

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



**Belfast
City Council**

19th February, 2026

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room, City Hall and remotely via MS Teams on Tuesday, 24th February, 2026 at 5.15 pm, 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. **Motions**

- (a) Call for the NI Executive to Introduce a Basic Income for Artists Scheme (Pages 1 - 4)
- (b) Ormeau Arts Centre (Pages 5 - 8)

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Subject:	Notice of Motion – Call for the NI Executive to Introduce a Basic Income for Artists Scheme
Date:	24th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance 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: 30px; height: 20px;" 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 					
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?					
After Committee Decision After Council Decision Sometime in the future Never	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 30px; height: 80px;"> <tr><td style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table>				

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	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 2nd March, 2026 in relation to Call for the NI Executive to Introduce a Basic Income for Artists Scheme.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and agree to either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	<p>The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows:</p> <p>(m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i></p> <p>(n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i></p> <p>(o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i></p> <p>(p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i></p> <p>(q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i></p> <p>(r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i></p>
3.2	<p>The following motion has been received:</p> <p><u>Call for the NI Executive to Introduce a Basic Income for Artists Scheme</u></p> <p>“This Council notes that:</p>

The arts, culture and creative sectors are central to Belfast's social fabric, wellbeing, identity, and local economy.

Many artists, performers and creative workers in Belfast and across the North continue to experience insecure, low and irregular incomes, worsened by the long-term impacts of COVID-19 and the ongoing cost of living crisis.

The Irish Government introduced a Basic Income for Artists pilot in 2022, providing an unconditional weekly payment to artists and creative workers, which has been independently evaluated as improving financial stability, wellbeing, and time spent on creative practice.

The Irish Government has now committed to making this scheme permanent, recognising the structural precarity faced by those working in the creative industries.

This Council believes that:

- Artists and creative workers should not be forced out of their professions due to financial insecurity.
- Belfast's creative sector is a vital public good, contributing to community cohesion, regeneration, tourism, mental health, youth engagement and cultural life.
- A Basic Income for Artists scheme in the north would help protect creative livelihoods, retain local talent, and strengthen the city's cultural ecosystem.

This Council resolves to:

- Call on the Executive to introduce and fund a Basic Income for Artists scheme, modelled on the Irish Government's programme, providing regular, unconditional income support to eligible artists and creative workers.
- Request that the Minister for Communities lead on the development of this scheme, in partnership with the Department for the Economy and the Department of Finance, engaging directly with the arts and creative sectors in its design.
- Write to the First Minister and deputy First Minister urging that this proposal be treated as a priority within the Executive's Programme for Government and budget-setting process.

Proposer: Councillor Paul Doherty

Seconder: Councillor Séamas de Faoite

3.3

The motion calls upon the Council to call on the Executive to introduce a Basic Income for Artists Scheme, the Committee can either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.

3.4	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Ormeau Arts Centre
Date:	24th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

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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	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 2nd March, 2026 in relation to Ormeau Arts Centre.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>Members are asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or falls within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.</p> <p>At this time Members are only asked to note that the Notice of Motion has been received and that a subsequent report will be brought to Committee, if that Committee so agrees, outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to note that this motion will be referred on the first instance to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.</p>
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	<p>The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows:</p> <p>(m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i></p> <p>(n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i></p> <p>(o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i></p> <p>(p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i></p> <p>(q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i></p>

<p>3.2</p>	<p>(r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i></p> <p>The following motion has been received:</p> <p><u>Ormeau Arts Centre</u></p> <p>“Belfast City Council acknowledges the thriving and inclusive arts and cultural scene in Ballynafeigh and the benefits this brings not just to the local area, but to the city and region more widely;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ notes the growing aspiration in the community, particularly emerging through the Open Ormeau Community Visioning project which took place in 2025, for a dedicated arts and cultural space in Ballynafeigh, recognising the strong local interest in the arts, music and culture, and the area's increasing status as a destination for both residents and visitors to Belfast; ▪ and therefore agrees to fund a feasibility study to examine the potential for a dedicated arts and culture space in Ballynafeigh, working with Open Ormeau and the local community.” <p>Proposer: Councillor Séamas de Faoite</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Gary McKeown</p>
<p>3.3</p>	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to fund a feasibility study to examine the potential for a dedicated arts and culture space in Ballynafeigh. The City Growth and Regeneration Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of arts and culture and the motion will be referred to that Committee.</p>
<p>3.4</p>	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
<p>3.5</p>	<p>None associated with this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None.</p>

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