporting Officer(s):	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer(s):	Ed Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management)

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To provide an update on Major planning applications and applications that have been determined by the Planning Committee.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The report is for notation.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	The Committee received an update on Planning Performance at its meeting on the 27 th August 2024. At that meeting and previously, the Committee sought a regular update on Major applications and applications that have been determined by the Planning Committee, especially those where a Decision Notice has yet to be issued.
3.2	All Major applications must be determined by the Planning Committee. The Key Performance Indicator (given in weeks) is calculated from when an application is considered to be valid to when the Decision Notice ("Green Form") is issued. This means that any delays either pre- or post- committee will impact on the KPI. The target for determining a Major application is 30 weeks.
	<u>Major applications</u>
3.3	Appendix 1 sets out the Major applications that are currently with the Council to determine. Details are given on the location, proposal, the validation date and target date for determination (using the 30 week target set out in the Key Performance Indicator) as well as a status update.
	<u>Applications determined by Committee</u>
3.4	Appendix 2 sets out the applications that have been determined by Committee since February 2022 which are yet to issue. For completeness information is also given on those applications determined by Committee which have had their Decision Notice issued. Details are given on the time taken (in weeks) to bring the applications before Committee and where decisions are yet to be issued, information is given relating to the main reason for the delay.
	<u>Conclusion</u>
3.5	This report will be brought to each Planning Committee and to each Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for information on an ongoing basis
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.6	There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.7	There are no equality or good relations / rural needs implications associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Major planning applications at April 2025 Appendix 2 – Applications determined by Committee at April 2025

This page is intentionally left blank

Live Major Applications not previously considered by Committee @ 11.03.25

Number	Application No.	Category	Location	Proposal	Date Valid	Target Date	Status
1	LA04/2022/0809/F	Major	Lands to the south and west of Woodland Grange to the north of Blacks Gate and to the east of Moor Park Mews Belfast.	Amendments to approved schemes ref. Z/2008/0993/F (erection of 53 No. dwellings) & ref. Z/2013/0120/F (erection of 46 No. dwellings); to reduce overall density from 99 No. dwellings to 94 No. dwellings and associated and ancillary works.	21-Apr-22	17-Nov-22	UNDER CONSIDERATION
2	LA04/2023/2633/F	Major	St Teresa's GAC, 2 Glen Road Heights, Belfast BT11 8ER	Proposed extension to existing clubhouse to provide indoor sports hall, changing rooms, reception, and fitness suite. Proposed relocation of grass pitch and new 4G training pitch with integrated ball walls. Proposed annex building with club store and matchday shop. Site works including increased parking, fencing, catch nets, floodlighting, dugouts, paths, and other associated amenities.	14-Mar-23	10-Oct-23	UNDER CONSIDERATION
3	LA04/2023/3799/F	Major	Vacant lands (partial site of the former Wolfhill Flax Spinning Mill) located to the south, of Wolfhill Manor, north of Wolfhill Grove and west of Mill Avenue, Ligoniel Road, Belfast, BT14 8NR	New single storey 10-class based primary school, separate nursery school accommodation and school meals accommodation to facilitate the relocation of St. Vincent De Paul Primary School and Nursery from existing site on Ligoniel Road, Belfast. Proposal includes new pedestrian and vehicular accesses onto Mill Avenue, car parking, covered cycle storage area and hard play areas. Hard and soft landscaping including wildlife walkway, fencing, retaining walls, underground drainage system to include the reinstatement of underground storm sewer and headwall into adjacent DFI River wayleave. Includes temporary contractors compound and all associated site works.	09-Oct-23	06-May-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
4	LA04/2023/4181/F	Major	Lands comprising the existing Sydenham Wastewater Pumping Station west of Park Avenue, Connswater River and King George V Playing Fields, to the south of the Sydenham By-Pass, east of The Oval football stadium, north and east of Parkgate Gardens and north of Parkgate Crescent, Parkgate Parade and Mersey Street, Belfast	Demolition of existing Wastewater Pumping Station (WwPS) with reinstatement of site as a landscaped area. Construction of a replacement WwPS including associated control building and hardstanding, the raising of site levels, in-channel works, provision of new rising main, other ancillary buildings, the creation of an access road on lands within the King George V Playing Fields to serve the facility, landscaping and other ancillary works. Provision of a temporary working area on lands within the King George V Playing Fields, the creation of a temporary access road from Mersey Street to facilitate construction traffic on lands to the rear of 1-35 Parkgate Gardens, the creation of a temporary footway adjacent to 88 Park Avenue and other ancillary development and landscaping restoration works.	14-Nov-23	11-Jun-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
5	LA04/2024/0015/F	Major	Lands at Cabin Hill, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4	Erection of 53 residential units (including 43 dwellings and 10 apartments) including creation of access, internal roads, landscaping and associated works (amended description and plans).	22-Dec-23	19-Jul-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
6	LA04/2024/0211/F	Major	Existing Football Stadium The Oval Parkgate Drive Belfast BT4 1EW.	Redevelopment of the existing stadium by way of demolition of both existing stands and construction of two new spectator stands with reconfiguration of existing standing terracing at goal ends, new turnstiles and associated siteworks including new floodlighting, additional car parking and improved circulation routes to provide an overall capacity for 6000 spectators on site.	15-Mar-24	11-Oct-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION

7	LA04/2024/0285/F	Major	Ardoyne Youth Club, Old Beltex Mill, Flax Street, Belfast, BT14 7EJ	Demolition of existing building and erection of a new purpose-built youth facility including retention of existing chimney. (Renewal of planning permission reference LA04/2018/1998/F)	20-Feb-24	17-Sep-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
8	LA04/2024/0429/F	Major	Lands bound by North Street, Royal Avenue, Rosemary Street and building south of Lower Garfield Street located approximately 400m west of Laganside bus station 300m northeast of City Hall and 1km northwest of Central Train Station.	Renewal of planning permission LA04/2017/2126/F (Phase 1B Tribeca) for redevelopment including the construction of a new six storey building on the existing surface level car park, part change of use to create a mixed use development comprising retail units, restaurants and cafes, residential units, offices, church and related community floor space, new streets and public realm works. Demolition of 53 Royal Avenue and 27-31 Rosemary Street and restoration of Central Halls (37-39 Rosemary Street), Masonic Hall (15 Rosemary Street), 43/43a Rosemary Street and retention of 30-34 North Street.	08-Mar-24	04-Oct-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
9	LA04/2024/0569/O	Major	STORMONT HOTEL 587 UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD BALLYCLOGHAN BELFAST BT4 3LP	Outline planning permission with all matters reserved for independent living and assisted living retirement apartments (Use Class C3), associated internal access roads, communal open space, revised access from Castlevue Road, associated car parking, servicing, amenity space and landscaping.	04-Apr-24	31-Oct-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
10	LA04/2024/0570/F	Major	Stormont Hotel, 587 Upper Newtownards Road BT4 3LP and adjacent properties at Castlevue Road (nos. 2, 4, 6, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28 & 30), Summerhill Parade (nos. 18, 20 & 22), and Summerhill Park (nos. 37 & 39).	Change of use of from hotel, conference centre and offices (sui generis) to a 97-bed care home (Use Class C3(b)) and 1,559sqm diagnostic medical facility (Use Class D1(a)), associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space.	04-Apr-24	31-Oct-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
11	LA04/2024/0675/F	Major	The Arches Centre 11-13 Bloomfield Avenue, Belfast, BT5 5AA	Change of Use of first and second floor to 39 No. apartments; extension to second floor for 6 No. apartments and erection of new third floor for 19 No. apartments (all social housing dwellings, 64 No. in total), and ancillary/associated works. Solar panels on roof (amended plans and description).	13-May-24	09-Dec-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION
12	LA04/2024/0910/F	Major	70 whitewell Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 7ES Site at Hazelwood Integrated College	Redevelopment of Hazelwood Integrated College to include demolition of existing building and development of new school campus, new sports pitch, outdoor play areas, car parking, hard and soft landscaping and retention and refurbishment of the Listed Building (Graymount House) and other associated site works including a temporary mobile village during the construction process.	23-May-24	19-Dec-24	UNDER CONSIDERATION

13	LA04/2024/1385/F	Major	Olympic House, Titanic Quarter, 5 Queens Road, Belfast, BT3 9DH	Amendment to planning permission Z/2013/0931/F to permit occupation for Class B1(a) office and/or Class B1(c) research and development. (amended description)	09-Aug-24	07-Mar-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
14	LA04/2024/1592/F	Major	Marlborough House, (no. 28-32 Victoria Street), and no. 8 Marlborough Street, Belfast BT1 3GG	Residential development comprising the demolition of no. 8 Marlborough Street, partial demolition of existing Marlborough House, and the refurbishment of existing Listed Building (Princes Court) (3 storeys), for the erection of 103 no. apartments (mix of 1-bed, 2-bed and 3 bed units) (7 storeys), with provision of private amenity, and internal and external communal amenity spaces; and associated site and infrastructure works.	20-Sep-24	18-Apr-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
15	LA04/2024/1761/RM	Major	Land forming Plot 9 of the Kings Hall development as approved by LA04/2020/0845/O.	Application for approval of reserved matters application for a medical facility in accordance with outline planning permission LA04/2020/0845/O, seeking approval of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping details	15-Oct-24	13-May-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
16	LA04/2024/1836/F	Major	Lands between Ballygomartin Road and Upper Whiterock Road and to the west (rear) of Moyard Parade and New Barnsley Crescent, Belfast Co. Antrim BT13 3QZ	Proposed development of new walking trails linking Black Mountain Shared Space Project building (approved under LA04/2022/0853/F) on the Ballygomartin Road with the Upper Whiterock Road and Moyard Parade. Proposal to include gated accesses, stockproof fencing, seated areas, information signage, landscaping and associated site works.	25-Nov-24	23-Jun-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
	LA04/2024/2044/F	Major	Lands at 39 Corporation Street, Belfast, BT1 3BA	Erection of 895 room Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) across 9-20 storey building blocks with communal facilities, internal and external communal amenity space including landscaped courtyard and roof terraces and ancillary accommodation. With additional use outside term time (no more than 50% of the rooms) as short-term let accommodation and (no more than 50% of the rooms) accommodation for use by further or higher education institutions	26-Nov-24	24-Jun-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
18	LA04/2024/2077/F	Major	Adelaide Business Centre 2-6 Apollo Road, Belfast, BT12 6HP	Proposed change of use from office space to Bowling Alley, Restaurant, Indoor Golf, Children's Soft Play, VR Zone & Amusements, Smoking Area, Car Parking and Associated Site Works.	29-Jan-25	27-Aug-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
19	LA04/2024/2131/F	Major	38-52 Lisburn Road, Malone Lower, Belfast, BT9 6AA	Section 54 planning application to revise the wording of the planning condition numbers 13 and 15 (Relating access gradient and visibility splays) of planning approval LA04/2023/3778/F.	31-Jan-25	16-May-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION

20	LA04/2024/2134/F	Major	Site of the former Dunmurry Cricket Club, Ashley Park, Dunmurry, Belfast BT17 0QQ, located north of 1-10 Ashley Park and south of 1-20 Areema Grove and Areema Drive, Dunmurry.	Mixed use scheme for new community recreational facilities, including basketball court, parkland and residential development comprising 40no social/affordable housing units with landscaping and associated works.	21-Dec-24	19-Jul-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
21	LA04/2024/2145/F	Major	Lands at North Foreshore / Giant's Park Dargan Road, Belfast, BT3 9LZ	Creation of a new Adventure Park comprising a community / visitor hub building including café, creche, flexible exhibition / community space, ancillary office space and maintenance yard. Development includes community gardens, bmx track, crazy golf, dog park, walking/running/cycle paths, outdoor amphitheatre, bio diversity zones, and recreational facilities. Associated landscaping and infrastructure (drainage, lighting, car / coach parking, WC block etc).	15-Jan-25	13-Aug-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION
Page 12	LA04/2025/0012/F	Major	Lands at the Waterworks Park, located off the Cavehill Road; and lands at Alexandra Park, located between Castleton Gardens and Deacon Street; extending along Castleton Gardens and Camberwell Terrace to the road junction approximately 30 metres to the north west of 347 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 2HF	<p>Refurbishment and safety work to the Waterworks upper and lower reservoirs, and Alexandra Park Lake reservoir, to be complemented with wider environmental, landscape and connectivity improvements.</p> <p>The reservoir works comprise of a new overflow structure with reinforcement and protection of the return embankment parallel to the by-wash channel at Waterworks Upper reservoir. Repairs to the upstream face of Waterworks Lower reservoir with the addition of wetland planting to reduce the overall capacity of the reservoir.</p> <p>Removal of an existing parapet wall and embankment reinforcement at the Alexandra Park Lake reservoir.</p> <p>Improvements at Waterworks Park comprise the demolition of the existing Waterworks Bothy and replacement with a new building to include public toilets, Changing facilities, multi-purpose community room and kitchenette. Extension to existing Cavehill Road gatehouse building. Entrance improvements, new events space including multipurpose decking; resurfacing of footways; new pedestrian lighting along key routes; a dog park; replacement platforms and viewing area. New 3-on-3 basketball court; replacement surface to existing small sided 3G pitch; and upgrades to existing Queen Mary's playground.</p> <p>Improvements at Alexandra Park include the resurfacing of footways; new pedestrian lighting along key routes; new reinforced grass event space; new lake viewing area; new public toilets and changing places; entrance improvements. 2no existing bridges replaced; new pedestrian entrance; reimagined peace wall; new multi-sport synthetic surface with cover; and upgrades to existing play parks.</p> <p>Streetscape improvements along Camberwell Terrace and Castleton Gardens include resurfacing of footways with new kerbs; resurfaced carriageways and new tactile paving at pedestrian crossings; and all associated works.</p>	20-Dec-24	18-Jul-25	UNDER CONSIDERATION

Planning Applications Discussed at Committee Between 01 Apr 2019 and 11 Mar 2025

Decision Description	Totals
	28
Consent Granted	
Consent Refused	
Permission Granted	1
Permission Refused	
Total	29

Application No.	Location	Proposal	Category	Date Valid	Delegated Committee	Committee Date	Weeks between Valid date and Comm date	Weeks Since Committee	Weeks between Comm Date and Issued Date 2	Decision	Issue date	Todays Date	Reason decision not issued
LA04/2021/547/F	Lands at 124-126 Lisburn Road Belfast BT9 6AH	Demolition of the existing buildings and redevelopment of site for 2 no. commercial units on ground floor; 11 no. 1 & 2 bed apartments; landscaped communal courtyard; and all associated site works.	LOC	30-Mar-21	C	15/02/2022	46	160	No Issue Date	Permission Granted		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2022/2059/F	Lands south of 56 Highcairn Drive Belfast BT13 3RU Site located at junction between Highcairn Drive and Dunboyne Park Belfast.	Proposed Social Housing Development Comprising of 12 no. 3p/2b semi-detached dwelling houses with incurtilage parking and associated site works. (amended description and site location plan)	LOC	04-Nov-22	C	29/06/2023	33	88	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2022/1924/F	160-164 Kingsway Dunmurry BT17 9RZ.	Mixed-use proposal comprising 13 apartments (with 13 car parking spaces) and coffee shop.	LOC	19-Oct-22	C	29/06/2023	36	88	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2023/2324/F	MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTRE NORGLLEN GARDENS BALLYMURPHY BELFAST ANTRIM BT11 8EL	Proposed redevelopment comprising demolition of an extant building and development of two apartment blocks (12 units category 1 over 55s tenure) and change of use/alterations of existing retail unit to apartments (8 units private tenure), communal amenity, parking, site access alterations, landscaping and ancillary site works	LOC	13-Dec-22	C	17/10/2023	44	73	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement

LA04/2020/1858/F	Hillview Retail Park Crumlin Road Belfast.	Proposed residential development of 18 no. social housing units, comprising two terraces. Development includes associated car parking, gardens, landscaping, site access and all other site works. (amended plans uploaded to the Planning Portal on the 5th April 2023 that revise the proposed access and road layout, including the introduction of a traffic island).	LOC	08-Jan-21	C	14/11/2023	148	69	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2021/2016/F	21-29 Corporation Street & 18-24 Tomb Street Belfast.	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. (Further information received).	MAJ	26-Aug-21	C	16/01/2024	124	60	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2022/1219/F	177-183 Victoria Street 66-72 May Street and 4-8 Gloucester Street Belfast	Demolition of existing building and erection of 11 storey building (May Street/Victoria Street) and 4 storey building (Gloucester Street) comprising 77 apartments with communal areas, ground floor retail services (A2) unit, cycle and car parking, and vehicular access via Gloucester Street	MAJ	21-Jun-22	C	16/01/2024	82	60	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2022/0097/F	22-30 Hopefield Avenue Belfast BT15 5AP	Proposed three and a half storey residential development comprising of 18no. units (3no. wheelchair apartments and 15no. Category 1 - Social Housing) and associated access, bin storage, boundary treatments, bike stands, car parking and site and landscaping works (Amended Drawings)	LOC	04-Apr-22	C	13/02/2024	97	56	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement

LA04/2017/1991/F	Land adjacent to Concourse Buildings Queens Road Belfast BT3 9DT.	Construction of a new 5 storey office development for science and I.T. based business and associated car parking and public realm works.	MAJ	20-Sep-17	C	19/03/2024	338	51	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2020/2105/F	1-5 Gaffikin Street Belfast BT12 5FH	Residential development comprising 55no. apartments comprising 12 no social, and 43 no private apartments and associated site works.	MAJ	21-Oct-20	C	19/03/2024	177	51	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2022/0612/F	Lands at the junction of Shankill Road, Lanark Way, and bound by Caledon Street, Belfast.	Residential scheme of 53 no. dwellings comprising 34 no. semi-detached and 4 no. detached) and 15 no. apartments (7 no. 2-bed and 8 no. 1-bed), amenity space, bin and bicycle storage, landscaping, access, car parking and all associated site works.(revised description & amended plans).	MAJ	15-Apr-22	C	18/06/2024	113	38	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/0483/F	34-44 Bedford Street and 6 Clarence Street, Belfast	Proposed change of use from Office (B1) and restaurant (Sui Generis) to Hotel comprising of 88 no. bedrooms, two storey rooftop extension, restaurant and bar offerings, gym facilities, including new dormer windows on roof, internal and external refurbishment and alterations, and all associated site works.	MAJ	19-Mar-24	C	15/10/2024	30	21	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/0480/DCA	34-44 Bedford Street and 6 Clarence Street, Belfast	Part demolition of existing buildings (stripping back of roof, shopfront and other external alterations to facilitate change of use and extension of buildings to hotel use.	LOC	29-Mar-24	C	15/10/2024	28	21	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/0393/F	ECIT Building Queen's Road, Queen's Island, Belfast, BT3 9DT	Proposed 5 storey extension to the East of the ECIT Building (Institute of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology), and 3 storey extension to the West, to provide additional research and development space with associated landscaping and site works	MAJ	21-Mar-24	C	12/11/2024	33	17	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement

LA04/2024/0369/F	Lands at Former Monarch Laundry site, and Broadway Hall Site, No's 451 - 457 Donegall Road, Belfast, BT12 6HD.	Proposed Specialist Nursing and Residential Care Facility comprising approximately 158 no. beds, day/dining rooms, treatment rooms, staff rooms, office/store rooms, including car parking provision, cycle parking, refuse storage, landscaping, and associated site and access works.	MAJ	08-Feb-24	C	12/11/2024	39	17	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/0122/F	Former Belfast Metropolitan College Campus, Whiterock Road, Belfast, BT12 7PG	Proposed mixed use development comprising of 62No. social housing units (mix of dwellings and apartments) and a new children's centre, car parking, landscaping, open space and all associated site and access works.	MAJ	19-Jan-24	C	10/12/2024	46	13	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/1138/F	Lands including and to the rear of 24-54 Castle Street, 2-6 Queen Street, 1-7 & 21 Fountain Street, Belfast.	Demolition of existing buildings and construction of Purpose Built Multi Storey Managed Student Accommodation (821no. rooms) with additional Short Term use outside of term time. Proposed heights of between 6-9 storeys and associated shared/ancillary spaces with ground floor retail/retail service units, resident's gym/cinema and ancillary development/uses. (Amended Description)	MAJ	16-Oct-24	C	10/12/2024	7	13	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/1141/DCA	Lands including and to the rear of 24-54 Castle Street, 2-6 Queen Street, 1-7 & 21 Fountain Street, Belfast	Demolition of existing buildings and construction of Purpose Built Multi Storey Managed Student Accommodation (821no. rooms) with heights of between 6-9 storeys and associated shared/ancillary spaces with ground floor retail/retail service units, resident's gym/cinema and ancillary development/uses	LOC	28-Jun-24	C	10/12/2024	23	13	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/1744/LBC	Belfast City Hall, 2 Donegall Square North, Belfast, BT1 5GS	Installation of metal gates to the Titanic Memorial Garden at the ground of Belfast City Hall	LOC	16-Oct-24	C	10/12/2024	7	13	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Deferred for Site Visit

LA04/2024/0626/F	1 Havelock House Havelock Place, Ormeau, Belfast, BT7 1EB .	Erection of 104no. social rented residential units (comprising a mix of General Social Housing and Category 1 over 55's accommodation) across two detached blocks [ranging between 3 and 5 storeys], landscaping, communal and private amenity space, ancillary cycle and car parking provision, and other associated site works	MAJ	17-Apr-24	C	10/12/2024	33	13	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2023/2557/F	Lands East of Meadowhill, North of Glencolin Court, North and East of Glencolin Rise, East of Glencolin Grove, North and West of Glen Road Rise, and North of Glen Road Grove. Belfast.	260 no. dwellings, children's play area and other ancillary and associated works.	MAJ	24-Feb-23	C	10/12/2024	93	13	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
LA04/2024/0714/F	Units 2A and 2B at 38 Boucher Road, Belfast, BT12 6HR.	Proposed development to create a private medical facility (a hospital within Class C3) comprising of the change of use of part of retail warehouse and the extension of the building to create a private medical facility with a significant element of overnight residential care together with all associated ancillary development.	MAJ	14-Feb-25	C	21/01/2025	-3	7	No Issue Date	Permission Granted		11/03/2025	Awaiting issuing
LA04/2024/0754/F	Lands immediately north and south of existing film studios, north of Dargan Road (within wider Belfast City Council lands known at North Foreshore/Giants Park), Belfast.	Retrospective application for the construction of a landscaped earth mound, new fencing, the reconfiguration of internal access arrangements to provide a new turning head, and associated site works. (Amended description and plans)	LOC	26-Apr-24	C	21/01/2025	38	7	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Issuing

LA04/2024/1458/F	Divis and The Black Mountain National Trust Site, Divis Road, Hannahstown, Belfast, BT17 0NG.	Alterations to the site include refurbishing and repurposing of 3no existing vernacular buildings to provide visitor facilities and replacing 1 shed, a small garage and an agricultural structure with a new amenity building. Enhancements to the existing pond network, introduction of signage interpretation and a suite of site-appropriate furniture. Wider site improvement works are proposed including path enhancements and new routes, installation of site furniture and interpretation signage.	MAJ	20-Sep-24	C	11/02/2025	20	4	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Consultees
LA04/2024/1837/F	Lands north of 14 Mill Race and 15 Belfield Heights and south of 2-15 St Gerards Manor Ballymurphy Belfast Co. Antrim	Variation of condition No. 20 of planning permission LA04/2022/0129/F to amend trigger point for implementation of approved foul and surface water drainage programme, from prior to commencement to prior to occupation.	MAJ	17-Nov-24	C	11/02/2025	12	4	4	Permission Granted	11 Mar 2025	11/03/2025	
LA04/2024/1623/F	49 Woodcot Avenue, Belfast, BT5 5JB	Change of use from 4 bed dwelling (C1) to 4 bed House of Multiple Occupancy (Sui Generis)	LOC	26-Sep-24	C	11/02/2025	19	4	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Deferred for Site Visit
LA04/2024/1551/F	Cathedral Gardens (Buoy Park), Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 2GT	Public Realm Environmental Improvement scheme	LOC	26-Sep-24	C	11/02/2025	19	4	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Consultees
LA04/2020/2325/F	Lands at Former Maple Leaf Club 41-43 Park Avenue Belfast.	Proposed erection 21no. dwellings (social/affordable housing units comprising 17no. townhouses and 4no. semi-detached), car parking, landscaping and all associated site and access works (Amended drawings, additional information)	LOC	06-Nov-20	C	11/02/2025	222	4	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement

LA04/2019/0081/F	Lands at former Maple Leaf Club 41-43 Park Avenue Belfast.	Erection of 12No. apartments (social/affordable housing units comprising 3No. one bed & 9No. two bed) with provision of community pocket park, car parking, landscaping and all associated site and access works (Amended site location plan / site layout)	LOC	04-Oct-24	C	11/02/2025	18	4	No Issue Date	Decision To Be Issued		11/03/2025	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement
------------------	--	---	-----	-----------	---	------------	----	---	---------------	-----------------------	--	------------	-------------------------------

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Horizon Cities@Heart Project
Date:	18 April 2025
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty Mark Mulholland, External Funding Coordinator

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this paper is to update Members on an opportunity offered to the Council to be part of a joint Horizon Europe and Innovative Health Initiative grant funding call.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee are asked to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> note the content of this report and agree that the Council continues to engage with QUB and Belfast Healthy City (BHC) to explore a possible role for the Council in the Cities@Heart project. Any future financial or other implications will be brought back to Committee for consideration and approval.
3.0	Main report
3.1	The Council has been approached to work with QUB and Belfast Healthy City to bring forward a joint funding submission to the Horizon Europe and Innovative Health Initiative grant funding call. The intention of the overall €15million funding bid across seven cities (named Cities@Heart) would be to enable work to be undertaken with the WHO Health Cities Network & innovative technology to reduce recognised cardiovascular risk factors (Hypertension, High cholesterol, obesity & inactivity) in order to more effectively manage risk and prevent future cardiovascular events.
3.2	Cities@Heart will focus on obesity, hypertension, dyslipidaemia and diabetes as key drivers of cardiovascular disease and poor health. The intention would be to identify effective public health activities which offer potential to scale-up. It will also seek to develop and deploy as well as strategies to leverage engagement and citizen empowerment, raise awareness of cardiovascular disease, effective prevention, early detection and optimal management.
3.3	The emerging bid will involve representatives, including public sector, academia and industry experts, from across seven municipalities including Izmir (TR), Belfast (NI), Łódź (PL), Cork (IE), Udine (IT), Birmingham (EN) and Utrecht (NL). Each have diverse communities and a commitment to deploy multi-disciplinary health strategies.
3.4	<p>Together with citizen and industry co-creation, the cities will apply a structured, multi-sector methodology that includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> city-level approaches to reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease; a digital ecosystem that will power the development of European health technology and economic growth, integration of health policy and health economics to deliver cost-effective city-level solutions; and sustainability at its core using an implementation framework that can apply across the 1800+ cities in the WHO European Healthy Cities Network.
3.5	Cities@Heart will build connections and capacity across our broad array of stakeholders, including citizens, patients, municipalities, healthcare providers, policymakers and industry, and support the next generation of health technology to address critical barriers in cardiovascular disease across Europe. Members will be aware that addressing health inequalities is a priority set out in the Belfast Agenda. This funding proposal may enable related work to be taken forward at a local level and officers are engaging with QUB, BHC, PHA and BHSCCT to explore opportunities for Belfast.

3.6	Members should note that the Council has been asked to be a partner in the submission and the emerging programme of work. Further clarity is being sought on the role of Council in the project, the level of officer involvement, the scale of project funding available to local government and the role of industry partners. Any future request for resources would be subject to Members consideration and agreement.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.7	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Officer time will be required to help shape the emerging bid and programme of work.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.8	There are no equality/ good relations or rural needs implications arising directly from this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Summer Schemes Additional Needs
Date:	18 April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan – Operational Director, Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Cormac McCann, Lead Officer Community Provision Lisa Wilson, Community Services Unit Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

☐
☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☐

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To provide information on promotion and assessment of the Summer Scheme for Additional Needs grant and seek approval to award funding to successful applicants.

1.2	The People and Communities committee on 2 February 2025 agreed to offer a grant to enhance provision within the sector and to support participation for those who cannot access any other summer scheme programmes or services during the summer months due to support needs. A fund of £80,000 was agreed with a total amount of £20,000 allocated per area, north, south, east and west Belfast. Strategic Policy and Resources committee of 21 February 2025 agreed an additional £40,000 with £10,000 allocated per area, north, south, east and west Belfast.
1.3	To advise members of the outcome of the open recruitment process and for members to agree upon an allocation model.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the contents of the report and agree an allocation model for the additional needs summer scheme.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	A co-ordinated campaign to advertise and promote the grant was launched on 7 March 2025. The information was disseminated widely to community and voluntary contacts, Belfast Health and Social Care and Health Trust locality planning groups, Department of Education Special Educational Needs schools and was also promoted across Belfast City Council website and social media platforms.
3.2	53 application forms were issued. 16 were returned with two of the applications failing eligibility checks. Of the 14 applications passed for assessment and moderation, there were five from organisations whose facilities are in South Belfast, four from North Belfast, three from East Belfast and two from West Belfast, although the children which most applicant organisations reside are from across the city. The total amount requested by eligible applicants was £116,249.82 which is within the £120,000 financial limit. The amount requested by providers in some areas exceeds the £30,000 allocation, whilst the amount requested from other areas is less than the £30,000 allocation.
	Applications received
3.3	Table 1 details the amount requested by each organisation and the area where their facility is located, table 2 summarises the amount requested based on where the providers' facilities are located, table 3 summarises the number of children which the funding will support based on where they reside.

Table 1.

Provider	Amount	Location
Arts for all	£5,305	North
Cedar lodge	£11,753.5	North
174 Trust	£18,548.6	North
you 2 me	£2,700	North
Rumbles	£1,100	North
Fleming Fulton	£19,950	South
Sólas	£9,622.25	South
Belvoir ASD	£2,245	South
Eager Belvoirs Special Olympics	£884	South
SEN space	£16,495.47	South
Mitchell House	£3,500	East
Hanwood Down Syndrome football club	£3,900	East
Kids Together Belfast	£9,896	West
Shine	£10,350	West
	£116,249.82	14

Table 2.

Location of provider's facility	Amount requested
North	£39,407.10
South	£49,196.72
East	£7,400.00
West	£20,246.00
	£116,249.82

Table 3.

Location of children's residence	Number of children supported
North	202
South	277
East	132
West	145
Outside Belfast	20
Total	776

	<p>Assessment</p>
3.6	<p>Officers scored each eligible application against the set criteria as outlined in the guidance notes. Each of the applications was then moderated by another member of staff to ensure that consistency and fair marking had been applied. Once staff were satisfied with the scoring and application of the criteria for the grants, the unit then made recommendations for awards as shown above in table 1.</p>
3.7	<p>It is important to note that the diverse range of applicants demonstrates the underlying diversity of needs within the sector. The nature of each proposed project is highly dependent on the specific support needs of their children. Delivery organisations often cite the challenge of accessing appropriately trained and qualified staff during the summer period. Accordingly, delivery is diverse, with differing supervision ratios, levels of specialist/voluntary supervision, numbers of children supported, nature of programming, duration of each session and number of days provided by the schemes evidenced within the applications.</p>
	<p>Next Steps</p>
3.8	<p>Members will note that both North and South Belfast have been oversubscribed and West and East Belfast have been undersubscribed. Members are asked to consider two options for funding of the initiative which are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The amount requested by providers in some areas exceeds the £30,000 allocation, whilst the amount requested from other areas is less than the £30,000 allocation. Members consider moving under-allocated amounts to support programming in over-subscribed areas which will maximise the impact for children with additional needs across the city within the budget envelope. 2. Members give delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to work with the groups in North and South Belfast to reduce their budget to the maximum of £30,000 each. Members give authority for officers to engage across the area and with the groups who applied in the previous year to see if they have capacity to offer a summer scheme in 2025 to the maximum the area budget of £30,000.
3.9	<p>Following approval of the grant awards by committee, organisations will be notified of decisions and sent a letter of offer. An introductory meeting will be held for organisations which have not previously received funding from Belfast City Council. They will be informed of, and provided support with, the requirements of monitoring and evaluation.</p>
	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.10	<p>Delivery of this project is within existing financial estimates.</p>

3.11	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>This report proposes funding a range of projects which are designed to support improved outcomes for under-represented groups, specifically children with additional needs living in Belfast.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Physical Programme Update
Date:	18 April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	Shauna Murtagh, Portfolio Manager

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The Council's Physical Programme currently includes over 200 capital projects with investment of £150m+ via a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which

	the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. This report presents the Half Year Update, requests for stage movement approvals under the Capital Programme along with updates on capital letters of offer and contracts awarded.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Programme Half Year Update - Note the overall update on projects that have been completed recently and projects currently under construction at 3.1 to 3.4 below and in Appendix 1; and that the Property & Projects Department is happy to arrange a site visit to any projects that have been completed or are underway. • Capital Programme Movements - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fleet Programme – Small Vehicles Service – Note that the Director of Finance has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> with a maximum budget of £470,000. ○ EV Charging Network - Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> to allow the options to be fully worked up. ○ Belfast Zoo Health & Safety Works - Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> to allow the options to be fully worked up. ○ 35-39 Royal Ave Health & Safety Works - Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> to allow the options to be fully worked up. ○ Victoria Park Basketball upgrade; Ormeau Park Basketball upgrade; West Basketball courts; Loughside Changing Facility; Mobile Changing Places; Makaton Boards; Strangford PF Enabling Works; Musgrave Park Sensory Garden; Woodvale Park Sensory Garden - Agree that the projects are added to the Capital Programme at <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i> to allow business cases and designs to be developed. ○ Belfast Bikes eBikes – Agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i> to allow a business case to be developed. ○ Under the Bridges – Agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i> to allow a business case to be developed. ○ Ulster Hall Lighting Scheme – Agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i> to allow a business case to be developed. • Capital Letters of Offer – to note the update in relation to capital letters of offer. • Contracts awarded in Q4 2024/25 – to note the update in relation to contracts awarded.
3.0	<p>Main report</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p>

3.1	<p>Physical Programme Half Year Update</p> <p>Members will be aware that the Council runs a substantial Physical Programme. This includes the rolling Capital Programme – a multimillion regeneration programme of investment across the city which improves existing Council assets or provides new council facilities. The Property & Projects Department is happy to arrange a site visit to any projects that have been completed or are underway.</p> <p>The Half Year Update below at 3.2 to 3.4 is a brief summary of projects completed as well as a sample of projects currently underway. The reporting pattern is shifting to align with the financial year instead of the calendar year, so this update only covers three months namely January to March 2025 and will be on a six monthly basis again after that.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Recently completed projects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fleet Replacement Programme 24/25 – prioritised purchase and replacement of older and/ or poor condition vehicles with Resources and Fleet such as forklifts, medium size panel vans, beavertails, mowers, compact sweepers, dropside trucks and others. • Sporting Pitches Investment 24/25 – completion of the improvements to pitches at Henry Jones Playing Fields - ball stops and spectator fencing at GAA pitch and Belvoir Activity Centre MUGA. • Playground Improvement Programme 24/25 – improvements have been completed at Grampian Avenue playground by CNS. • Covered Cycle Stands – completion of active travel projects bike stands at various locations across the city. • Other enhancements to Council assets include – Customer Focus Programme- Customer Hub at CWB, Duncrue Eurobin Workshop facility, HWRC Service Bay works at Ormeau (Park Road), pitch carpet replacement at LORAG/ Shaftesbury centre. • Rory Gallagher statue – commemorative statue of legendary composer and musician at the side of Ulster Hall. • Bredagh GAC container (LIF) – delivery and installation of container providing storage facilities for East Belfast clubs. • Hosford Community Homes Inclusive Hub (Urban Villages) – refurbishment of a building in ownership of East Belfast Mission at 240 Newtownards Road into a multi-purpose community and good relations space and accommodation units.
3.3	<p><i>Physical projects underway:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Hall Stained Glass Windows – the new LGBT stained glass window at City Hall is nearing completion and will be installed shortly, with an unveiling being planned for May. • Ballysillan Playing Fields (Urban Villages) - Works are underway on site at this £8.4m partnership project with DfL's Living with Water Programme, DfC and Urban Villages. Completion anticipated by Autumn 2026.

- **Lagan Gateway Greenway (BIF)** – major investment of £5m in a new navigation lock, iconic foot and cycle bridge and new path connections. Phase 2 procurement exercise is nearing completion for works on the Belvoir side. Completion anticipated by Summer 2026.
- **North Foreshore Development Sites Infrastructure Works** – the landfill gas infrastructure contractor has been appointed. Procurement on the foul pumping station is almost complete. NIE works to upgrade the connections to begin this month.
- **Floral Hall Health & Safety Works** – Contractor appointed, and initial investigations complete on a series of immediate health and safety works to stabilise the building. Completion anticipated by Summer 2025.
- **Strand Arts Centre (BIF)** – works are underway on the £6.4m major refurbishment of the art deco cinema building. The centre will provide educational and skills development workshops, arts, and heritage tours. Completion anticipated by Summer 2026.
- **Michael Davitt's Community Heritage Centre (NRF)** - contractor has been appointed and works are due to begin in May for the new build community and heritage centre at Davitt's GAC.
- **ABC Trust Health and Leisure Hub (Urban Villages)** – Phase 2 of the project is on site comprising a community café, boxing club, minor halls, community gym and office space. Phase 2 to be completed in Summer 2025.
- **Sandy Row Arts & Digital Hub (BIF and Urban Villages)** – work is progressing on the new build development for creative and digital arts entrepreneurs.
- **Titanic People Exhibition (Urban Villages)** – redevelopment of the courtyard/frontage of the existing building at Westbourne Presbyterian Church. Planned completion anticipated in Summer 2025, and launch expected in September 2025.
- **Corporate projects** – a range of capital IT projects via Digital Services to ensure business continuity; Waste Plan – Expansion of Glass Collection Scheme, HWRC and Civic Amenity Sites Containers, and ongoing delivery of Fleet Replacement Programme 25/26 via City & Neighbourhoods Services.
- **Developer Contributions** – progressing open space projects via CNS.
- **Playground Improvement Programme** – Michelle Baird and Balfour Avenue playgrounds are due to be completed by May 2025.
- **Alleygating Phase 5** – Progress made with the commencement of the installation of Phase 5a. Members agreed in February to proceed with the gating order for Phase 5b, with an estimated completion timeline following the enactment of four to six months.
- **Sporting Pitches Investment** – final works at Falls Park, Mallusk Playing Fields and Strangford Avenue Playing Fields are nearing completion.

3.4 **Physical projects in development:**

The remainder of the Physical Programme covers projects where activity is at earlier stages i.e. tender preparation or before. This includes schemes at the start of procurement at *Stage 3 – Committed* as well as those at *Stage 2 – Uncommitted* and *Stage 1 – Emerging* or equivalent:

Capital Programme: Cathedral Gardens, New Crematorium, Belfast Stories, Reservoir Safety Programme, LTP Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility, Waste Plan projects, St George’s Market – New Stalls, Waterfront Hall – Chiller Units, Relocation of Dunbar Link Cleansing Depot, New Cemetery, Access to the Hills – Black Mountain/Upper Whiterock Pathway, Glencairn Park/Ligoniel Park Greenway, City Hall – External Christmas Tree, Wilmont House, Historic Cemeteries and Historic Tiled Street Signs, and recently added schemes including City Hall Preservation, Bridges Improvement Programme, Beacon Programme and a range of health and safety projects.

A range of other schemes are also in development including the remaining LIF, BIF and SOF projects.

3.5 **Capital Programme - Proposed Movements**

As outlined above Members have agreed that all capital projects must go through a three-stage process where decisions on which capital projects progress are taken by the Committee. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. Members are asked to note the following activity on the Capital Programme:

Project	Overview	Stage movement
Fleet Programme – Small Vehicles Service	Smaller collection vehicles to improve collection performance in narrow and restricted streets	Move to Stage 3 – Committed with a maximum budget of £470,000
EV Charging Network	A publicly accessible electric vehicle charging point network on Council owned assets	Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted
Belfast Zoo H&S Safety Works	Improvements to animal enclosures and boundary fencing	Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted
35-39 Royal Ave H&S Works	Urgent works to listed building.	Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted
Victoria Park Basketball upgrade	Upgrade to existing court	Add as Stage 1 - Emerging
Ormeau Park Basketball upgrade	Upgrade to existing court	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
West Basketball courts	New facilities at Blacks Road and Páirc Nua Chollan	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
Loughside PF Changing Facility	Modular changing and flexible space facility	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
Mobile Changing Places	Modular facility for citywide use	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
Makaton Boards	Inclusive communications boards in playgrounds	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
Strangford PF Enabling Works	Enabling works for active travel container and gate improvements	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
Musgrave Park Sensory Garden	Upgrade to sensory garden	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
Woodvale Park Sensory Garden	New sensory facility	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging

	Belfast Bikes eBikes	Introduction of Belfast Bikes eBikes	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
	Under the Bridges	Connectivity, active travel and public realm enhancements under M3 bridges	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
	Ulster Hall Lighting Scheme	Feature lighting to exterior of Ulster Hall	Add as Stage 1 – Emerging
3.6	<p><i>Fleet Programme – Small Vehicles Service</i></p> <p>This project was moved to <i>Stage 2 - Uncommitted</i> in March 2025. It forms part of the Council's Waste Collection service and seeks to address issues around difficult to access streets via the introduction of smaller refuse collection vehicles. Following a successful trial utilising lease vehicles it is proposed to procure the small vehicles. The business case has now been completed. Members are asked to agree to move the project to Stage 3 – Committed with a maximum budget of £470,000.</p>		
3.7	<p><i>EV Charging Network</i></p> <p>This project was added to the Capital Programme in January 2025 in line with the LEV Strategy. It will deliver a publicly accessible electric vehicle charging point network on Council owned assets, working with a commercial partner. The Climate and City Resilience Committee noted in March that a cross departmental working group is progressing Step 1 of the LEV Strategy which involves assessing the suitability of land assets for this purpose. Options around the operating model, delivery timelines and cost estimates are being developed, with the timeline being heavily dependent on NIE processes. Members are asked to agree that 'EV Charging Network' is moved to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the options to be fully worked up.</p>		
3.8	<p><i>Belfast Zoo Health & Safety Works</i></p> <p>A range of health, safety and welfare works are required at the Zoo including improvements to animal enclosures and boundary fencing works. Members are asked to agree that 'Belfast Zoo – Health and Safety Works' is moved to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the options to be fully worked up.</p>		
3.9	<p><i>35-39 Royal Avenue Health & Safety Works</i></p> <p>The property at 35-39 Royal Avenue is listed as Grade B2 and the building requires physical intervention, as well as further consideration on the future model. Health and safety works to the roof are required to be brought forward at pace to secure the building's integrity. Members are asked to agree that '35-39 Royal Avenue Health & Safety Works' is moved to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the options to be fully worked up.</p>		
3.10	<p><i>Victoria Park Basketball upgrade; Ormeau Park Basketball upgrade; West Basketball courts; Loughside Changing Facility; Mobile Changing Places; Makaton Boards; Strangford PF Enabling Works; Musgrave Park Sensory Garden; Woodvale Park Sensory Garden</i></p>		

	<p>Members will recall that capital monies were received from UKSPF for existing schemes last financial year, which freed up resources for additional schemes. These schemes, as listed above, have been considered via the AWGs and will target a range of small scale capital schemes focusing on sporting provision and access and inclusion. A further project, 'Historic Cemeteries', is already on the programme and so the scope of that existing scheme will be widened accordingly. Members are asked to agree that these projects are added to the Capital Programme at Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business cases to be developed.</p>
3.11	<p><i>Belfast Bikes eBikes</i></p> <p>Members will recall that in January 2025 it was reported that a satisfactory tender return has been received for a new Belfast Bikes operator and that capital costs can be met via an existing reserve along with either external funding or a growth proposal. Members will now note at Appendix 2 that the funding has been successfully secured from DfI. Members are asked to agree that the 'Belfast Bikes eBikes' project is added to the Capital Programme at Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business case to be developed.</p>
3.12	<p><i>Under the Bridges</i></p> <p>This project was noted by Members of the City Growth & Regeneration Committee in January 2025 and seeks to improve connectivity through high quality active and sustainable travel corridors, enhanced public realm and amenity space under the M3 bridges. Members are asked to agree that the 'Under the Bridges' project is added to the Capital Programme at Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business case to be developed.</p>
3.13	<p><i>Ulster Hall Lighting Scheme</i></p> <p>Design and delivery will be fully funded by DfC and Linen Quarter BID. The project involves the installation of an LED lighting display on the façade of Ulster Hall capable of changing colour similar to City Hall's Illuminate scheme. Members are asked to agree that the 'Ulster Hall Lighting Scheme' is added to the Capital Programme at Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business case to be developed.</p>
3.14	<p><i>Capital Letters of Offer</i></p> <p>Members are asked to note the update in relation to capital letters of offer in Q4 2024/25 at Appendix 2.</p>
3.15	<p><i>Contracts Awarded</i></p> <p>Members are asked to note the award of tenders for capital works including services related to works in Q4 2024/25 at Appendix 3.</p>
3.16	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p><i>Financial Implications – Fleet Programme – Small Vehicles Service</i> - a maximum of £470,000 is now allocated to this project. The Director of Finance has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.</p> <p><i>Resource Implications – Officer time to deliver.</i></p>

	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.17	All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Photos of completed projects Appendix 2 - Capital Letters of Offer in Q4 2024/25 - January to March 2025 Appendix 3 – Contracts Awarded in Q4 2024/25 - January to March 2025

Physical Programme Completed Projects

January – March 2025



Belfast
City Council

Fleet Replacement Programme 24/25

Page 140



Belfast
City Council

Fleet Replacement Programme 24/25



Sporting Pitches Investment – Henry Jones Playing Fields

Page 142



Belfast
City Council

Sporting Pitches Investment – Belvoir Activity Centre MUGA



Customer Focus Programme - Customer Hub

Page 144



Belfast
City Council

Duncrue Eurobin Workshop facility



Bredagh GAC Container



Hosford Community Houses



UPSURGE Project at Botanic Gardens

Page 148



Belfast
City Council

Rory Gallagher statue



Page 149



Belfast
City Council

Playground Improvement Programme – Grampian Avenue

Page 150



Belfast
City Council

Active Travel Project – Covered Cycle Stands

Page 151



Belfast
City Council

Covered Cycle Stand – Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon Park

Page 152



Belfast
City Council

Covered Cycle Stand – Orangefield Park



Covered Cycle Stand – Bog Meadows

Page 154



Belfast
City Council

Appendix 2

Capital Letters of Offer 01 January – 31 March 2025

Project	Funder	Amount
Belfast Local Community PEACE Action Plan	SEUPB	€17,437,277
<i>Household Waste Recycling (Amendment)</i>	<i>DAERA</i>	<i>£768,000</i>
<i>Black Mountain Shared Spaces Project - Phase 2 - Finlay's Site (Amendment)</i>	<i>IFFI</i>	<i>£647,000</i>
E-Bikes for Belfast Bikes Scheme Active Travel Project	DfI	£500,000
Under The Bridges Active Travel Project	DfI	£292,956
Sailortown/Titanic Quarter Bridge Active Travel Project	DfI	£300,000

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 3**Schedule of Contracts Awarded (Works and Works Related) for Notation
(January – March 2025)**

Contract Awarded	Supplier	Date of Award
Floral Hall Asbestos Removal	Keltbray Ltd	13/01/2025
Commissioning of an Artist for the design, manufacture and installation of a new stained glass window at City Hall, Belfast	Alpha Stained Glass	20/01/2025
BIF_Castlereagh Community Hall	Bradley Construction (MF) Ltd	28/02/2025
Design, Supply, Maintenance & Operation of Belfast Bikes Public Hire Scheme	Beryl	12/03/2025
L1BCC03 Wilmont House and Fernhill House + Stables Condition Surveys and Options Appraisals	Doran Consulting	19/03/2025
NRF_New Build Community & Heritage Centre at Davitts GAC	Piperhill Construction	20/03/2025
MTC for Glazing Services at all Council Properties	John Hunter Glazing Ltd	24/03/2025
MTC for Roller Shutter Services at various Council properties	D W Industrial Doors	24/03/2025

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Asset Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Cromac Street Car Park – Licence Renewal ii) Station Street Car Park – Licence Renewal iii) The Lighthouse Building, The Gasworks Estate – Proposed change of use from office use to residential use iv) St John Vianney Youth Club, River Terrace - Lease Assignment v) Belfast City Centre Festive Lighting Fittings – Agreements with building owners
Date:	18 th April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	Pamela Davison, Estates Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number ☐

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

☐
☐
☐

Never

☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee on asset related disposal, acquisition and estates matters.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Cromac Street Car Park – Licence Renewal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the renewal of a Licence agreement from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to Belfast City Council in relation to the council operated off-street car park at Cromac Street. ii) Station Street Car Park – Licence Renewal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the renewal of a Licence agreement from the Department for Communities (DfC) to Belfast City Council in relation to the Council operated off-street car park at Station Street. iii) The Lighthouse Building, The Gasworks Estate – Proposed change of use from office use to residential use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide an in-principle approval for a change of use from office use to residential use. iv) St. John Vianney Youth Club, River Terrace - Lease assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the terms of the current ground lease of St. John Vianney Youth Club which is to be assigned from the Trustees of St. John Vianney Youth Club to LORAG. v) Belfast City Centre Festive Lighting Fittings – Agreements with building owners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve entering into agreements between Belfast City Council and building owners within the city centre for the purpose of erecting festive lighting fittings. Terms of the agreements are to be agreed by the Estates Management Unit and Legal Services.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>i) Cromac Street Car Park – Licence renewal</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>As part of the Transfer of Functions legislation for off-street car parking from DRD (DfI), the car park at Cromac Street transferred to Council on 01 April 2015. This car park is owned</p>

by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and has been held by Council under Licence since the transfer date. The current Licence from NIHE is for a term of 1 year, which expired on 31 March 2025 and the Council is currently holding over on the lease. The Licence was subject to a fee of £47,850 as assessed by Land & Property Services (LPS) based on the actual income generated by the car park in the previous year. The Licence contained a caveat enabling NIHE to terminate the agreement upon one weeks' notice. NIHE required this flexibility as previous Licences do not deal with the Electric Vehicle (EV) charging point located within the car park, and NIHE is considering options with regards to an arrangement with the EV charging point operator. When a long-term solution has been identified, a new arrangement with Council will be required. In the interim, NIHE have agreed to grant a new Licence to the Council for a further term of 1 year to 31 March 2026, subject to a Licence fee assessed by LPS based on the actual income generated by the car park in the previous year, and subject to the same one week notice period while NIHE consider options for the EV charging point. Council will retain all revenue generated from its operation of the car park.

Financial and Resource Implications

The Licence renewal will be drafted by NIHE and Council's Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estates Management Unit to agree terms. Council will be responsible for payment of the Licence Fee as assessed by LPS based on the actual income the car park generated in the previous year. Council will retain all revenue generated from its operation of the car park.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.

3.2

ii) Station Street Car Park – Licence renewal

Key Issues

As part of the Transfer of Functions legislation for off-street car parking from DRD (DfI), the car park at Station Street transferred to Council on 01 April 2015. This car park is owned by the Department for Communities (DfC) and has been held by Council under Licence since the transfer date. The current Licence from DfC is for a term of 1 year expiring on 30 June 2025 and is subject to a Licence fee of £58,500 as assessed by LPS based on the actual income generated by the car park in the previous year. DfC have agreed to grant a Licence for a further term of 1 year to 30 June 2026 subject to the same licence fee of £58,500. Council will retain all revenue generated from its operation of the car park. Both DfC and Council would have a mutual break option given the Queens Quay development plans.

Financial and Resource Implications

The Licence renewal will be drafted by DSO on behalf of DfC, and Council's Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estates Management Unit to agree terms. Council will be

3.3	<p>responsible for payment of a Licence fee of £58,500. Council will retain all revenue generated from its operation of the car park.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> <p>iii) The Lighthouse Building, The Gasworks Estate - Change of Use from office use to residential use</p> <p>Members will recall that in August 2024 the Committee deferred consideration of a change of use from office to residential use for the Lighthouse Building to enable a further report to be submitted on the type of residential property and on land contamination issues.</p> <p>The Lighthouse Building is an office building located in the Gasworks Estate, situated next to the Voco Hotel. The Lighthouse Building is held by the Tenant, Inislyn Office Co Ltd, on a 125-year sub lease from 4 June 2004. A map showing the location of the Lighthouse Building is attached at Appendix 3. The building has been vacant since June 2019 following the departure of the Department for Communities. Despite an extensive marketing campaign by Inislyn Office Co Ltd, it has not been possible to secure an office occupier for the Lighthouse Building. Inislyn Office Co Ltd has therefore asked if Council would be agreeable to a proposed change of use from office use to residential use. Changing the use of the Lighthouse Building to residential use would have some impact on the character and the dynamic of the Gasworks Estate. However, the reuse of the existing building and provision of city centre housing are in keeping with some of the main overarching objectives of the Belfast Agenda and the Local Development Plan. The Lighthouse Building is in close proximity to the Gasworks Northern Fringe sites which Council sold to Radius Housing in 2023, which are currently being developed for social housing. The Outline Planning Permission granted to the Council for the Gasworks Northern Fringe Masterplan on 30 March 2023 also included for residential use within the proposed mixed-use blocks on the Council's lands adjacent to the Lighthouse Building. The Tenant has indicated that they are keen to explore the possibility of repurposing the Lighthouse Building as a "Co Living Space", with an emphasis on an affordable rent. Co Living is a residential city living model and is a fast-growing trend becoming popular with remote workers and digital nomads, who wish to travel the world as they work. Co Living has grown in popularity in cities such as London and Dublin, offering good value accommodation for many renters who are priced out of home ownership. The Co Living model offers fully furnished co living rooms, studios and apartments to rent, putting community at its core. It is estimated that The Lighthouse Building could provide approx. 80 residential units, subject to detailed proposals being drawn up by the Tenant's design team.</p>
-----	--

Council's Contaminated Land Officer has advised that The Contaminated Land Regime, which is set out in Part III of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, has been enacted but is not yet in force in Northern Ireland. Therefore, in Northern Ireland, the vast majority of contaminated land considerations are dealt with under the Planning regime. Upon a Planning application being submitted for a change of use of the Lighthouse Building from office to residential use, the Environmental Health Service will be consulted and contaminated land will be a key consideration, given the former use of the Gasworks site. The applicant will have a responsibility to ensure the site's suitability for its proposed new end use, which is likely to require assessment of any risks to human health relating to contaminated land under the Environment Agency's Land Contamination Risk Management Framework. Any proposed change of use will be subject to receipt of Planning and other statutory consents. The Planning Service have indicated that the principle of residential use at this location seems favourable. Member Approval is sought for an in-principle consent to the change of use of the Lighthouse Building from office use to residential use. The full details of any proposed residential scheme brought forward under the proposed change of use, will be subject to the completion of Council due diligence in respect of same.

Financial and Resource Implications

Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estates Management Unit. Under the terms of the current Lease, Council receives an equity rent from the Lighthouse Building. Any amendment to the current equity rent formula will be subject to the approval of the Director of Property and Projects under the Scheme of Delegation, depending on further information on the proposed residential use.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.

3.4

vi) St. John Vianney Youth Club, River Terrace - Lease assignment

Key Issues

The St. John Vianney Youth Club building is constructed on lands owned by the Council. The land is leased by the Council to the Trustees of St. John Vianney Youth Club by way of 99-year ground lease. The Trustees of St. John Vianney Youth Club own the building. The youth club building has not operated since September 2023 following the decision by the Trustees to close the building due to a reduction in Education Authority funding. The building was closed without the consent of the Council, as Superior Landlord, and constitutes a breach of the terms of the Lease.

Lower Ormeau Residents Action Ground (LORAG), in conjunction with representatives of Down & Connor Diocesan Trust (DCDT) approached the Council with a request that

LORAG take a lease over the youth club building initially, to facilitate an imminent reopening of the building. The proposal from DCDT and LORAG in respect of the long-term future of the facility is set out below. DCDT and LORAG have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the purpose of which is to form a new entity, Lower Ormeau Youth Providers Partnership (LOYPP) which will operate under the title of St. John Vianney Youth Centre with the intention of restoring and enhancing youth services within the Lower Ormeau area. Initially, DCDT and LORAG will nominate Trustees with relevant experience who will operate and manage the provision of youth services from the building. It is anticipated that after an initial 3-year period, LOYPP will operate independently with ongoing support from DCDT and LORAG. The existing Lease of the building will transfer to LORAG by way of an assignment. There are 60 years remaining on the lease. LORAG will take on all rental and repair/maintenance responsibilities. The rent is subject to RPI linked rent reviews. There is an outstanding rent review due as of 1 November 2020 which will increase the rent from £1,600 per annum to £1,822 per annum with the next rent review due on 1 November 2025. As is standard Council policy, there is an administration fee of £1,000 +VAT for dealing with the application for the lease assignment, which is in progress with Legal Services.

Financial and Resource Implications

The Council will receive a rent of £1,822 per annum, subject to review, payable from the date of assignment.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.

3.5

iv) Belfast City Centre Festive Lighting Fittings – Agreements with Building owners

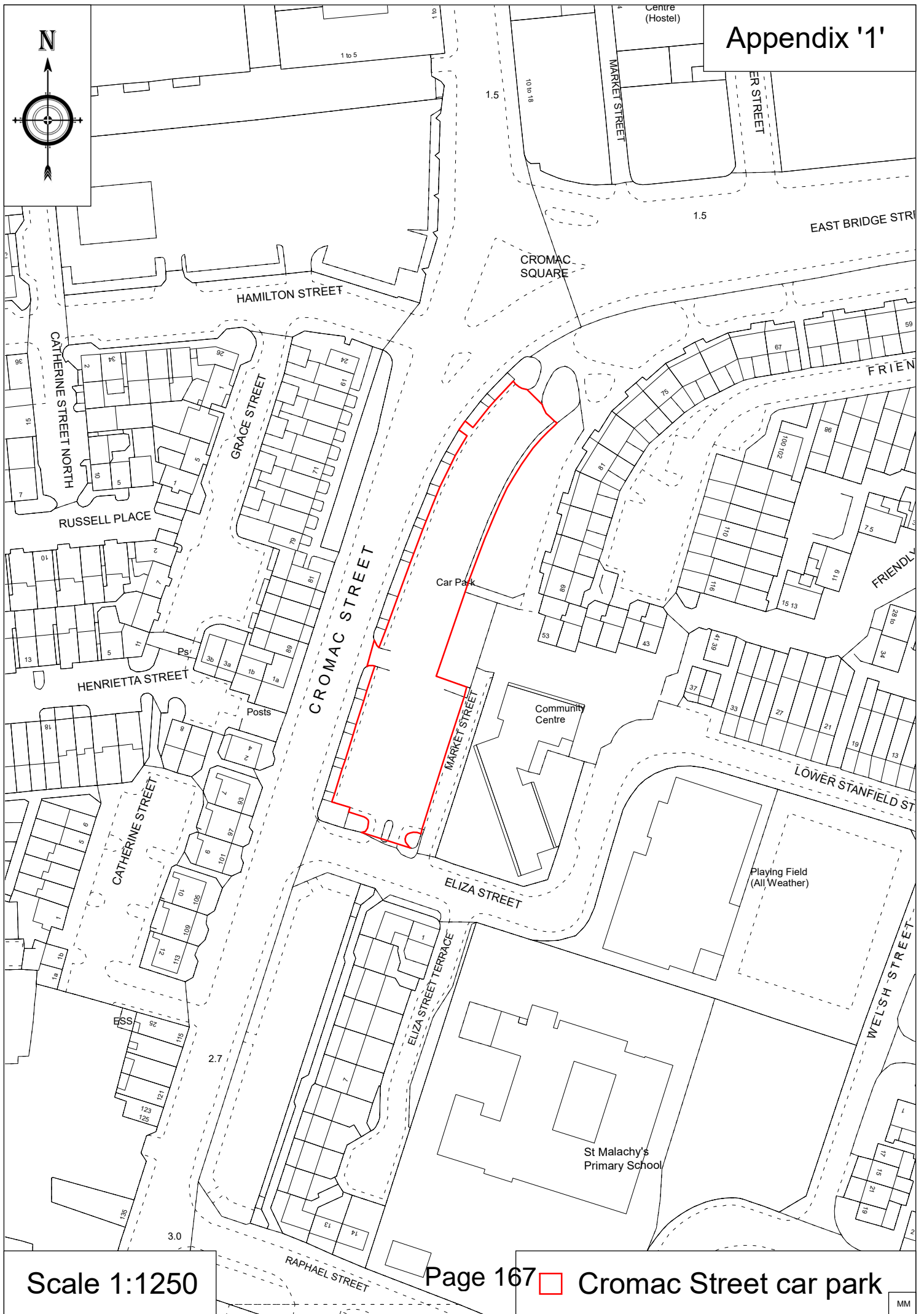
Key Issues

Belfast City Council's Place & Economy Department is currently in the process of procuring a new lighting design and installation contractor, with an appointment expected by the end of April 2025. In advance of lighting installation works commencing the Council will seek to enter into legal agreements with property owners to permit the Council to use, maintain and, if necessary, install eyebolts, fixing plates and brackets to a building owner's property and permit the attachment of BCC's festive lighting features to these fittings. The Estates Management Unit and Legal Services will prepare a short standard agreement to be agreed with the property owners. There are approximately 127 property owners. Members are asked to approve the delegation of authority to the Estates Management Unit and Legal Services to agree the terms of the legal agreements with the property owners and if required pay the building owners' reasonable legal fees.

Financial and Resource Implications

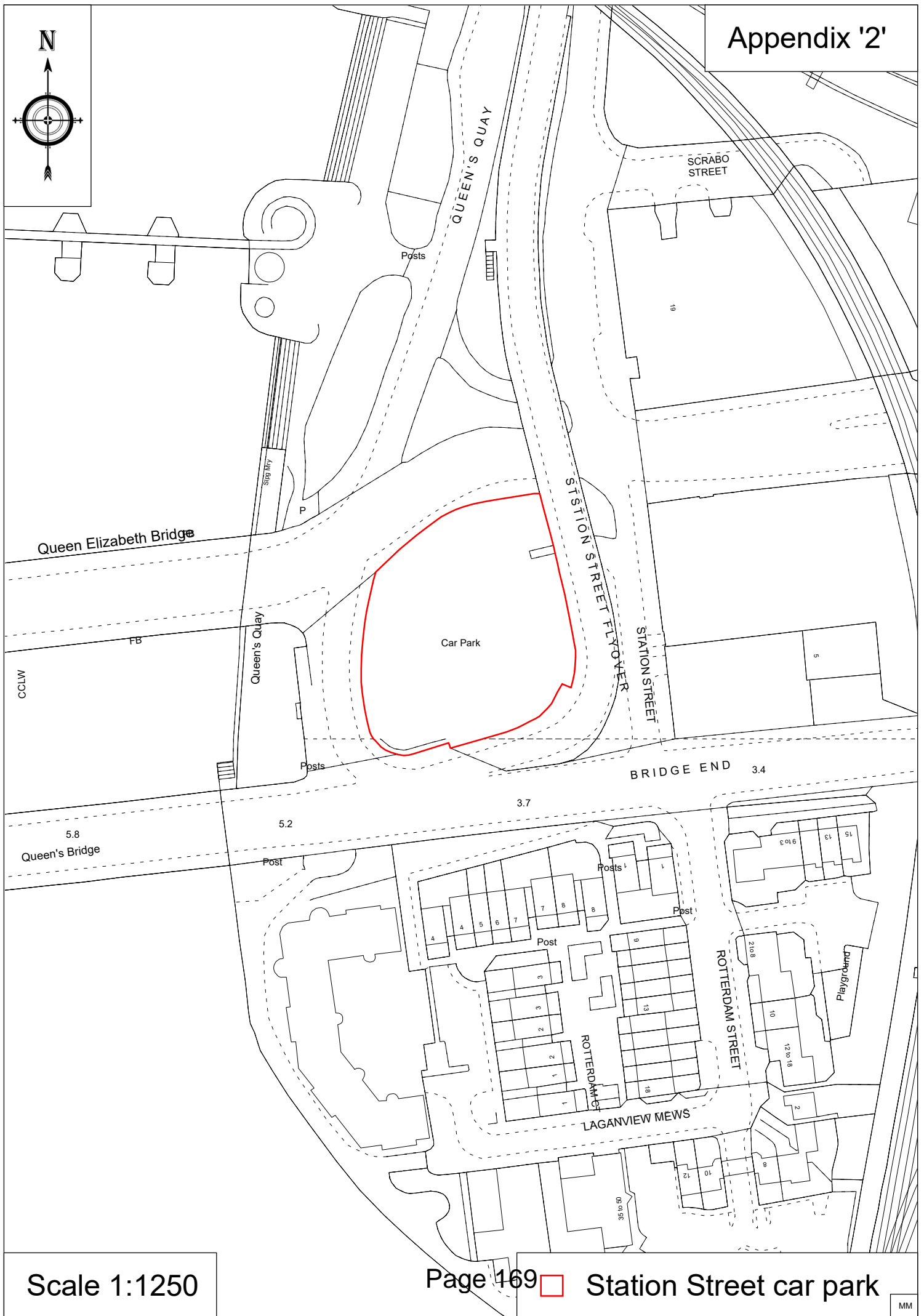
	<p>BCC will pay reasonable legal fees. Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estates Management Unit.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Map outlining location of Cromac Street Car Park in red</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Map outlining location of Station Street Car Park in red</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Map outlining location of The Lighthouse Building in red</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Map outlining St. John Vianney Youth Club building in red</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

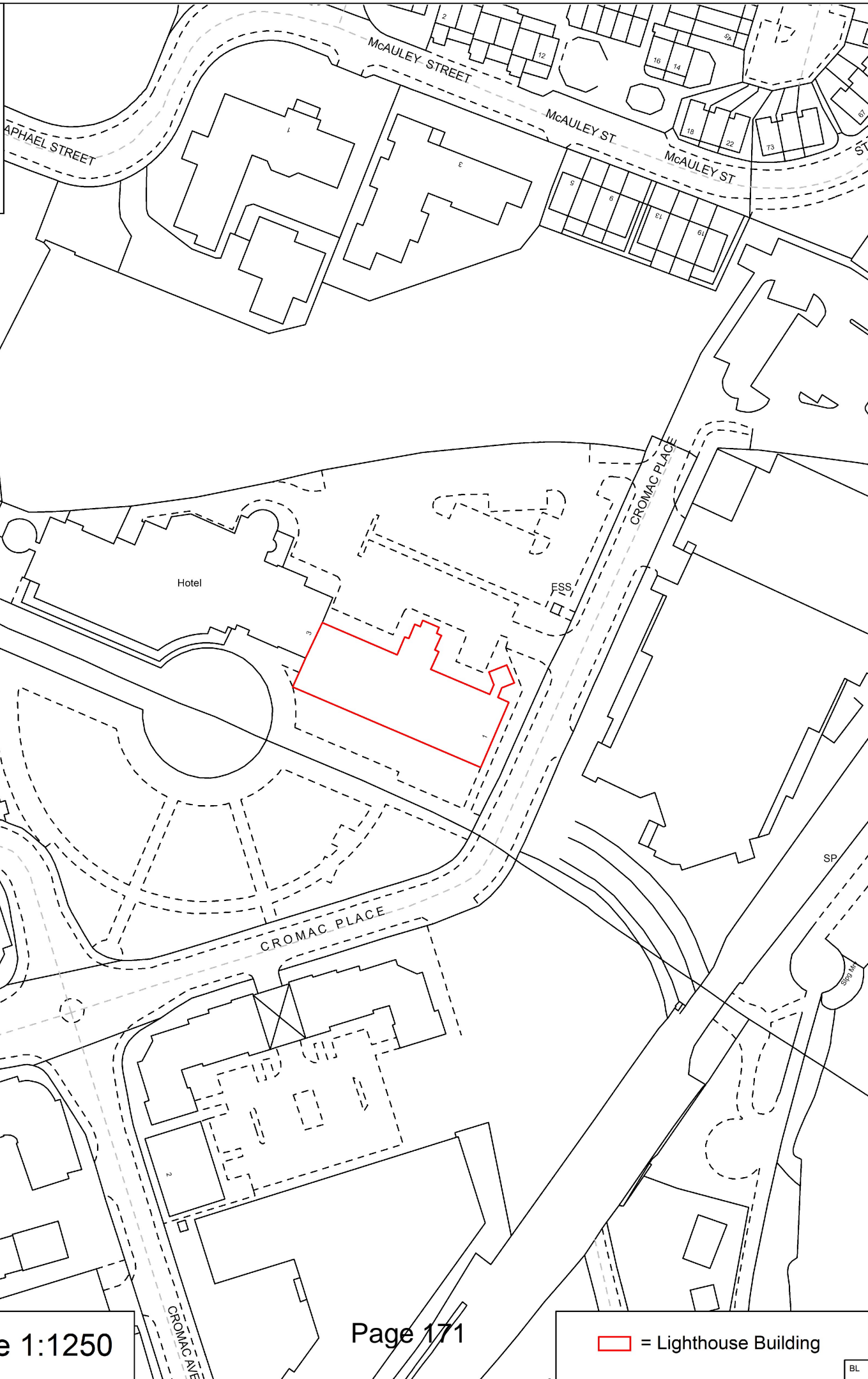


Scale 1:1250

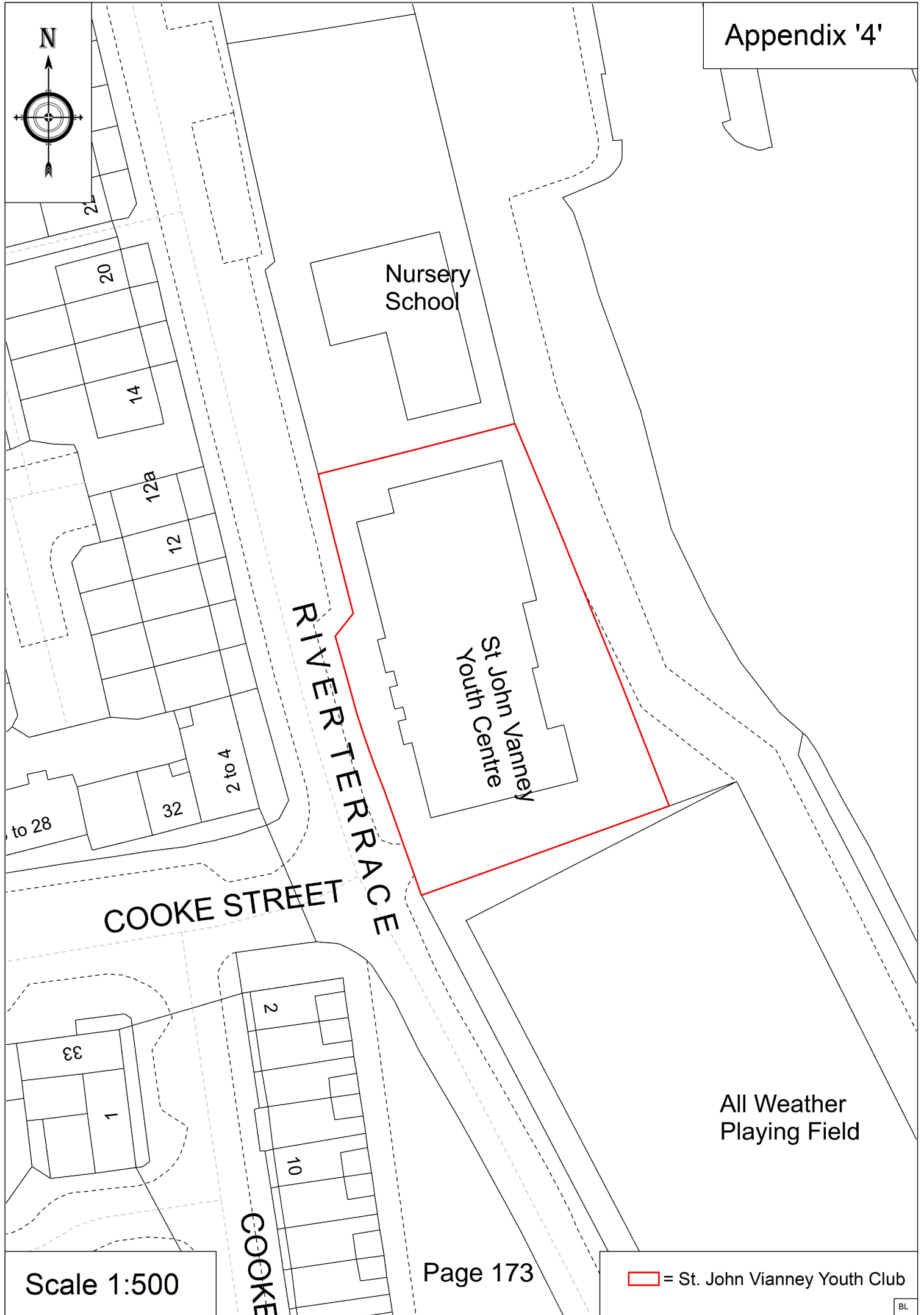
This page is intentionally left blank



This page is intentionally left blank



This page is intentionally left blank



This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Contracts Update
Date:	18 April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Noleen Bohill, Head of Commercial and Procurement Services

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek approval from members for tenders, contract modifications to contract term and Single Tender Actions (STA) over £30,000

	<p>And to ask members to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note retrospective Single Tender Actions (STAs) and non-procurement expenditure
2.0	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 1) Approve the award of STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 2) Note the award of retrospective STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 3) Approve the modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 4) Note the non-procurement expenditure as detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 5) Approve the award of a project to the International Organization for Migration 'IOM' as per Standing Order 56a and as detailed in section 7 of this report. Note the Quarter 4 24/25 update regarding STA and Contracts <£30k Reporting as detailed in section 8 of this report.
3.0	Competitive Tenders
	<p>Section 2.5 of the Scheme of Delegation states Chief Officers have delegated authority to authorise a contract for the procurement of goods, services or works over the statutory limit of £30,000 following a tender exercise where the council has approved the invitation to tender.</p> <p>Standing Order 60(a) states any contract that exceeds the statutory amount (currently £30,000) shall be made under the Corporate Seal. Under Standing Order 51(b) the Corporate Seal can only be affixed when there is a resolution of the Council.</p> <p>Standing Order 54 states that every contract shall comply with the relevant requirements of national and European legislation.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to approve the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 1).</p>
4.0	Single Tender Actions (STAs)
	<p>The Council's current Single Tender Action (STA) process, which has been in place since 2020, provides assurance that the Council continues to comply with its obligations under the Procurement Act 2023 'the Act' and internal governance arrangements including required controls and approvals. It mirrors the Act setting out the exceptional and specific circumstances when a STA can be used (see STA/ Direct Award Reasons Table in Appendix 1).</p>

	<p>To support Officers understanding and to build capability, CPS offer support training and guidance on the STA process.</p> <p>In line with Standing Order 55 the Committee is asked to approve the award of the following STAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract for up to £100,000, up to 2 years, awarded to Simply Zesty, for the provision of content management licensing, site hosting and support for all BCC websites. Recent upgrades, new site developments as well as integration with a content delivery network partner in the past 12 months, enhancing all aspects of the websites also means moving at this stage of the websites lifecycles would be prohibitively expensive and come with significant risks associated. Note – Retrospective spend for 2 months at £18,476 (March and April 2025). Remaining contract duration 2 years at £100k. Contract for up to £34,000, up to 35 months, awarded to Elmore Fish, for the supply and delivery of frozen fish to Belfast Zoo. Tender advertised in February 2025 but no bids received. Note – Current contract expired 31/01/25; retrospective spend for 3 months at £3,000 (Feb, March and April 2025). <p>Further details on these STAs are set out in Appendix 1 (Table 2).</p> <p>In line with Standing Order 55 the Committee is asked to note the award of the following retrospective STAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract for up to £18,746, up to 2 months, awarded to Simply Zesty, for the provision of content management licensing, site hosting and support for all Belfast city council websites. Retrospective 2 month STA to cover spend (March/ April 25). Contract for up to £3,000, up to 3 months, awarded to Elmore Fish, for the supply and delivery of frozen fish to Belfast Zoo. Tender advertised in February 2025 but no bids received. Note – Current contract expired 31/01/25; retrospective spend for 3 months at £3,000 (Feb, March and April 2025). <p>Further details on these Retrospective STAs are set out in Appendix 1 (Table 3).</p>
5.0	Modification to Contract
	<p>The Committee is asked to approve the following modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to an additional 2 months and £30,000, awarded to Avenue Recycling for receipt, stock control and delivery of waste containers (T1977). A extension is required for up to 8 weeks to support the glass collection project rollout to be finished and the tender evaluation for the new contract to be completed and the contract awarded <p>Further details on these contract modifications are set out in Appendix 1 (Table 4).</p>
6.0	Non-Procurement Expenditure
	<p>The Procurement Act 2023 'the Act' – Schedule 2 Exempted Contracts</p> <p>Schedule 2 of the Act sets out a specific list of types of contracts that are exempted under the Act.</p> <p>The following exempted contracts are being submitted for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract for £804,000, for up to 10 years, awarded to Land & Property Services (LPS) NI for NI agreement; proprietary for mapping requirements & planning. This is considered an exempted contract under the Act in line with Schedule 2, section 3 (1) - horizontal arrangement. <p>Further details on these non-procurement expenditure are set out in Appendix 1 (Table 5).</p>
7.0	Award of project to International Organization for Migration 'IOM'
	<p>In January 2025 SP&R approved for a project for Asylum Support and Community Link Advisor Project (£170k over 2 years) to be advertised as an open tender competition.</p> <p>The tender was advertised in February 2025 with 1 bid being received from IOM.</p> <p>IOM have a special legal status as part of the United Nations which means that they are unable to sign up to Council terms and conditions. A bespoke agreement would need to be agreed between IOM and Council to reflect their legal status.</p> <p>Following evaluation of IOM's tender bid, the tender evaluation panel agreed IOM's bid was strong and are reassured of their ability to deliver this project to a high standard if awarded.</p> <p>Members are asked to approve the award of this project to IOM in line with Standing Orders 56(a) Exceptions to reflect IOM's special legal status.</p>
8.0	STA and Contracts <£30k Reporting
	<p>At SP&R in October 23 the Committee agreed that 'the quarterly finance report should, in future, include information on expenditure on Single Tender Actions and on the number and value of contracts under £30,000'.</p>

	<p>Information on expenditure broken down by individual STA contract records is not readily available from the Council's current financial system.</p> <p>However, CPS centrally record the number and maximum total value of STA contract records. Quarter 4 2024/25 is provided below:</p> <p>STAs awarded FY 24/25 Qtr 4</p> <table> <tr> <th>Number of STA contracts</th><th>Total value of STA contracts</th></tr> <tr> <td>34</td><td>£476,597.60</td></tr> </table> <p>Records for contracts (including title; supplier name; value; duration etc) valued below £30,000 are not centrally held by CPS and are maintained on departmental registers. Below is a quarterly return by all departments on contracts awarded valued below £30,000 during FY 24/25 Qtr 4.</p> <p>Contracts <£30k awarded FY 24/25 Qtr 4</p> <table> <tr> <th>Number of <£30k contracts</th><th>Total value of <£30k contracts</th></tr> <tr> <td>48</td><td>£851,255</td></tr> </table>	Number of STA contracts	Total value of STA contracts	34	£476,597.60	Number of <£30k contracts	Total value of <£30k contracts	48	£851,255
Number of STA contracts	Total value of STA contracts								
34	£476,597.60								
Number of <£30k contracts	Total value of <£30k contracts								
48	£851,255								
9.0	Financial & Resource Implications								
	The financial resources for these contracts are within approved corporate or departmental budgets.								
10.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment								
	None								
11.0	Appendices – Documents Attached								
	<p>Appendix 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 1 - Competitive Tenders • Table 2 - Single Tender Actions • Table 3 - Retrospective Single Tender Actions • Table 4 - Modification to Contract • Table 5 - Non Procurement Expenditure 								

This page is intentionally left blank

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Specialist vehicle body work repairs	Up to 3 years	£90,000	S Leonard	Specialist vehicle body work repairs that cannot be completed by Fleet Management workshop
Service and maintenance of Bergmann compactors	Up to 3 years	£60,000	S Leonard	Service and maintenance contract required for the 4 Bergmann waste compactors at recycling centres. Specialist service.
Provision of first aid training courses	Up to 3 years	£60,000	N Largey	Provision of first aid training courses for Council staff.
Development and delivery of the Belfast DPCSP's Older Adults Cyber Safety Project (Fully Funded)	Up to 3 years	£60,000	J Girvan	Belfast DPCSPs have identified the need for community-led, technically competent training to improve cyber safety amongst older adults across Belfast.
Implementation and delivery of West Belfast DPCSP's Community Safety Initiative (Fully Funded)	Up to 3 years 6 months	£166,000	D Sales	West Belfast DPCSP wishes to appoint a contractor to deliver a community led community safety initiative (CSI). The initiative must raise awareness of community safety remedies, support community-based organisation to work in partnership to address those issues and enable the resolution of cases.
AR exhibit and all associated equipment (Fully Funded)	Up to 12 months	£85,000	S McNicholl	Develop the Augment the City use case, utilising the existing small cell indoor public 5G connectivity in Belfast City Hall. This project will run for one year under the agreed trial terms and conditions and support model.
Supply of bottled and mains-fed water with dispensers across BCC offices and sites	Up to 2 years	£47,870	N Largey	This is a continuing requirement as kitchens throughout Council buildings need to be refurbished to provide safe drinking water and public access areas need to have a supply of water.

Appendix 1

Undertaking work to support the Belfast Place Based Growth Proposition	Up to 18 months	£79,240	D Martin	<p>This work covers a number of interrelated strands relating to the Belfast Place Based Growth Proposition which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of a full Five Part Business Case, Summary Proposition and supporting negotiating principles Support a tri-pronged approach to engagement aimed at UK / Irish Government and NI Executive to unlock funding for regeneration / development activity (in line with similar funding received by other major cities).
<p>Provision of coordination of services for delivery of Culture Night Belfast for 2025 with the cultural sector</p> <p>Recommendation approved by Members at City Growth and Regeneration Committee 09/04/25)</p>	Up to 9 months	£150,000	D Martin	<p>Large scale event management to deliver the 2025 Culture Night programme. This include the event's delivery model, safety and marketing resources appropriate for an event of this scale.</p> <p>The successful appointee will be required to create an independent committee, as referred to in the Governance section of these recommendations and to lay the foundation for 2026.</p>
Supply of fuel cards for purchasing fuel across Greater Belfast Area	Up to 1 year	£250,000	D Sales	<p>Fuel cards are for vehicles that do not fuel up at Duncrue Complex due to the logistics of their daily working location. Fuel cards enable staff to re-fuel their vehicles at designated petrol stations across the greater Belfast area allowing them to fulfil their daily duties.</p>
Public services hub project delivery (fully funded)	Up to 11 months	£650,000	S McNicholl	<p>Belfast 5G Innovation Region is a DSIT-funded programme that requires Belfast City Council, on behalf of Belfast Region, to deliver economic benefits in key industries.</p> <p>A public services hub at Cecil Ward / 9 Adelaide to deliver two or three projects focused on issues dynamic occupancy management in support of hybrid working,</p>

Appendix 1

				energy and building management, environmental monitoring, etc
Technical support for Belfast 5G Innovation Region funding competition (fully funded)	Up to 11 months	£150,000	S McNicholl	<p>Belfast 5G Innovation Region is a DSIT-funded programme that requires Belfast City Council, on behalf of Belfast Region, to deliver economic benefits in key industries.</p> <p>A funding competition and associated support will be delivered as part of this.</p>

Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Description	Supplier	STA Reason
Provision of content management licensing, site hosting and support for all BCC websites	Up to 2 years	£150,000	S McNicholl	<p>Recent upgrades, new site developments as well as integration with a content delivery network partner in the past 12 months, enhancing all aspects of the websites also means moving at this stage of the website's lifecycles would be prohibitively expensive and come with significant risks associated.</p> <p>Note - Retrospective 2 month STA also required to cover spend (March/ April 25).</p>	Simply Zesty	7
Supply and delivery of frozen fish for Belfast Zoo	Up to 35 months	£35,000	D Martin	Tender advertised in February 2025 but no bids received. Current contract expired 31/01/25; retrospective spend for 3 months at £3,000 (Feb, March and April 2025).	Elmore Fish	1

Table 3: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Description	Supplier	STA Reason
Provision of content management licensing, site hosting and support for all BCC websites	Up to 2 months	£18,746	S McNicholl	Retrospective 2 month STA to cover spend (March/ April 25).	Simply Zesty	7
Supply and delivery of frozen fish to Belfast Zoo	Up to 3 months	£3,000	D Martin	Tender advertised in February 2025 but no bids received. Note – Current contract expired 31/01/25; retrospective spend for 3 months at £3,000 (Feb, March and April 2025).	Elmore Fish	1

Table 4: Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Duration	Modification	SRO	Description	Supplier
Stock control and delivery of waste containers (T1799)	Up to 4 years	Additional 2 months and £30,000	D Sales	An extension is required for up to 8 weeks to support the glass collection project rollout to be finished and the tender evaluation for the new contract to be completed and the contract awarded	Avenue Recycling Ltd

Table 5: Non-Procurement Expenditure

Title	Duration	Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
NI agreement; proprietary for mapping requirements & planning	Up to 10 years	£804,000	S McNicholl	<p>This is a license agreement with LPS for use of maps for planning etc.</p> <p>This is considered an exempted contract under the Act in line with Schedule 2, section 3 (1) - horizontal arrangement.</p> <p>Legal advice was for this to be approved through STA process and reported to SP&R as 'non procurement spend</p>	Land & Property Services (LPS) NI

STA/ Direct Award Reasons

STA Number	Full description
1. Switching to a Direct Award	Switching to a Direct Award: No response or no suitable response following advertised procurement exercise.
2. Single Supplier for Art or Artistic Performance	Single Supplier for Art or Artistic Performance: the creation or acquisition of a unique work of art or artistic performance
3. Single Supplier Absence of Competition for Technical Reasons	Single Supplier Absence of Competition for Technical Reasons: only a particular supplier can supply the goods, services or works required and there are no reasonable alternatives to those goods, services or works

Appendix 1

4. Single Supplier Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)	Single Supplier Intellectual Property Rights (IPR): only particular supplier can supply the goods, services or works required due to that particular supplier having IPR or other exclusive rights and there are no reasonable alternatives to those goods, services or works.
5. Urgency	Urgency: Where the goods, services or works to be supplied under the public contract are strictly necessary for reasons of extreme and unavoidable urgency which is not attributable to any act or omission of and could not have been foreseen by the council, and as a result the public contract cannot be awarded on the basis of a competitive tendering procedure using the reduced 10 day period for 'urgent procurements'
6. Prototypes and Development	Prototypes and Development: the production of a prototype, or supply of other novel goods or services (i.e. goods or services designed or developed at the request of BCC), for the purpose of testing the suitability of the goods or services, researching the viability of producing or supplying the goods or services at scale and developing them for that purpose, or other research, experiment, study or development.
7. Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works	Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works: Extension or Partial Replacement concerns the supply of goods, services or works by the existing supplier (includes supplier that the council no longer has a contract with) which are intended as an extension to, or partial replacement of, existing goods, services or works in circumstances where a change in supplier would result in the council receiving goods, services or works that are different from, or incompatible with, the existing goods, services or works, and the difference or incompatibility would result in disproportionate technical difficulties in operation or maintenance.
8. Commodity	Commodity: Supplies quoted and purchased on a commodity market
9. Advantageous time-limited	Advantageous time-limited: Supplies or services on particularly time-limited advantageous terms e.g. supplier winding up its business activities
10. Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works	Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works: Similar to Existing Goods Services or Works, concerns the supply of goods, services or works by the existing supplier (includes supplier that the council no longer has a contract with) that are similar to existing goods, services or works where the existing goods, services or works were supplied under a public contract that was awarded following a competitive procedure within the period of five years ending with the day on which the transparency notice is published, and the tender notice or any tender document in respect of the earlier contract set out the Council's intention to carry out a subsequent procurement of similar goods, services or works in reliance on this direct award justification, and any other information specified in Section 95.
11. Other	Other: Reason not in line with Procurement Act 2023

Appendix 1

12. To Protect Life	To Protect Life: where a Minister of the Crown has by Regulations provided that specified contracts may be awarded to protect human animal or plant life or health or protect public order or safety
13. Schedule 2– Exempted Contract	Schedule 2– Exempted Contract: Requirement not considered procurement spend but use of STA process to document and approve spend. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/54/schedule/2

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting on 07 th April 2025
Date:	18 th April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Godfrey McCartney, Good Relations Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

☐

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

☐
☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To report to committee on the key issues discussed at the Shared City Partnership meeting held on 7 th April 2025.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	That the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approve the minutes and recommendations from the Shared City Partnership Meeting held on 7 th April 2025 including:
2.2	<p><u>Discussion on the Refresh of the Good Relations Strategy and Development of a 3-year Action Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Partnership recommends to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it notes the contents of presentation.
2.3	<p><u>Asylum Dispersal Programme – Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Partnership noted the contents of the report in relation to the Asylum Dispersal Fund and recommend that SP & R note the contents of the report.
2.4	<p><u>PEACE IV – Secretariat Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommends to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it notes the contents of the report.
2.5	<p><u>PEACEPLUS Belfast City Council Local Community Action Plan – Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Partnership noted the contents of the report and agreed that a six-month extension request (to 30 June 2028) be submitted to SEUPB and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report and agree the above recommendation.
2.6	<p><u>Update from Partnership Members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No updates were provided from partnership members
2.7	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Good Relations Manager updated the Partnership following receipt of an email detailing an increased level of funding which would enable full programme implementation of Council’s Good Relations Action Plan for 2025/2026.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Shared City Partnership is a Working Group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which consists of Elected members and representatives from various sectors

	across the city. The minutes from the Partnership are brought before the Committee for approval on a monthly basis.
3.2	<p>The key issues on the agenda at the 7th April 2025 meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership Papers of 10th March 2025 • Discussion on the Refresh of the Good Relations Strategy and Development of a 3-year Action Plan • Peace IV Secretariat Update • PEACEPLUS – Theme 1.1 – Belfast City Council Local Action Plan Update • Update from SCP Members • AOB – Good Relations Programme 25/26
3.3	<p>More details regarding the above issues and recommendations are included in the following minutes of the meeting attached in Appendix 1 Minutes of the Shared City Partnership 7th April 2025; and Appendix 2; Presentation Good Relations Audit, Strategy and Action Plans 2025-2028.</p>
	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.4	<p>All financial implications are covered through existing budgets, and the Good Relations Action Plan is included in the current estimates process.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.5	<p>The recommendations of the Partnership are to promote the work of the Council in promoting good relations and will enhance equality and good relations impacts for the City of Belfast.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Minutes of the Shared City Partnership 7th April 2025</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Good Relations Audit, Strategy and Action Plans 2025-2028</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Monday 7th April, 2025

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY AND IN THE CONOR ROOM

Members present: Councillor I. McLaughlin (Vice-Chairperson) and Councillor Abernethy.

External Members: Ms. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. M. Briggs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. L. Gunn, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
Father M. Magill, Faith Representative;
Mr. M. McBride, Education Authority;
Mr. W. Naeem, Interfaith Forum; and
Ms. A. M. White, British Red Cross

In attendance: Mr. G. McCartney, Good Relations Manager;
Ms. H. Donaldson, PEACE Programme Lead Officer;
Mr. D. Robinson, Acting Senior Good Relations Officer;
MS. L. Dolan, Good Relations Officer; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of the Chairperson (Councillor Duffy), Mr. Walker and Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE Programme Manager.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th March were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 21st February, subject to the addition of Ms. T. Mimna within the list of apologies received and a declaration of interest from Ms. B. Arthurs under the 'PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan - Update' item.

Declarations of Interest

In respect of the item 'PEACEPLUS - BCC Local Action Plan Update', declarations of interest were reported by the Councillor I. McLaughlin, as well as Independent Members Ms. B. Arthurs, Mr. M. Briggs and Mr. W. Naeem. It was noted that they were associated with organisations which were in receipt of support under the terms of the Plan and they retired from the meeting whilst the matter was under discussion.

Forth Meadow Greenway – Members' Walking Tour

The Vice-Chairperson, on behalf of the Partnership, expressed his thanks to the Members and staff who had partaken in the walking tour of the Forth Meadow Greenway on 27th March. He

thanked also Father M. Magill for the hospitality which had been provided at the St. John's Parish Hall at the end of the tour.

Refresh of the Good Relations Strategy and Development of a 3-year Action Plan

The Vice-Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Osborne, who was representing Rubicon Consulting, to the meeting. Mr. Osborne delivered a presentation on the review which was being undertaken on the Council's Good Relations Audit, Strategy and Action Plan for 2025/28.

Mr. Osborne outlined the current challenges which faced the Council in delivering Good Relations, particularly within the context of race equality, environment, socio-economic need, the Belfast Agenda, PEACEPLUS and others. He referred to the underlying issues that needed to be addressed relating to language, cultural comfort and prevailing inequalities and how innovative thinking would be necessary in re-evaluating how any revised strategy would be delivered. He suggested, given the evolving nature of Good Relations, that the delivery of any revised strategy should be outcomes-based and all-inclusive, whilst seeking also to address underlying historical issues and the challenges posed by an ever-changing demographic across society.

Mr. Osborne reminded the Members how the work of the Shared City Partnership had helped to make Belfast a more welcoming and inclusive city, which had created a sense of belonging for all people regardless of geography, beliefs, cultural identity or social background. The aim of the review, he added, would be to enhance Belfast's reputation as an inclusive city where people from all backgrounds felt a sense of belonging. He added that the review would seek to build on the achievements to date to identify more innovative methods to deliver a strategy that would affect real and meaningful change across the city.

In response to Members' questions, Mr. Osborne clarified the timeline that had been established for the review to take place and the work that would be undertaken with various communities, including the faith sectors. Other Members welcomed the objective of delivering Good Relations in a more targeted and outcomes-based manner and the acknowledgement that any strategy should be an evolving one that could be refocussed to address issues and problems as they arose.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and welcomed the scope of the review as presented, particularly the level of resilience that would be included within the revised plan. It was noted also that a further update would be presented to the Partnership at its meeting in June.

Asylum Dispersal Funding and Refugee Integration Funding

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Issues

1.1 To provide members with an update on the Asylum Dispersal Fund and for members to note the contents of the report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report in relation to the Asylum Dispersal Fund and recommend that SP & R note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 In November 2024, TEO wrote to the Council, asking for funding proposals under the Full Dispersal Funding up to the value of £302,759. This quantum, allocated for Belfast, has been worked out through a baseline funding amount of £15k plus £287,759 based on the percentage of people seeking asylum in the council area.
- 3.2 As reported and approved at the December meeting of the Shared City Partnership, subsequently by S P&R and Council, the proposals listed in table 1 were submitted and accepted by TEO.

Table 1: Overview of project proposals and costs

Proposal	Procurement method	Costs
Proposal 1: Organisational Development and Capacity Support Programme	Proposal was procured in February through an open tender process and has been awarded to the Law Centre, with delivery occurring between May 25- March 26	£100,000
Proposal 2: Provision of Asylum Link Advisor	This proposal is still undergoing assessment following an open tender in March.	£100,000
Proposal 3: Integration and inclusion outreach	Open Call to support community integration projects to be opened in February.	£95,000
Administration support		£7,759
		£302,759

3.4 Summary of proposals and current status

Proposal 1

‘Organisational Development and Capacity Support Programme’

Background

As asylum seekers are now accommodated in new geographical areas of Belfast, that have not had a history of accommodating people

seeking asylum, an increased number of community and voluntary organisations are finding a change in the communities now accessing their services. Many of these community support organisations have reported that they do not have the specialised knowledge to provide advice and case work support for asylum seekers but wish to provide services for all living in the locality.

The service

This proposal aims to invest in the organisational capacity of organisations to ensure that people seeking asylum can access, accurate and quality advice across Belfast.

The purpose of the programme is to build the capacity of Belfast-based voluntary & community sector organisations to support the inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees within their communities.

The proposal aims to develop the capacity of organisations currently providing advice to asylum seekers or organisations that are new to this area of provision. It will do this through the provision of a training programme, supported by the development of a Knowledge and Learning Network to strengthen the capacity of organisations to provide quality advice to people in the asylum process.

The project will be delivered by the Law Centre NI and will Commence in May 2025 and complete in March 2026

Proposal 2

‘Provision of Asylum Link adviser’

Background

This proposal, led by an organisation / consortium with specialised knowledge of providing asylum advice and case work support, will support the development of a minimum of 2 Community Outreach Advisors who will provide case work support and advice for asylum seekers in community settings

It is well documented that early specialised advice is crucial if asylum seekers are to navigate life in Belfast; understand their rights and entitlements, access essential services and feel integrated and included as well as developing their own autonomy and independence.

Belfast has witnessed an increase in the number of people that have sought asylum in the city. Many of these new communities find it hard to navigate services when they arrive in the city and are accommodated in local communities. In addition, the shifting backdrop of national policy and changes in immigration law have led to the need for more specialised advice and support responses.

The purpose of this proposal is to increase the spread of advisors that can provide advice and case work support to asylum seekers in their community settings.

Current Status

The tender for this closed in March and it is hoped that a contract will be awarded in April, with the project commencing in May 2025 and completing in March 2026.

Proposal 3

‘Supporting localised integration, inclusion and contact projects’

Background

Given the increasing spread of people that have sought asylum across Belfast, this proposal provides organisations and community groups with the opportunity to develop small scale projects to support the localised integration and inclusion of people that have sought asylum and to link them with local communities.

The Service

Through an open call, organisations will be invited to submit proposals up to £10,000, that support the integration and inclusion of people that have sought asylum. The proposal will support projects that: engage host communities and people who have sought asylum, projects that can support awareness raising in host communities of the reality of asylum related matters, projects that can foster contact and connections with host communities to improve the welcome that people who have sought asylum receive, projects that encourage and support groups to involve people who have sought asylum in the life of their communities through participation in local activities, networks and organisations, including voluntary work, projects that are delivered in areas where, to date, there has been limited infrastructure / funding for interventions supporting the inclusion of people seeking asylum.

Current Status

This call is currently open

Proposal 4

Administration Costs

The final proposal covers a small cost, from Belfast City Council, relating to the administration of the proposal

Financial & Resource Implications

The proposals in this report are 100% funded through Full Dispersal Funding via the Executive Office, the main resource is a significant amount of Officer time around the management and governance of the funds as well as time spent procuring projects.

Ms. Dolan, the Acting Senior Good Relations Officer, outlined the principal aspects of the report and answered several questions which had been posed by Members.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be requested to note also the contents of the report. It was agreed that an invitation be extended to representatives from The Executive Office to present to the Partnership in respect of the programme.

Arising from discussion, officers undertook to provide further information to a Member in respect of the 'Black Mountain Pathway - Access to the Hills' programme.

PEACE IV Programme - Secretariat Update

Ms. Donaldson reported that, subsequent to the issuing of the papers, confirmation had been received from the Audit Authority that the that Article 27 Audit of the Council's Programme had been completed successfully. This related to the Period 36 claim for Shared Spaces and Services, which was valued at approximately £1.2m.

Noted.

PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan Update

The Partnership considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Shared City Partnership members with an update on the mobilisation of PEACEPLUS 1.1. Co-designed Belfast Local Community Peace Action Plan (LCAP).

2.0 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and agree that an extension request of 6 months to 30 June 2028 is submitted to SEUPB and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report and agree the above recommendation.

3.0 Main report

3.1 SEUPB Approval / Letter of Offer (LoO)

Officers are continuing to liaise with SEUPB on the formal contracting of the Action Plan on the JeMS system and finalising the Data Sharing Agreement (DSA).

3.2 Contract Awards

Members are requested to note that contract awards and initiation are continuing to progress, with further awards made to successful bidders as follows:

- TPC3 – Youth Empowerment –Lot 1 to Giga Training
- TPC3 – Youth Empowerment –Lot 2 to Active Communities Network
- TPC3 – Youth Empowerment –Lot 3 to Streetbeat Youth Project
- TPC6 - Arts Across the Genres to Maywe
- CCD1 – Interfaith and Belief to the Corrymeela Community, with community partners

Members should note that due to the delay in the Letter of Offer, and thereby contract awards, delivery partners have been requested to realign project implementation timeframes to condense delivery as necessary, to ensure achievement of targets by December 2027.

3.3 Delivery Partner Support

A training workshop for delivery partners on Data Sharing, Monitoring and Evaluation, Communications and Finance took place on 13 March and was well received.

3.4 Procurement

Assessment of re-tender submissions for Lot 4 Youth Empowerment is underway, and the re-tender for Lot 2 of CCD5 Multi-culturalism to Interculturalism remains open to 28 March 2025. Officers are continuing to seek feedback for Lot 1 of CCD5 Multi-culturalism to Interculturalism and the re-tender is expected to progress in April 2025.

3.5 Mobilisation of Community Regeneration and Transformation

A meeting with SEUPB and CPD took place on 7 March 2025, during which CPD advised that given the individual project values (below £1.5m) their role will be to review procurement documents, sit on assessment panels, and review the interim payments to appointed contractors. As such members are requested to note that CPD advised they will not be part of client project boards. SEUPB is considering this approach and is to confirm with Council the requirements for CPD representation. As such, a further report on the Capital Governance Structure will be presented at a future meeting.

3.6 Members should note that sequencing of projects has been agreed, as below, and the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) documentation for all the capital projects has been submitted to CPD

for review. Once approved procurement will commence and is estimated to begin in April 2025.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. LGBTQIA+ Hub | 4. Access to the Hills |
| 2. Annadale | 5. Sanctuary Theatre |
| 3. Distillery Street | |

During discussions, delivery of both infrastructure works and animation activity within the current Letter of Offer timeframe was highlighted as challenging, and SEUPB has indicated that an extension to the Letter of Offer would be considered favourably.

As reported in March 2025, the construction timeline is being considered in line with animation activity, and given that works are to continue until June 2027, it is highly likely that an extension to the Letter of Offer of at least 6 months will be required.

Further considerations on the Capital Programme and animation timeframe are also progressing with preliminary stakeholder meetings, and as such the aligned timeframe will be reported to members in May 2025.

3.7 Programme Extension

As reported in March 2025, an extension to the Letter of Offer is required to enable full delivery of the PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan.

Members are reminded that the original bid submission outlined an end date of 31 March 2028. However, during the initiating period, SEUPB advised they would permit 42 months for activity with an extended 6-month period. As programme costs are claimed from 1 January 2024, the Letter of Offer end date of 31 December 2027 was provided. On this basis, an extension period was always required.

In considering the Programme closure requirements, Council's contractual obligations, and the delivery timeframe for the construction works, members are advised that an extension to 30 June 2028 would be prudent.

- 3.8** An important aspect of the extension request is adequate staff resources and budget to cover the extension period. The Action Plan submission outlined a staff budget of £2,727,850. The actual estimated staff costs for the extension period to June 2028 is £2,831,860. As such, there is a budget shortfall variance -£104,010. To address the shortfall, it is proposed that PEACE IV deferred income is reallocated to PEACEPLUS budgets.

Members should also note that some Office & Admin (O&A) costs associated with staffing, estimated at £424,779, may be redirected internally to cover staff costs, if necessary.

- 3.9 The PEACEPLUS Programme Board has considered the need for an extension, as well as the budget and staffing position. The Board recommends that the Shared City Partnership agree that an extension request to 30 June 2028 is submitted to SEUPB.

3.10 **Financial Controller**

Members are reminded that Council is obligated to appoint a Financial Controller from a framework established by SEUPB, and a Letter of Offer condition states that the controller budget should be re-allocated from Staff / Office and Administration to External Expertise.

A budget of £240,875 has been allocated for an internal financial controller, however SEUPB guidance indicates a cost of €39,520+VAT (£31,418 est). On this basis, there is sufficient budget to cover the controller costs, within the existing external expertise budget.

SEUPB has advised the framework is now in place and requested that Council approaches the 1st ranked contractor (KPMG) to ascertain a maximum contract value. Advice in relation to appointing a contractor from the Framework and the contractual approach is being progressed with advice from Legal and Procurement Services.

Members are requested to note that the PEACEPLUS Programme Board has considered the operational claims verification timeframe of between 83-115 days for the Action Plan and agreed that an approach to KPMG is progressed with contractual arrangements to follow. Members should also note that a one Council approach for Financial Control with the 1.4 Reconnected Belfast project is being progressed.

3.11 **Staff Recruitment**

The Claims / Data Support Assistant has been appointed and is due to commence at the end of April 2025.

3.12 **PEACEPLUS 1.4 Project - Waterworks / Alexandra Park**

A further Design Information Session took place on 27 March 2025, and procurement for the Integrated Design Team is progressing.

Financial & Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS Action Plan is eligible from 1 January 2024. Once SEUPB complete the formal contracting on JeMS, claims submission will progress.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and agreed that SEUPB be requested to authorise a six-month extension, until 30th June 2028, to enable the full delivery of the PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan. It was agreed also that the Strategic Policy and

Resources Committee be requested to note the contents of the report and endorse the request to extend the timescale for the delivery of the programme.

Any Other Business

The Good Relations Manager reported that, subsequent to the issuing of the papers, he had received confirmation from The Executive Office that the level of funding to be allocated from within the Central Good Relations Fund to the Council would be sufficient to enable the delivery of the Action Plan in full in 2025/56.

The Partnership welcomed the confirmation that had been received from The Executive Office in respect of the funding allocation.

Chairperson

GOOD
RELATIONS
AUDIT,
STRATEGY AND
ACTION PLANS
2025-2028

Shared City Partnership



An abstract illustration featuring three stylized figures in a creative workshop. On the left, a person with teal hair and a beard sits on a stack of books, holding a blue pen. In the center, a person with blue hair and a grey sweater stands, gesturing with their hands. On the right, a person with dark hair and an orange patterned shirt is partially visible, reaching towards a grid. The background is filled with various geometric shapes like triangles, circles, and squares, along with a glowing lightbulb and swirling lines. A dark grey rectangular area serves as a backdrop for the text.

TEAM

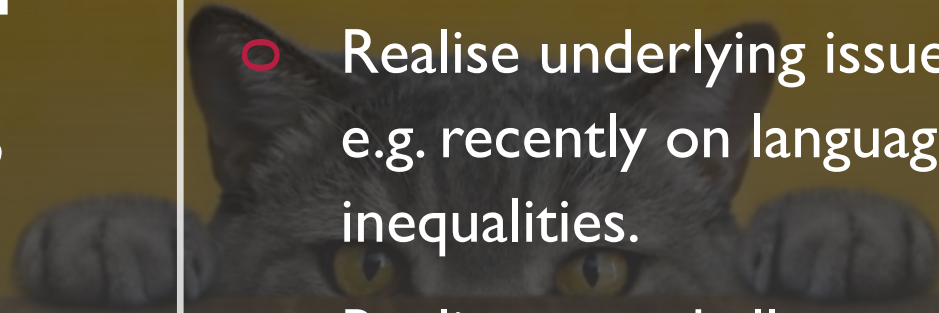
- Bethany Waterhouse-Bradley
- Denise Wright
- Lucy Michael
- Peter Osborne

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY GOOD RELATIONS?

- T:BUC being reviewed by TEO – consistent with TEO/T:BUC.
 - Achieved a lot – Belfast CC done a lot.
 - Embraces s75(2) – relevance to other equality groups?
 - There are needs that unite communities across the city.
-
- Is it time to reflect and think again about how we do GR? Is it time to go Beyond Relationship Building?

CONSISTENCY AND CHALLENGES?

- So much good work being undertaken.
- Consistency with initiatives on GR, race equality, environment, socio-economic need, Belfast Agenda, PEACEPLUS and many others.
- Realise the importance of Belfast CC as largest Council with significant spend and influence.
- Realise underlying issues that still need addressed – e.g. recently on language, racism, cultural comfort, inequalities.
- Realise new challenges such as social media and cultural influences from outside.
- How do we recognise these things but shift a paradigm in how we address Good Relations?

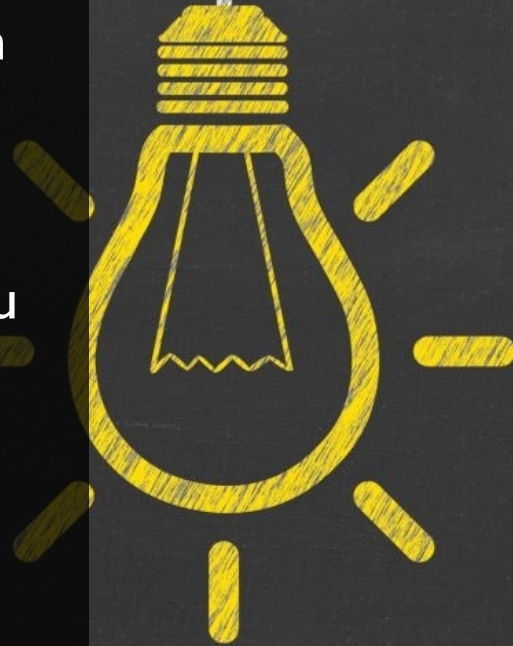


WHAT QUESTIONS DO WE NEED TO ASK WHEN WE SAY BEYOND GOOD RELATIONS?

- Can we take the existence of relationships across communities as reasonably strong?
- Nearly 30 years after ceasefires, should we still talk about peace, or do we talk more about outcomes in the next iteration of the process?
- If we can't leave communities behind because they have nowhere to go, what can we do with them?
- Does a focus on 'traditional' issues sometimes mean less focus on others e.g. inequalities and socio-economic needs?
- How do communities address GR without losing focus on the needs they have in common?

WHAT ROLE FOR SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP?

- Question is broader than role in developing this strategy – what role do you play/should play with BCC?
- Who leads the GR agenda in Belfast, the biggest city in a region that is praised around the world for its approach to conflict management?
- Indicative report by early June – can we have a session with you then?
- Can we input with your stakeholders – party groups, community stakeholders, existing events?



GET IN TOUCH

- Peter Osborne
- 07803 717 930
- peter@rubiconconsulting.net
- Do the survey please and circulate to others.



This page is intentionally left blank

Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum Thursday 10th April 2025

Attendance

Members:

Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Ryan Murphy
Councillor Sarah Bunting
Councillor Séamas de Faoite
Councillor Áine Groogan

Apologies: Councillor Ciaran Beattie, Alderman Sonia Copeland

Officers:

John Walsh, Chief Executive
Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance
Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place & Economy
David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
Wendy Langham, Programme Director, Belfast Stories (for Item 4)
Eimear Henry, Strategic Lead, Belfast Stories (for Item 4)
Jim Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services (for Items 6,7 & 9)
Pól Hamilton, Lead Officer, Community Provision (for Item 6)
Stevie Lavery, Programme Manager(for Item 9)
Joanne Delaney, Portfolio and Programme Coordinator (secretariat)

1. ICC Belfast, Waterfront and Ulster Hall

The Chief Executive welcomed Rob McConnell, the new Chief Executive of ICC Belfast, Waterfront and Ulster Hall who officially took up the role in January this year. He outlined for Members the work he has been prioritising since taking up his appointment and provided a detailed brief on his vision for driving the organisation's strategic direction and business transformation in ICC Belfast, alongside the Waterfront Hall and Ulster Hall entertainment venues. Members discussed the ongoing engagement with key stakeholders and the new approaches being adopted for future use of all venues along with an update on access for the Community & Voluntary Sector. It was noted that regular updates will be brought back to the Forum going forward to keep Members informed.

2. The Open

The Strategic Director of Place & Economy presented some visual concepts to support delivery of animation and activation in Belfast for the upcoming Open at Royal Portrush. Following discussion on the proposals including the format and resources required it was

agreed a report would be brought to April SP&R Committee for Members consideration. The Director to link in with Rob McConnell to explore possibility of collaboration with ICC.

3. Finance Update

The Director of Finance provided an update on the Department of Finance supplementary consultation on Domestic Rating Measure which is due to close for responses on 25th April 2025. He outlined the detail of the two proposals being looked at by the Department in the supplementary consultation and advised that a draft response will be submitted to April SP&R committee for Members consideration. In relation to a number of queries raised by Members on the options within the consultation the Director provided clarity and outlined previous response submitted. The Director to review the consultation template to ascertain if it allows for additional commentary and include an update in the report to SP&R Committee in April.

The Director also presented the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which would be presented to members at the April SP&R Committee. He outlined the budgetary pressures and outlined the need to ensure integration with both the corporate planning process and capital strategy. It was noted that consideration needs to be given to the future priorities and sustainable funding so that any budgetary gaps can be identified in a timely manner. Highlighting the need for a longer-term, forward-looking approach to rate setting.

The Deputy Chief Executive referred to the issue raised at March SP&R Committee for a Bi Monthly Meeting of the Committee for Efficiency/Consultancy matters. She outlined potential terms of reference, workstreams and proposed approach in terms of the meeting format. It was noted that given the linkages to the MTFP an update would be included in the April SP&R Committee report with the recommendation for an initial workshop to scope out in the first instance.

4. Belfast Stories

The Programme Director and Strategic Lead for Belfast Stories referred to the recent Party Group Briefings which took place in order to update Members on the progress achieved to date on the project and the activity that was undertaken to support the submission of the Outline Business Case.

The Director presented the timeline for the Outline Business Case submission and the key milestones for the year ahead. A report outlining the detail discussed will be brought to April SP&R Committee for consideration.

5. Support for businesses affected by August disorder

The Strategic Director of Place & Economy provided an update on the options presented to March SP&R Committee for direct support to the businesses affected by the disorder in August. He also outlined the detail of the suggested approach for engagement with eligible businesses. Members noted that the report will be reconsidered at April SP&R Committee.

In relation to a query raised by a Member on other Council funding streams the Director of Neighbourhood Services provided clarity on the timescales involved and it was noted information on the funding once it opened would be sent to Members for onward circulation.

6. Summer Community Diversionary Programme

The Director of Neighbourhood Services declared an interest and left the meeting during the discussion.

The Forum had previously discussed the detail of the assessments undertaken by officers for the Summer Community Diversionary Programme for both July and August applications and the recommendations and options being presented for the 2025 programme. Subsequently a report was submitted to March SP&R Committee and after review was deferred for further consideration.

The Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services provided an update following deferral at SP&R following review and outlined the proposed recommendations to be considered by Members at April SP&R Committee. He also confirmed that it would be possible to revert to a single year programme if Members so desired. There were a number of specific issues raised by Members including some on the process which the Director noted, and it was agreed he would further explore and consider for the funding model for next year. It was also agreed that Dr Jonny Byrne was invited to a future meeting in order to review options/recommendations in relation to the programme going forward.

7. Social Supermarket Fund 25/26

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that an independent assessment had been undertaken in relation to the points previously raised by Members in relation to the Social Supermarket Fund open call grants round for 25/26 following deferral at March SP&R Committee. He advised that the outcome of the assessment was that there were no identified issues with the approach undertaken. Detailed discussion followed on the funding

criteria, the scoring matrix and the geographical spread of funding and the impacts this might have in relation to the duplication of resources in some parts of the City. Some Members also highlighted that the delay in allocating the funding was causing difficulties for some organisations. The Director to consider the feedback provided and the options discussed in advance of a report to April SP&R Committee.

8. Planning Update

The City Solicitor updated the Forum on the live planning applications and provided an update on the applications to be considered at the April Planning Committee.

Some issues were raised by Members in relation to the closure of Connswater and current applications linked to the Strategic Site Assessments in that area and the Strategic Director of Place & Economy to follow up with the Director of City Regeneration & Development and Director of Planning and provide an update to a future meeting.

9. AOB

Asset Management

The Chief Executive provided an update on an asset related estates matter in relation to the Gasworks Estate. It was noted that a report will be brought to April SP&R Committee seeking approval for an in-principle consent to the change of use outlined.

Illuminate Requests

The City Solicitor outlined for Members an illuminate request from the Lord Mayor for the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day in May 2025. Members noted the request would be agreed under the City Solicitors delegated authority.

Community Support Plan 2025/29

The Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Programme Manager outlined the Community Support Plan consultation timeline, the questions to be included in the consultation and the detail of the process to be undertaken. It was noted that the consultation will go live on Monday 14 April and the information and detail discussed will be forwarded to Members for onward circulation.

Annual Day of Reflection Joint Statement

The Director of Neighbourhood Services referred to the joint statement on behalf of Party Group Leaders for the Day of Reflection in June 2025. There was consensus that the statement is circulated to Party Group Leaders for review prior to issue in June.

Extended Cultural Support Programme

The Strategic Director of Place & Economy provided an update on the funding allocation for the extended Cultural Support Programme previously agreed by SP&R Committee to provide co-design support for groups requiring additional assistance to overcome barriers to accessing funding. There were some queries raised in relation to the allocation of the funding and the Director to follow up and provide an update to the relevant Members. It was also agreed that some representatives from Belfast Pride be invited to a future meeting.

Committee Meetings

The City Solicitor advised that she is aware of some concerns raised and current issues with the technical equipment used within the Committee Rooms for hybrid Committee meetings. It was noted that an upgrade of the equipment was imminent and that a report on this and the option to stream Council meetings on YouTube would be brought to May SP&R Committee.

Issues Raised by a Member

It was agreed the following issues raised by a Member to be followed up by the relevant Director:

- Events in Parks – report for Committee
- Meeting with DfC in relation to the Strand Cinema
- Feedback on outcomes from MIPIM 2025

This page is intentionally left blank



Belfast
City Council

Subject:	Requests for use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality
Date:	18 April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Aisling Milliken, Functions and Exhibition Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision After Council Decision Sometime in the future Never	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	This paper, together with the attached appendix, contains the recommended approach in respect of each of the requests by external organisations for access to the City Hall function

	rooms received up to 4 April 2025.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the recommendations as set out in Appendix 1.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Background Information</u>
3.1	The current criteria for use of the function rooms used to review external applications is set out below.
3.2	<p>Functions permitted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • functions which support other events in the city and which are of demonstrable economic benefit to Belfast whether organised by the council or not. • functions which demonstrably enhance the city's image nationally or internationally as a desirable commercial, business or tourist destination. • functions designed to celebrate or commemorate a notable achievement or significant anniversary (25, 50, 100 years) by an organisation or body with close links to the city or province. • functions organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector groups for non-profit and non-political purposes.
3.3	<p>Functions not permitted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conferences, meetings, seminars, performances, wedding receptions, private parties or receptions and similar booking requests in the prestige function rooms. • functions, which have as their principal purpose the generation of commercial gain for the organisers. Charity-fundraising functions are managed by the Lord Mayor's Office. • functions which have no compelling links to the council or the city specifically and which could instead use local private sector facilities. • functions which have as their primary purpose the advancement of any political or religious cause or campaign or are otherwise potentially contentious or involve significant reputation risks for the council. • functions which involve exceptionally large or disruptive set-ups or pose a real and tangible risk to the fabric of the building or grounds.
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.4	Committee will recall that at its meeting on 24 th May 2024, it considered an update on the City Hall Income Generation Project. Committee was advised that charging for the use of the Council's function rooms will be considered as part of a later stage of this project. This will include looking at a review of the current pricing structure and the provision of hospitality.

	Pending this work being brought to Committee, delegated authority was given to the City Solicitor and Director of Legal & Civic Services to depart from the existing charging structure and negotiate room hire charges for commercial type events.
3.5	The standard charging structure will apply to the event listed in the Schedule at Appendix 1.
	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u>
3.6	None, any recommendations for hospitality will be met from existing budgets.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.7	None.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Schedule of function requests received up to 4 April 2025.

This page is intentionally left blank

APRIL 2025 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED
IFA	2 October 2025	McDonalds IFA Grassroots Football Awards – Celebrating the volunteers who help deliver their programmes; reception, dinner, entertainment and awards. Numbers attending - 200	C	<i>Charge £1250</i>	
Federation for Ulster Local Studies	6 June 2025	50 th year Anniversary Celebration – Reception, Dinner, Speeches, entertainment and dancing. Numbers attending - 320	C	None	Wine and Soft Drinks Reception as significant anniversary
Belfast MET Boxing Academy	14 June 2025	Boxing Reception and Weigh in prior to Belfast MET v Sheffield University Boxing Event- speeches, photocall and tour. Numbers attending - 60	A & B	<i>Charge £175 plus private tour charge</i>	
The Corrymeela Community	16 June 2025	Launch of PEACEPLUS Interfaith and Belief Project to build, improve and sustain relationships between and within communities of different faiths and beliefs. A reception with speeches, lunch and networking. Numbers attending – 60	D	None	
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust – Family Nurse Partnership	26 June 2025	Family Nurse Partnership Graduation Event – celebratory event to recognise achievements of local service users with the Family Nurse Partnership. Numbers attending - 150	C & D	<i>Charge £450</i>	
Ulster Beekeepers Association	7 July 2026	International Young Beekeepers Closing Ceremony and Award Presentation to celebrate young beekeepers coming to Belfast from 40 different countries. Reception, dinner, entertainment and awards. Numbers attending – 400	C	<i>None</i>	

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Request for the use of the Garden of Remembrance and Cenotaph at the City Hall
Date:	18th April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Aisling Milliken, Functions and Exhibition Manager

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider request from the 1 st Battalion Irish Guards for the use of City Hall Garden of Remembrance and Cenotaph on Friday 5 September 2025 for service of remembrance as part of their 125 th Anniversary programme.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorise the Irish Guards remembrance service subject to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the submission of appropriate event management plans and satisfactory terms being agreed with the Event Organisers, to include ○ resolving all operational issues and meeting all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><u>1st Battalion Irish Guard 125th Anniversary Service of Remembrance – Cenotaph at City Hall: Friday 5 September 2025.</u></p> <p>The parade will assemble at the Cenotaph from 10.45am for a service commencing at 11.00am leaving the City Hall at 11.30am on conclusion of the wreath laying ceremony. The Royal Navy Association propose to use a small hand-held battery powered PA system and Regimental Band and Pipes and Drums of the Irish Guard will lead hymns as part of the act of commemoration. The numbers of observers/on parade are estimated around 125.</p>
3.2	<p>The request requires use of the cenotaph for the service and grounds for access and access to changing facilities inside City Hall prior to the service.</p>
3.3	<p>Organisers would manage the service in consultation with City Hall Function Management Unit and would adhere to event management requirements.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There is no cost to the Council in approving the use of the cenotaph. All costs associated with the Cenotaph service such as PA sound system, first aid, security, barriers will be covered by Irish Guards.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality of Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None known at this time.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None

Disability Working Group

Wednesday, 9th April, 2025

MEETING OF DISABILITY WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor Brooks (Chairperson); and
Councillors Doherty and Smyth.

In attendance: Mr. R. Connelly, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer;
Mr. M. Johnston, Language Officer;
Ms. L. Dennis, Equality and Diversity Officer; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

Apology

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Abernethy.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th December, 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Sign Language Bill

The Working Group was reminded that a Sign Language Framework had been launched by the Department for Communities which sought to address the historical under-investment in both Irish and British sign language in Northern Ireland. In February, legislation to protect both languages had been introduced to the Assembly and referred to the Committee for Communities for consideration. It was reported that the Council was preparing its response to a 'call for evidence', which would be submitted prior to the closing date of 9th May.

The Working Group welcomed the progress which had been achieved in the introduction of the legislation.

Update on Disability Actions – Delivering an Accessible City for All

The Equality and Diversity Officer reported that work was progressing on the Council's Annual Report to the Equality Commission for 2024/25. The report, she added, was part of the Council's statutory duties and an updated Disability Action Plan was being developed also.

The Working Group noted the following:

- that a report on the Disability Action Plan Annual Report for 2024/25 would be submitted to a future meeting; and
- that a disability scoping exercise had commenced to develop the new Disability Action Plan for 2026 (and onwards) and would be presented to the Working Group prior to the undertaking of a public consultation exercise in the autumn of 2025.

Contract with 'AccessAble' Organisation

The Working Group noted that the Council would be renewing its contract with the 'AccessAble' organisation, which provided support to organisations to support and improve the lives of disabled people across society. The Members noted that the present contract, which would end on 31st March, would be renewed for a further three-year period.

International Day for People with Disabilities - Engagement Evaluation

The Working Group noted the contents of a report, and an associated appendix, which outlined the findings of the evaluation exercise which had been undertaken to coincide with the International Day for People with Disabilities event which had taken place in Belfast City Hall on 3rd December, 2024.

Strategic Roadmap to Delivering an Accessible City by 2035

The Working Group was provided with an update on the work undertaken in respect of the above-mentioned matter. In considering the report, Members suggested, given the importance of the issue, that it would be beneficial if an all-Members' workshop be convened to consider the wider steps that would be involved in delivering an accessible city by 2035. Specifically, that workshop would consider how the Council could work in conjunction with other governmental bodies/agencies to enhance and improve existing projects, particularly those which sought to enhance access to and from, as well as throughout, the city centre.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed to the following:

- that a report outlining an indicative timeline for the undertaking of the associated work and recommendations would be submitted in due course for consideration;
- to invite a representative of the Equality Commission to present on the implementation of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and
- that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be requested to authorise the holding of an all-Members' workshop to consider in detail the wider implications associated with delivering the strategic roadmap to create an accessible city by 2035.

Chairperson