

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



**Belfast  
City Council**

6th January 2026

## **MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on **Tuesday, 13th January, 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. Restricted**

- (a) 'Bad Debt' Write Off (Pages 1 - 2)
- (b) Ending Violence Against Women and Girls - Regional Change Fund Letter of Offer Extension 2025/26 (Pages 3 - 38)

#### **3. Matters referred back from the Council/Motions**

- (a) Vital Role of Trees - Update (Pages 39 - 44)

#### **4. Committee/Strategic Issues**

- (a) Consultation re: DfI Roads Service - Draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023/28 (Pages 45 - 54)
- (b) Blackstaff Residents' Association - naming of entrance to Olympia Leisure Centre (Pages 55 - 56)

5. **Operational Issues**

- (a) Proposals for Dual Language Street Signs (Pages 57 - 60)
- (b) Off-Street Car Parking - Update (Pages 61 - 92)
- (c) City Protection Role in Planning (Pages 93 - 98)
- (d) Alleygate Delivery - Update (Pages 99 - 102)

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

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<b>Subject:</b>	Notice of Motion on the 'Vital Role of Trees'
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen Leonard – Director City & Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alan McHaffie - Senior Woodland & Recreation Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
	This report is in response to Cllr Hedley Abernethy's Notice of Motion on the 'Vital Role of Trees' and to give an update on (i) the Belfast Tree Strategy (ii) the One Million Tree initiative and (iii) the management of Street trees on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are asked to note the content of this report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	At its February meeting the Committee agreed to adopt a Notice of Motion that the Council recognises the vital role of trees in enhancing the health and well-being of people and communities, addressing climate change, and supporting biodiversity; commits to raising awareness among residents about these benefits and to actively support efforts to plant and protect the right trees in the right places and for the right reasons, ensuring that everyone can share in the benefits trees provide; and, will commit to exploring how we can educate and raise awareness of trees, the role they play in all our lives across Belfast.
3.2	<p>In addition, the Committee agrees that officers would submit a report which would provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an update on the Tree Strategy, including the 'One Million Trees' initiative.</li> <li>• seek to identify sites within the Council's estate where additional trees could be planted ; and</li> <li>• an outline as to how communities and electoral areas could become involved further in the life of trees in our city."</li> </ul>

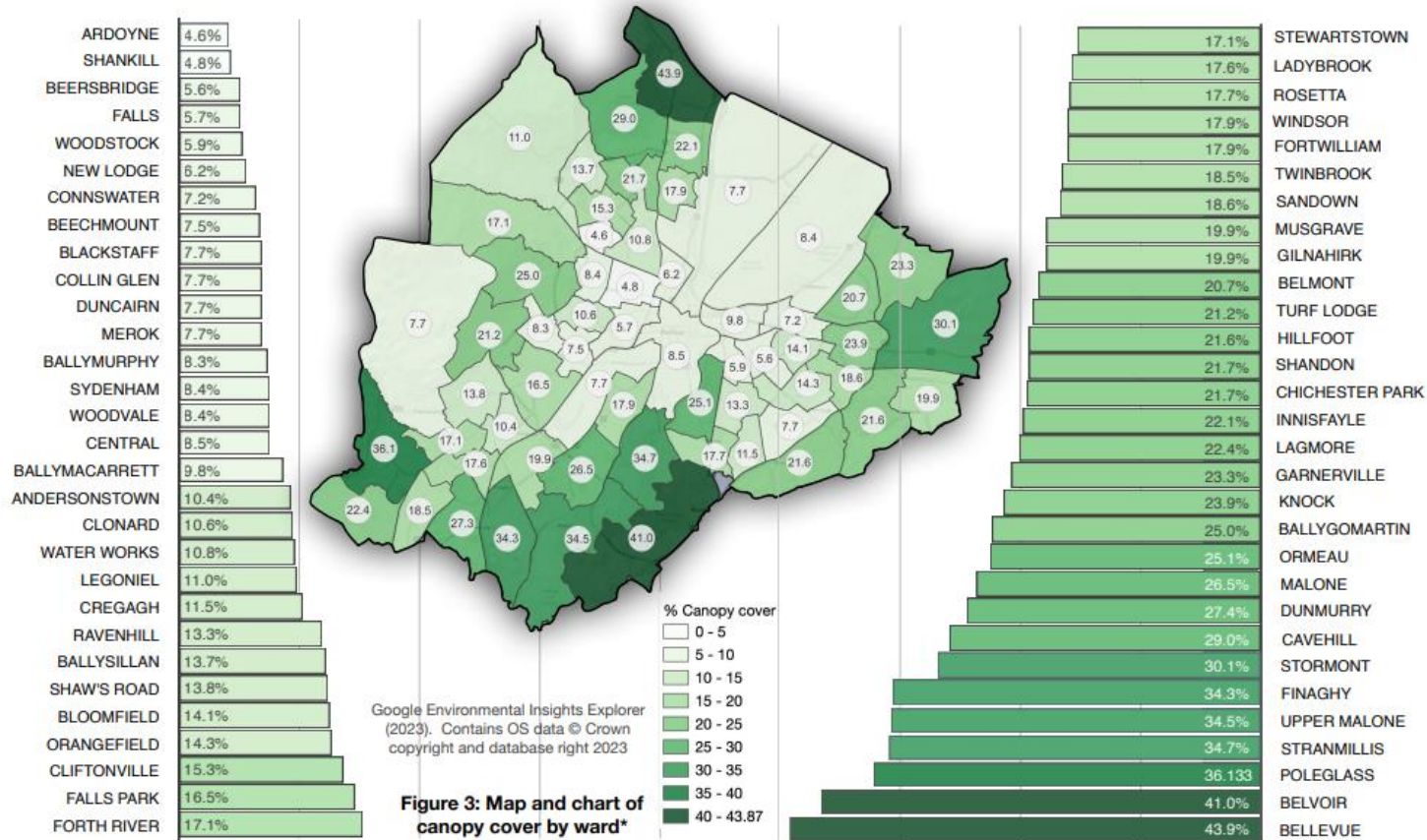
## **The Belfast Tree Strategy**

- 3.3 The Belfast Tree Strategy was produced with the aim of managing and improving the city's tree-scape over the next 10 years, focussing on protecting, enhancing, and expanding the Council's woodlands, hedges, and trees, connecting people to nature, and ensuring that they continue to be a major asset to everyone who lives in, works in, and visits Belfast city.
- 3.4 After an extensive public consultation exercise which involved a public questionnaire and the facilitation of five public workshops at locations across the city, the Belfast Tree Strategy was launched on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 at Belfast Botanical Gardens.
- 3.5 The Tree Strategy set out 37 key actions which will be delivered over the life of the Tree Strategy, and aligned with the key actions, a commitment was given to undertake an independent review of the Tree Strategy after year one and thereafter, once every 3 years until 2033.
- 3.6 In December 2024 the Council completed its first independent review/audit of the Belfast Tree Strategy. The audit process was designed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) to help stakeholders responsible for the planning and management of urban trees and forests, and to ensure trees and forests are accounted for and well-integrated into relevant planning, management and governance activities at the local level. The audit of the Tree Strategy included a scorecard of which Belfast scored a total of 42 points out of 50 which is 'Very Good' (71-85%) The next independent audit will be undertaken in 2027.
- 3.7 Tree canopy cover across Belfast averages 18.6%, as measured by Google satellite data. This ranges from 20.8% in urban and suburban areas, to 15.0% in rural areas. The Ward with the highest tree cover in Belfast is Bellevue, with 43.9% tree cover and the lowest is Ardoyne with just 4.6%. The average tree canopy cover for Northern Ireland is 11.8%. The council's woodland team will direct attention to increasing tree canopy cover in areas across the city highlighted within the Tree Establishment Strategy.
- 3.8 An increase in canopy cover will contribute to Belfast's emission reduction targets – 66% reduction by 2025; 80% by 2030; 100% by 2050. The existing trees in Belfast already store around 319,000 tonnes of carbon and sequester more than 8,890 tonnes of carbon annually (equivalent to approx. 1% of the City's annual emissions) with associated values of around £290 million and £593,000 respectively. These trees also trap and remove over 210 tonnes of air pollution annually at a value of nearly £7.5 million from reduced healthcare costs (largely from Sycamore, Beech and Ash which have a large canopy). The IUCN Urban Alliance suggests a tree a 30% tree canopy target and the Tree strategy has adopted this as the target for the city.
- (See Appendix 1. – Belfast Tree Canopy by Electoral Wards).
- 3.9 As part of the stakeholder exercise on the Councils Belfast Tree Strategy, there was a clear and recurring theme from members of the public, quote:
- “A volunteer drive would be fantastic to engage the community in the drive to increase trees, as well as a scheme to teach people how to plant trees in their own gardens safely.”
- 3.10 In collaboration with the climate team, the council has recently appointed a woodland officer for a fixed period to assist the council's Woodland team in establishing a 'community champions and a tree planting volunteer' network, engaging with local communities across the city with the objective of having tree planting volunteers throughout the city. With a particular focus on areas identified with the lowest tree canopy cover this scheme will look to provide volunteers with the resources and skills to plant trees within community settings.

	<p><b>One Million Trees initiative</b></p>
3.11	<p>The Belfast One Million Tree initiative was a strong call to action when it was launched in December 2020. It got everyone thinking about trees, their importance, especially in supporting the city to deliver its climate targets and objectives. The ambitious project was inspired by an original idea from the Belfast Metropolitan Residents' Group and is a collaboration between public, private, and voluntary sector partners. The initiative was part of the Northern Ireland-wide 'Forests of our Future' project with the aim of improving the city's resilience to climate change and enhance the quality of life for its residents.</p>
3.12	<p>Public consultation and engagement, followed by the launch of the Belfast Tree Strategy in October 2023, has shown that the city needs to be more sophisticated and targeted in its approach. Rather than focusing purely on a target number of trees, our goal is now to increase overall tree cover in the city – from 18.6% to 30% (set by IUCN Urban Alliance) – taking in woodlands, hedges and trees. To achieve the 30% canopy target will require increased tree planting and the one million trees initiative has an important role to play in this regard. It will also require a strong focus on managing our existing stock for example dealing with extreme weather conditions and managing the impact of diseases like ash die back.</p>
3.13	<p>Since the inception of the One Million Trees initiative in 2020 161,240 new trees and 2,761m new hedgerows have been planted, and 6,285 people have been engaged in the programme across the city, including schools, sports and community organisations. This has been achieved in collaboration with external partners and organisations such as the Belfast Hills Partnership, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Woodland Trust.</p>
3.14	<p>However, in terms of the Council's own estate council officers are finding it increasingly difficult to identify suitable areas to undertake 'large scale' tree planting. Locations suitable for large scale tree planting going forward are necessary if the city is to meet both the ambitions of the One Million Trees initiative and achieve 30% canopy cover by 2050. Whilst the council will continue to plant new trees and hedges where it can within its own estate, it should be emphasised that the One Million Trees is a city-wide project. We now need more engagement with other landowners to identify and develop sites that would permit larger scale tree planting opportunities. The Nature Towns &amp; Cities initiative provides an opportunity for Council to engage with partners on this and similar initiatives to support both programmes. Officers will begin these conversations with the relevant stakeholders in 2026.</p>
	<p><b>The management of street trees on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure</b></p>
3.15	<p>The council has been managing the city's street tree population on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) for the past four decades. During this time, this partnership has delivered over seven thousand new street trees and has ensured their establishment and ongoing maintenance within the greater Belfast Area.</p>
3.16	<p>The Council has been receiving 'professional fees' to cover the management of DfI street trees, however over recent years this has put an increasing strain on existing resource capacity within the councils Woodland unit, due primarily to the introduction of the Belfast Tree Strategy and the delivery of the councils 37 key actions over the next 10 years. The council has secured additional funding from the DfI to recruit three new Woodland officers on a fixed term basis and in addition to this, has increased its income generation to cover the management of the new Woodland officers. This will allow the council to continue to work on the management of street trees and sustain this ongoing and successful partnership.</p>

3.17	<p><b>Biodiversity</b></p> <p>We want to create a sustainable, nature-positive city – it's a key goal in our own Corporate Plan, as well as the Belfast Agenda community plan. This will protect our environment and wildlife, help to combat climate change, encourage people to spend more time outdoors to boost health and wellbeing, and improve the appearance and vibrancy of our city. It also compliments other projects including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• securing £850,000 of funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Nature Towns and Cities Initiative to co-design plans for nature recovery in Lagan Valley Regional Park and the Belfast Hills.</li> <li>• receiving £472,000 of funding from DAERA Challenge Fund towards the development of a Nature Recovery Network across Belfast, alongside £100,000 set aside to support biodiversity work £50,000 already set aside from council towards four wildflower meadows city-wide.</li> <li>• being selected as one of 50 finalists for Bloomberg Philanthropies' Mayors' Challenge for our project to reimagine the city's alleyways as new shared community assets for neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• 23 of our parks already carry the Green Flag accreditation for quality and good park management.</li> <li>• exploring new and emerging opportunities to enhance the city's blue and green infrastructure as agreed in the Local Development Plan.</li> </ul>
4.0	<b>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</b>
4.1	<p>The Woodland officer post dedicated to the new Tree Volunteer initiative will be a fixed term post and is currently funded by the council's climate fund. Officers have submitted a bid into the estimates setting process for 26/27 to make this post permanent and to include additional monies to treat Ash Die back within the Council's estate.</p>
5.0	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b>
	None
6.0	<b>Appendices</b>
	<b>Appendix No1</b> (Belfast Tree Canopy Cover by Electoral Wards).

## Appendix 1. Belfast Tree Canopy Cover by Electoral Ward



\*These percentages are an average of the canopy cover for each ward area. To better understand the reality for neighbourhoods and residents, street canopy cover or LSOA level assessment may be preferable.







<b>Subject:</b>	Consultation on the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028.
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services.
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alastair Curran, Environmental Protection 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

☐

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	<p>The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) is presently consulting on a fourth-round draft Road Noise Action Plan, covering the period 2023-2028 in accordance with the Environmental Noise Directive or END</p> <p>The Department's consultation document may be accessed via the following weblink:  <a href="https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/consultations/environmental-noise-directive-road-noise-action-plan-2023-2028">https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/consultations/environmental-noise-directive-road-noise-action-plan-2023-2028</a></p>
1.2	<p>This report serves to provide an overview of the round 4 noise mapping assessment process, the technical amendments to the mapping methodology that have been implemented since round 3 and the outcomes of the noise mapping and associated action planning processes for the Belfast City Council area. The report considers the proposed Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) for Belfast and the associated mitigation measures proposed by DfI in order to reduce levels of road transport related population noise exposure within the CNMAs and their environs.</p>
1.3	<p>Finally, this report provides at Appendix 1, a proposed response to the Department for Infrastructure consultation concerning the Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028.</p>
1.4	<p>The Committee is advised that responses to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023 – 2028 are to be received by the Department by 17:00 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the contents of this Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028 report;</li> <li>• Agree that the proposed consultation response, provided at Appendix 1 to this report, be submitted to the Department for Infrastructure by the consultation deadline of 17:00 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026.</li> </ul> <p>Upon Committee agreement, the consultation response will be provided to the Department for Infrastructure by 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026, indicating that the consultation response is subject to ratification at a meeting of full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 and that the consultation response may therefore be subject to amendment.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p>The Committee is advised that pursuant to requirements of The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, as amended, and Annex V of the European Directive for Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise 2002/49/EC, colloquially referred to as the Environmental Noise Directive or END, the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) is presently consulting on a fourth round draft Road Noise Action Plan covering the period 2023-2028.</p>
3.2	<p>The Committee will appreciate that END requires Competent Authorities, such as the Department for Infrastructure, in the case of major roads, to review, and where necessary, to revise their Noise Action Plans every five years or whenever a 'major development' affects the current noise situation. The DfI round 4 draft Road Noise Action Plan therefore constitutes the five-year review covering the period from 2023 to 2028.</p>
3.3	<p>The round 4 draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028 has been based upon the outworkings of the fourth round of strategic noise mapping, which in accordance with the Environmental</p>

	Noise Regulations, has been produced for major roads, based upon 2021 road transport data. The Committee will be aware, however, that during 2021, Northern Ireland was subject to Covid-19 movement restrictions, with controls not finally rescinded until February 2022. Accordingly, it is unclear as to the applicability of noise modelling undertaken for road transport for a 2021 year to the entirety of the 2023-2028 five-year review period.
3.4	Notwithstanding, the qualifying thresholds for round 4 are the same as for previous rounds of noise mapping and action planning, meaning that noise mapping and action planning are prepared and reported for all major roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year and for agglomerations with a population in excess of 100,000 persons, a population density equal to or greater than 500 people per km <sup>2</sup> and which are considered to be urbanised.
3.5	The only designated agglomeration within Northern Ireland for the purposes of round 4 is the Belfast urban area, meaning that roads modelled within the Belfast Agglomeration for round 4 comprise urban areas of Belfast, Castlereagh, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and North Down districts. Major roads included trunk roads, motorways and classified roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year.
3.6	The Committee is advised that within END, there are presently no noise limit values established for the United Kingdom. The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) had previously, therefore, employed an assessment methodology established by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Welsh Government in relation to noise from roads by determining where the 1% of the population that are affected by the highest noise levels are located, and by further determining that these locations are where the LA <sub>10,18</sub> -hour indicator is at least 75dB.
3.7	For the Belfast Agglomeration, round 4 roads noise modelling has estimated that 11,000 dwellings within the Belfast Agglomeration are shown to be exposed to noise levels from major roads greater than 75 dB Lden (energy equivalent noise level, compared to around 800 dwellings in round 3. For the L <sub>night</sub> parameter, approximately 2,100 dwellings within the Belfast agglomeration are exposed to noise levels of more than 70 dB L <sub>night</sub> , compared to approximately 100 dwellings in round 3.
3.8	It is noted that the assessment methodology has changed since the round 3 mapping with the adoption of the CNOSSOS-EU 2020 assessment methodology for round 4. Accordingly, for round 4, within the Belfast Agglomeration and indeed, for major roads outside of the Belfast agglomeration, there has been a significant increase in the number of people exposed to noise levels greater than 75 dB Lden when compared to the round 3 outcome; (22,700 persons for round 4 versus 3,100 persons for round 3, for the Belfast Agglomeration) and noise levels greater than 70 dB L <sub>night</sub> (4,800 persons for round 4 versus 400 persons for round 3, for the Belfast Agglomeration). The Northern Ireland network of major roads is generally focused on Belfast, including the main radial corridors along the M1, M2, A1 and A6.
3.9	For the purposes of identifying Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs), the round 4 strategic noise maps were analysed to identify the 1% of the population affected by the highest road traffic noise levels from those exposed to road traffic noise above 50 dB LAeq,16-hour. The top 1% of the population with the highest noise exposure were then grouped into spatial clusters of 50m and those clusters were categorised into four priority bands based upon the number of affected properties (>0-4, 5-10, 11-20 and >20). Locations where more than 11 residential properties are affected served as the basis for proposing round 4 CNMAs. The Department's acoustic consultants have commented that these locations are characterised by high noise exposure and have been prioritised for potential noise reduction interventions. The top 10 clusters, based upon population, have been selected from this dataset and are proposed as CNMAs within the Round 4 – draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028 - Section 6.3 Potential Mitigation Measures for Round 4 CNMAs, and Appendix C Proposed CNMAs for Round 4.

3.10	<p>Of the round four 10 CNMAs proposed for Northern Ireland, 2 are located within the Belfast City Council area, namely:</p> <p><b>CNMA 1 - Belfast, Beersbridge Road</b> – covering an approximate 335 m length of the Beersbridge Road, from its junction with the Avoniel Road to the Connswater Greenway / Conn's Water and encompassing 39 residential properties and premises.</p> <p><b>CNMA 2 - Belfast, College Square East</b> – covering an approximate 425 m length of College Square East from its junction with Wellington Place to College Avenue and from College Avenue to its junction with Divis Street, encompassing student accommodation at John Bell House, Queen's Accommodation Elms (BT1), the College Central apartment building, properties beside 103-105 Castle Street and at 12 Hamill Street, and the Morning Star House, 2-12 Divis Street.</p>
3.11	<p>Council noise officers have reviewed maps of the proposed CNMAs, and it appears that in respect of CNMA 1, some recent residential developments along the Beersbridge Road may not be fully reflected within the Department's maps, and that for CNMA 2, the properties located beside 103-105 Castle Street are retail premises.</p> <p>In addition to the Department's general mitigation measures the Department's acoustic consultants have indicated that Table 6.3 of the draft Road Noise Action Plan provides a summary of proposed mitigation measures for round 4 CNMAs, which are subject to available funding and powers available to DfI, adding that due to the nature of the measures, many of the costs are unknown as they are outside of the powers available to DfI, and that some of the proposed measures identified are generic and it is anticipated that these will be developed over the course of the round 4 period (2023- 2028).</p>
3.12	<p>Accordingly proposed mitigation measures for <b>CNMA 1 - Belfast, Beersbridge Road</b> include: <i>'Introduction of targeted initiatives such as speed reduction, car-pools, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport, including the BRT on the Albertbridge Road - so could potentially benefit from the scheme'.</i></p>
3.13	<p>The Department for Infrastructure will appreciate however, that with respect to CNMA 1, the Beersbridge Road is already regularly served by Translink Metro Service 4, and that at the location of the proposed CNMA 1, the Translink Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) G1 Glider east route, which runs from Belfast city centre, via the Albertbridge and Upper Newtownards Roads, terminating at the Dundonald Park and Ride, is located some 600 m away. It is unclear, therefore, whether the proposed mitigation measures, that also include speed reductions, carpooling, etc. will lead to the necessary improvements in road transport related noise within the CNMA by the delivery date of 2028.</p>
3.14	<p>Proposed mitigation measures for <b>CNMA 2 - Belfast, College Square East</b> include: <i>'Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport. The promotion of the use of railway commuting may aid the reduction in commuter traffic into the city centre'.</i></p>
3.15	<p>The Department for Infrastructure will appreciate that Divis Street and College Square East provide access to and from the city centre via the A12 Westlink 'off' and 'on' slips, and that College Square East and Divis Street, connecting to the Falls Road, additionally provide access to and from the city centre for residents living in the west of the city. Moreover, the Falls Road, Divis Street and College Square East also form a component of the Belfast Rapid Transit G1 Glider route that starts at McKinstry Road, close to the Belfast City Council boundary with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, travels through the city centre and eventually terminates in the east of the city at the Dundonald Park and Ride.</p>
3.16	<p>Accordingly, and mindful of the road network at, and in the vicinity of CNMA 2, it is unclear whether the proposed introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, cycling to work</p>

	<p>schemes and encouraging the use of public transport will deliver the required reductions in road noise at this busy city centre location. It is acknowledged, however, that the nearby Grand Central Station and the promotion of the use of railway commuting may aid the reduction in commuter traffic into the city centre. The opportunity for further transition from road commuter traffic towards rail travel will though largely be determined by commuter needs and by those commuter catchment areas served by the Translink rail network. Moreover, the transition to hybrid working for many city centre organisations, after the Covid-19 pandemic, is likely to have resulted in a reduction in the commuter traffic within Belfast City Centre.</p>
3.17	<p>By way of conclusion, it is considered that where residential properties within the Belfast City Council area have been determined by the Department for Infrastructure to be subject to excessive road transport related noise levels, more affirmative, measurable and site specific mitigation measures should be proposed by the Department, in contrast to being dependent upon improvements in the local noise environment associated with the introduction of what may be regarded as 'softer' and intangible modal shift type initiatives such as car pools, cycle to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport. As already highlighted, the proposed CNMAs and their environs are serviced by the Translink Belfast Metro bus services and / or the Translink Belfast Rapid Transit Glider.</p>
3.18	<p>Moreover, it is unclear which organisations would be responsible for the introduction and operation of specific measures such as carpools and cycle to work schemes within each of the CNMAs and how their implementation and impact could be monitored and confirmed by the Department for Infrastructure in order to ensure that road transport noise levels within the CNMAs are reduced to 'acceptable' levels by 2028.</p>
3.19	<p>The Department's comment that when addressing specific CNMAs, validation exercises can be undertaken including, for example, that site-specific noise monitoring can be completed when developing noise models to determine the specification of acoustic barriers or low noise road surfacing is, however, welcomed. Although acoustic barriers or low noise road surfacing are not proposed for either of the Belfast CNMAs, the Department for Infrastructure should nevertheless undertake noise readings to validate the round 4 mapping and to confirm the need for designation and implementation of the proposed CNMAs. The Department should additionally engage with residents and other relevant parties located within each of the CNMAs in order to agree any final necessary road noise mitigation measures.</p>
3.20	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications.</u></b></p> <p>There are no financial or resource implications for Belfast City Council associated with the proposed consultation response to the Department for Infrastructure.</p>
3.21	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment.</u></b></p> <p>The Department for Infrastructure has advised within its consultation document that under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity. The Department consequently has further advised that an Equality Impact Assessment screening exercise and Rural Needs Impact Assessment were carried out for the Round 4 Road Noise Action Plan, which concluded that no further action is necessary i.e. a full EQIA was 'screened out' but should the need for a full Equality Impact Assessment be identified, this decision will be reviewed.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices -</b>
	<p><b>Appendix 1</b> – Belfast City Council proposed consultation response in respect on the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028.</p>

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**Appendix 1 – Belfast City Council proposed consultation response in respect on the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028.**

WSP  
Ground Floor  
The Soloist, Lanyon Place  
Belfast  
BT1 3LP

Via email: [round4rnap@wsp.com](mailto:round4rnap@wsp.com)

Dear Sir

**Re: Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028.**

Belfast City Council has considered the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028, as it applies to the Belfast City Council area, and would provide the following comments by way of consultation response.

Belfast City Council notes that the round 4 draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2208 has been based upon the outworkings of the fourth round of noise mapping, which in accordance with the Environmental Noise Regulations, has been produced for major roads, based upon 2021 road transport data. The Department for Infrastructure will appreciate, however, that during 2021, Northern Ireland was subject to Covid-19 movement restrictions, and that those restrictions were not finally rescinded until February 2022. Accordingly, it is unclear as to the applicability of noise modelling undertaken for road transport for a 2021 year to the entirety of the 2023-2028 five year review period.

Belfast City Council further notes that of the 10 CNMAs proposed for Northern Ireland, for round four, two are located within the Belfast City Council area; namely:

**CNMA 1 - Belfast, Beersbridge Road** – covering an approximate 335 m length of the Beersbridge Road, from its junction with the Avoniel Road to the Connswater Greenway / Conn's Water and encompassing 39 residential properties and premises.

**CNMA 2 - Belfast, College Square East** – covering an approximate 425 m length of College Square East from its junction with Wellington Place to College Avenue and from College Avenue to its junction with Divis Street, encompassing student accommodation at John Bell House, Queen's Accommodation Elms, the College Central apartment building, properties beside 103-105 Castle Street and at 12 Hamill Street, and the Morning Star House, 2-12 Divis Street.

Council noise officers have reviewed maps of the proposed CNMAs, and it appears that in respect of CNMA 1, some recent residential developments along the Beersbridge Road may

not be fully reflected within the Department's maps, and that for CNMA 2, the properties located beside 103-105 Castle Street are retail premises.

Proposed mitigation measures for **CNMA 1 - Belfast, Beersbridge Road** include: *'Introduction of targeted initiatives such as speed reduction, car-pools, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport, including the BRT on the Albertbridge Road - so could potentially benefit from the scheme'.*

The Department for Infrastructure will appreciate that with respect to CNMA 1, the Beersbridge Road is already regularly served by Translink Metro Service 4, and that at the location of the proposed CNMA 1, the Translink Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) G1 Glider east route, which runs from the city centre via the Albertbridge Road and Upper Newtownards Road, terminating at the Dundonald Park and Ride, is located some 600 m away. It is unclear, therefore, whether the proposed mitigation measures, that also include speed reductions and carpooling, etc. will lead to the necessary improvements in road transport related noise within the CNMA by the action plan delivery date of 2028.

Moreover, proposed mitigation measures for **CNMA 2 - Belfast, College Square East** include: *'Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport. The promotion of the use of railway commuting may aid the reduction in commuter traffic into the city centre'.*

The Department for Infrastructure will appreciate that Divis Street and College Square East provide access to and from the city centre via the A12 Westlink 'off' and 'on' slips, and that College Square East and Divis Street, connecting to the Falls Road, additionally provide access to and from the city centre for residents living in the west of the city. Moreover, the Falls Road, Divis Street and College Square East also form a component of the Belfast Rapid Transit G1 Glider route that starts at McKinsty Road, close to the Belfast City Council boundary with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, travels through the city centre and eventually terminates in the east of the city at the Dundonald Park and Ride.

Accordingly, and mindful of the road network at, and in the vicinity of CNMA 2, it is unclear whether the proposed introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport will deliver the required reductions in road noise at this busy city centre location. It is acknowledged, however, that the nearby Grand Central Station and the promotion of the use of railway (and indeed bus) commuting may aid the reduction in commuter traffic into the city centre. It is considered, however, that the opportunity for further transition from road commuter traffic towards rail travel will be substantially determined by commuter needs and by those commuter catchment areas served by the Translink rail network. Moreover, the transition to a hybrid working model for many organisations, after the Covid-19 pandemic, is likely to have resulted in a reduction in the commuter traffic within Belfast City Centre.

By way of conclusion, it is considered that where residential properties within the Belfast City Council area have been determined by the Department for Infrastructure to be subject to excessive road transport related noise levels, more affirmative, measurable and site specific mitigation measures should be proposed by the Department, in contrast to the Noise Action Plan being dependent substantially upon improvements in the local noise environment associated with the introduction of what may be regarded as 'softer' and intangible modal shift type initiatives such as car pools, cycle to work schemes and encouraging the use of public



transport. As already highlighted, the proposed CNMAs and their environs are already served by Translink Belfast Metro bus services and / or the Translink Belfast Rapid Transit Glider.

Moreover, it is unclear which organisations would be responsible for the introduction and operation of specific measures such as carpools and cycle to work schemes within each of the CNMAs and how their implementation and impact could be monitored and confirmed by the Department for Infrastructure in order to ensure that road transport noise levels within the CNMAs are reduced to 'acceptable' levels by 2028.

However, Belfast City Council welcomes the Department for Infrastructure's comments that when addressing specific CNMAs, validation exercises can be undertaken including, for example, that site-specific noise monitoring can be completed when developing noise models to determine the specification of acoustic barriers or low noise road surfacing. Although acoustic barriers or low noise road surfacing are not proposed within either of the two Belfast CNMAs, the Department for Infrastructure is nevertheless recommended to undertake noise readings to validate the round 4 strategic noise mapping and to confirm the need for designation and implementation of the proposed CNMAs. The Department should additionally engage with residents and other relevant parties located within each of the CNMAs in order to agree any final necessary road noise mitigation measures.

I hope that you find Belfast City Council's consultation comments helpful in respect of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round 4 - draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023-2028. Should you wish, however, to discuss any aspect of the consultation response in greater detail, please contact the Council's noise officers on 028 9027 0428 or via [environmentalhealthservice@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealthservice@belfastcity.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

Siobhan Toland  
Director City Services

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Request from Blackstaff Residents' Association re: John Stewart Bell</b>
<b>Date:</b>	13th January 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Barry Flynn, Committee Services Officer

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.0	To consider a request to erect a memorial to the Belfast-born physicist John Stewart Bell at the Olympia Drive entrance to Olympia Leisure Centre.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the report and to take such action thereon as may be determined.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Born in the Village area of Belfast in 1928, John Stewart Bell is regarded as one of the 20th Century's greatest physicists. In October 2017, the Committee acceded to a request from the Blackstaff Residents' Association to rename the Olympia Drive entrance to Olympia Leisure Centre in honour of the John Stewart Bell. That decision was taken after a wider community consultation exercise and as part of the then Olympia site development. A small plaque was erected in 2017 at the entrance in recognition of Mr. Bell.
3.2	Correspondence has since been received from Mr. William Dickson on behalf of the Blackstaff Residents' Association requesting that the Council consider erecting a metal arch incorporating the wording 'John Stewart Bell Entrance' over the entrance from Olympia Drive (appendix 1 refers). The residents' association feels this would be more appropriate and fitting gesture to the eminent physicist.
4.0	<b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b> None at this stage.
5.0	<b><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></b> There are no Equality or Good Relation Implications attached to this report.

## APPENDIX 1

### OLYMPIA DRIVE ENTRANCE TO OLYMPIA LEISURE CENTRE





<b>Subject:</b>	Proposals for dual language street signs
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley - Director of Planning and Building Control
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ian Harper - Building Control Manager Heather Wylie - Property and Legal Coordinator

## 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

☐

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>																		
1.1	To consider applications for the erection of dual language street signs for three existing streets within the city.																		
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>																		
2.1	The Committee is asked to agree to the erection of a second street nameplate in Irish at Delhi Street, Lagmore Downs and Rosetta Avenue.																		
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>																		
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> The Council may erect a second street nameplate in a language other than English pursuant to Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995.																		
3.2	Members are asked to consider the following applications to erect dual language street nameplates showing the name of the street expressed in a language other than English. The second language is Irish.																		
3.3	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>English Name</th><th>Non- English Name</th><th>Location</th><th>Persons surveyed</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Delhi Street</td><td>Sráid Dheilí</td><td>Off Ormeau Road, BT7</td><td>123</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lagmore Downs</td><td>Mulláin an Laig Mhóir</td><td>Off Lagmore Avenue, BT17</td><td>152</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rosetta Avenue</td><td>Ascaill Rosetta</td><td>Off Ormeau Road, BT7</td><td>87</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			English Name	Non- English Name	Location	Persons surveyed	Delhi Street	Sráid Dheilí	Off Ormeau Road, BT7	123	Lagmore Downs	Mulláin an Laig Mhóir	Off Lagmore Avenue, BT17	152	Rosetta Avenue	Ascaill Rosetta	Off Ormeau Road, BT7	87
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Rosetta Avenue	Ascaill Rosetta	Off Ormeau Road, BT7	87																
3.4	The translations were authenticated by Queens University, the approved translator for Belfast City Council.																		
3.5	In accordance with the Council's policy for the erection of dual language street signs, surveys of all persons appearing on the electoral register plus owners or tenants in actual possession of commercial premises for the above streets were carried out and the following responses were received.																		
3.6	Delhi Street, BT7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37 occupiers (30.08%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate.</li> <li>5 occupiers (4.06%) were not in favour of the erection of a second street name plate.</li> </ul>																		
3.7	Lagmore Downs, BT17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>53 occupiers (34.86%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate.</li> <li>1 occupier (0.65%) had no preference either way.</li> </ul>																		

3.8	<p>Rosetta Avenue, BT7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 37 occupiers (42.52%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate.</li> <li>• 13 occupiers (14.94%) were not in favour of the erection of a second street name plate.</li> <li>• 1 occupier (1.14%) had no preference either way.</li> </ul>
3.9	<p>One resident commented that 'As a Catholic who embraces Irish culture, I feel this would be divisive'.</p>
3.10	<p><b><u>Assessment against policy</u></b></p> <p>The Council's policy on the erection of a second street nameplate requires that at least fifteen percent (15%) of the occupiers surveyed must be in favour of the proposal to erect a second street sign in a language other than English, to progress to Committee for consideration.</p>
3.11	<p>All the surveys listed above demonstrate compliance with the threshold contained within the Policy.</p>
3.12	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>There is a cost of approximately £1200 to cover the cost of the manufacturing and erection of the dual language street signs. The cost for these street signs has been allowed for in the current budget.</p>
3.13	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>Each application for a dual language street sign is subject to an initial assessment and an elected member notification process to identify any potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations and rural needs.</p>
3.14	<p>The initial assessment for Delhi Street identified that the carrying out of the survey had the potential to cause adverse impacts on the grounds of good relations. This application was subsequently screened and the draft screening identified that the carrying out of a survey in itself in this street had the potential to give rise to community tension, as could the erection of the street signs and therefore had the potential to give rise to adverse impact on the grounds of good relations. It was acknowledged however the process could alternatively assist in promoting cultural and linguistic diversity. The elected member notification carried out for Delhi Street did not identify any potential for adverse impacts. The application was presented to Committee prior to survey in line with the agreed process referencing the initial assessment and screening and the street was approved for survey by Committee and full Council.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Appendices</b></p>
	<p>None</p>

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<b>Subject:</b>	Update on Off Street Car Park
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	David Bone, City Services Manager, and Gavin Bell, Off Street Parking 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
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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

☐

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the Off-Street Parking function which transferred to local councils following Local Government Reform in 2015. Specifically, this report provides updates on.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Progress of the Belfast Parking Order which will include a consultation to replace the existing legislation.</li> <li>2. Update on City Centre Off Street Car Parks.</li> <li>3. Challenges of debt recovery from unpaid Penalty Charge Notices and graduated approach to car parking enforcement.</li> </ol>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to agree the report and note the following;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the progress of the Belfast Parking Order to enactment post consultation and subsequent amendment.</li> <li>2. Update on City Centre Off Street Car Parks.</li> <li>3. Note the update on debt recovery from unpaid Penalty Charge Notices and graduated approach to car parking enforcement.</li> </ol>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b><u>Belfast Parking Order</u></b></p> <p>The People &amp; Communities Committee approved the draft Belfast Off Street Car Parking Order in October 2023 and this was agreed by Council in November 2023. This was a revised version of the report previously agreed in 2019. Council had endeavoured to create their own Order in 2020 but following a discussion with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and an independent legal opinion, it was confirmed that the two orders could not be in place at the same time and the DfI legislation would always be the preeminent legislation. Other areas were also clarified through this opinion and will enable council to progress with the draft order.</p> <p>The main elements of the Belfast Order will remain unchanged from the current legislation which is place.</p> <p>The key proposed changes are outlined below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Include four existing public car parks into the order:</b> Two car parks transferred from the DfI in 2015 but were not in the order (Shaw's Bridge and Parkgate Avenue), one was within the BCC portfolio (Stranmillis), and one was part of an urban regeneration project (Slievegallion).</li> <li><b>2. Remove two public car parks from the order.</b> Bankmore Street and Frederick Street car parks transferred from the DfI and are subject to the existing Parking Order legislation. They were not within the ownership of the DfI when transferred in 2015. The landowners did not renew rental licenses with council in 2017 and 2018, respectively. These two car parks now need to be removed from the Order.</li> <li><b>3. Review the Blue Badge parking policy.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Council recognises that customers who hold Blue Badges may require additional time due to their mobility issues.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<p>b) It is proposed that vehicles displaying a valid Blue Badge may park free for an additional hour following payment of the appropriate charge in accordance with the scale of charges.</p> <p><b>4. Arrange for the suspension of car parking places for works or events to be undertaken.</b></p> <p>a) The Council on occasion receives requests to allow third parties to use car parks or parts of car park for other purposes.</p> <p>b) The draft order includes provisions for the Council to suspend the use of car parking in specific circumstances to facilitate other temporary uses.</p> <p>c) There would be a process developed to administer all requests, taking into consideration the scheme of delegation, which would involve off street car parking, legal and estates in drafting licence agreements for such purposes.</p> <p>d) This would provide the necessary powers to council under delegation to make these decisions expediently.</p> <p>It is important that the order proceeds not only for the mechanism of enforcement but as noted above the inclusion and exclusion of car parks in the order. This is of particular importance to the progress of the strategic sites as there has been considerable progress made with the development of the north city centre sites – Kent Street and Little Donegall Street.</p> <p>It had been previously agreed that the consultation would occur on the draft order, the findings examined and take the order back to committee to seek enactment when the DfI are ready to revoke the NI Council car parks from the NI 2000 Order. This amendment will only occur when all Councils are in readiness and the revocation has been tabled at Stormont. The DfI Minister has recently written to all Chief Executives in NI seeking an update on the progress of their orders and is encouraging all councils to have them progressed to ensure the advancement of the revocations, Appendix 1.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p>It is proposed to consult on the draft order via Your Say, Appendix 2, in January 2026 and following consultation, move to the published Notice of Intention and bring back to the Committee to enact. This order would cover the four car parks that currently sit outside the existing Off Street Parking Order (NI) 2000. Following the revocation of BCC Council car parks from the Off-Street Parking Order (NI) 2000 by the DfI, an amendment to this order will be advertised and brought back to the Committee for enactment. This will consolidate all car parks within the Belfast Order, Appendix 1.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<p><b><u>Update on City Centre Off Street Car Parks</u></b></p> <p>As part of the Belfast Agenda ambitions to increase the residential population, and to increase city centre living, several existing city centre off-street car parking sites have been approved by the CG&amp;R and SP&amp;R Committees to be brought forward for Housing Led Regeneration purposes. These sites, as identified below, are at various stages of development. Updates will be provided to City Growth and Regeneration Committee and Strategic Policy &amp; Resource Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little Donegal Street (BCC Owned)</li> <li>• Kent Street (Leased from the DfC)</li> <li>• Exchange Street (BCC Owned)</li> <li>• Charlotte Street (BCC Owned) and also under consideration for the Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2</li> <li>• Smithfield (BCC Owned)</li> </ul>

	<p>The development of these charged car parks will result in an estimated loss of departmental income but there will be an expected increase of rateable income from these development sites.</p> <p>The loss of this <b>net income</b> has been highlighted and mapped out within mid-term financial planning and is outlined below.</p> <table><tr><th>Estimate 26/27</th><th>Estimate 27/28</th><th>Estimate 28/9</th><th>Estimate 29/30</th></tr><tr><td>£ 96,682.07</td><td>£ 172,628.13</td><td>£ 172,628.13</td><td>£ 458,102.42</td></tr></table>	Estimate 26/27	Estimate 27/28	Estimate 28/9	Estimate 29/30	£ 96,682.07	£ 172,628.13	£ 172,628.13	£ 458,102.42
Estimate 26/27	Estimate 27/28	Estimate 28/9	Estimate 29/30						
£ 96,682.07	£ 172,628.13	£ 172,628.13	£ 458,102.42						
4.2	<p><b><u>Process for Debt recovery</u></b></p> <p>Within public car parks the main enforcement mechanism is the issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). PCNs are issued for non-payment, over staying a parking period, parking out of bay, misuse of blue badge and electric vehicle bays and vehicles not permitted to park. Once a PCN is issued users are given 14 days in which they can avail of a reduction of the cost by 50% (£45).</p> <p>Following this period the full cost of the PCN must be paid, if it is not paid a Notice to Owner is sent advising of the debt recovery process, as stipulated in the Traffic Management Order 2005. Should this be ignored a Charge Certificate Notice is sent (£135) and following this the registered owner is advised through a Notice of Intention that the debt will be registered with the Enforcement of Judgements Office (EJO). Article 15 of the TMO 2005 gives council the power to seek recovery of all those monies outstanding and the EJO is the mechanism for the first stage of recovery. The Traffic Management Order 2005 sets out all the mechanisms to ensure recovery of debt. The Off Street Car Park Manager is developing the processes to ensure that debt is managed and recovered within the legislative guidelines.</p>								
4.3	<p><b><u>Finance and resource implications</u></b></p> <p>All costs will be met through the existing budgets. Support will be required from several different Council services including Corporate Communications, Legal, Business Support and Democratic Services.</p>								
4.4	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>A screening of the draft order has occurred and the consultation with be circulated with all voluntary and statutory bodies stakeholders with a good relations/rural needs remit.</p>								
5.0	<p><b>Appendices - Documents Attached</b></p>								
	<p>Appendix 1 – Dfl Minister letter</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Draft Order</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Consultation questions</p>								

## Road Asset Development

By e-mail to:

**Council Chief Executives  
Council Representatives  
on Off-Street Parking Group**

Third Floor,  
James House, Gasworks Site  
2-4 Cromac Avenue,  
Belfast, BT7 2JA

Email: [ronnie.balfour@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ronnie.balfour@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

Our reference: IN1/25/418972

10 October 2025

Dear all,

### **Request for Update from Councils**

Over recent months the Department has been approached by a number of Councils requesting that it proceeds as soon as practicable to implement the legislative solution to address the anomaly which arose when off-street car parks were transferred across to Councils back on 1 April 2015. In response the Minister advised that officials would be re-engaging with councils to ascertain the current state of play to inform our plans with the intention of reaching mutual agreement on a suitable timescale for progressing the necessary legislative changes.

As previously advised the Department is keen to progress the legislation required to enable the solution to be implemented, however, as the legislation is using powers in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, the agreement of the Northern Ireland Assembly is required to make the legislation law.

Therefore, I'd be grateful if you could confirm if your council has drafted or is in the process of drafting its equivalent to the Off-Street Parking Order (Northern Ireland) 2000 ("the 2000 Order") as it is imperative that all councils have their draft administrative orders ready to come into operation to coincide with the repeal of the 2000 Order as it currently applies to councils. Such action is essential to help ensure continuity of governance arrangements for the off-street parking car parks in question, which I anticipate will be a significant consideration and matter of interest to MLA's during the Assembly's scrutiny of the draft legislation.

Please email your response at the earliest convenience to:

[TransportLegislationBranch@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:TransportLegislationBranch@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

Once I have received responses from all councils, my intention is to arrange another meeting of the off-street parking group to discuss implementation, timetabling and any other issues you wish to discuss. Given the passage of time since our previous contact with your council, I'd be most grateful if you could advise of any changes to the main contacts to whom this has also been copied.

Yours faithfully,

**Ronnie Balfour**  
**Head of Transport Legislation Branch**

**cc**  
**Liam McEvoy**  
**Director of Road Asset Development**  
**TRAM Group**

## Draft Belfast Off-Street Parking (Public Car Parks) Order 2026

*Made* XXXX 2026

*Coming into operation* XXXX 2026

### ARRANGEMENT OF ORDER

#### PART 1 PRELIMINARY

1. Citation and commencement
2. Interpretation

#### PART 2 USE OF PARKING PLACES

3. Specified parking places
4. Vehicles of a specified class
5. Position in which a vehicle may wait
6. Parking bays for disabled persons' vehicles
7. Parking bays for electric vehicles
8. Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait
9. Use of parking place other than for parking
10. Issue of licences
11. Surrender and revocation of licences

#### PART 3 TARIFFS AND TICKETS

12. Requirement to pay appropriate tariff
13. Payment of charges
14. Pre-paid tickets
15. Use of telephone parking system
16. Display of printed tickets
17. Particulars of tickets
18. Season tickets

#### PART 4 RESTRICTION ON USE OF VEHICLES AND PARKING PLACES

19. Requirement to stop the engine of a vehicle
20. Trading in a parking place
21. Sounding of horn
22. Driving in a parking place
23. Ball games

24. Miscellaneous activities
25. Means of passage
26. Consumption of intoxicating liquor
27. Use of entrances and exits, and direction of travel
28. Erection of structures and lighting of fires
29. Supermarket trolleys
30. Reserving a parking bay
31. Use of car park or sections of for the purposes of temporary meeting place

SCHEDULE 1 — PARKING PLACES

SCHEDULE 2 — TARIFFS

Belfast City Council (a) makes the following Order in exercise of the powers conferred by Articles 10, 11, 13, 14 and 26(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997(b) and Off-street Parking (Functions of District Councils) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Council has consulted such persons as the Council considered appropriate in compliance with paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 4 to that Order.

## PART 1 PRELIMINARY

### Citation and commencement

1. This Order may be cited as The Belfast Off-Street (Public Car Parks) Order 2026 and shall come into operation on <sup>xx</sup> day of XXXX

### Interpretation

2. In this Order—

“charging hours” means the period during which the driver is required to pay a charge for the use of a parking place specified in column 1 of Schedule 1 in accordance with the scale of charges set out in column 6 of Schedule 1;

“driver” means the person who whether as owner or otherwise has the charge or control of a vehicle or being present is entitled to give orders to the person having charge or control thereof;

“electric vehicle” means any vehicle which uses one or more electric motors for propulsion;

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(a) S.I. 1999/283 (N.I. 1) Article 3(1)  
(b) 2015. c.3



“electric vehicle charging post” means apparatus which supplies electricity for the charging of electric vehicles;

“hand-held device” means apparatus used by a traffic attendant which is programmed to interface with the telephone parking system;

“intoxicating liquor” means spirits, wine, beer, cider and any fermented, distilled or spirituous liquor with an alcohol content exceeding 1.2 per cent by volume;

“light goods vehicle” means a motor vehicle, constructed or adapted for use for the carriage of goods, the permissible maximum weight of which does not exceed 3.5 tonnes and for the purposes of this Order includes an electric vehicle of this type;

“motor car” means a mechanically propelled vehicle constructed solely for the carriage of passengers and their effects, seating not more than 6 persons in addition to the driver and for the purposes of this Order includes an electric vehicle of this type;

“motor cycle” means a mechanically propelled vehicle not being an invalid carriage or motor car having fewer than 4 wheels and the weight of which unladen does not exceed 410 kgs;

“parking bay” means a space which is marked out in a parking place for the leaving of a vehicle;

“parking charge” means any charge set by the Council for leaving a vehicle in a parking place authorised by this Order.

“parking ticket” means a ticket issued by a ticket machine relating to any parking place for which a charge is made identified in Schedule 1;

“pay and display parking place” means an off-street parking place authorised by this Order where permitted vehicles may park with a parking ticket issued by a ticket machine and displayed in the manner specified in Article 16 or whose driver is a registered driver who has paid the relevant fee via the telephone parking system;

“public service vehicle” means a mechanically propelled vehicle constructed or adapted to carry more than 8 seated passengers in addition to the driver, and used in standing or plying for hire, or used to carry passengers for hire;

“registered driver” means the driver of a vehicle who has, prior to leaving their vehicle in a pay and display parking place, had registered so many of their personal details with a service provider as that service provider may require to enable the telephone parking system to be activated in favour of said driver;

“service provider” means a person or company providing services to or on behalf of the Council;

“telephone parking system” means a system to facilitate and monitor any parking charge paid using any telephone or internet enabled device via communication with the service provider in accordance with instructions indicated on signs located at each pay and display parking place where the system is operational;

“ticket machine” means an apparatus designed to issue a ticket indicating payment of a charge and the day and time at which it was issued and the number of hours for which it is valid or the date and time at which the ticket expires;

“disabled persons vehicle” means a vehicle lawfully displaying a blue badge; and

“blue badge” means a badge of a form prescribed under section 14(1) of the [1978 c. 53.] Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Northern Ireland) Act 1978.

## PART 2 USE OF PARKING PLACES

### **Specified parking places**

3. - (1) Each area of land specified by name in column 1 of Schedule 1 may be used subject to the provisions of this Order as a parking place for such classes of vehicles during such hours on such days as are specified in relation to that area in Schedule 1.

(2) The Council shall have the power to close any specified parking place, or part thereof, or suspend on a temporary basis the use of the parking place where such suspension is considered reasonably necessary.

### **Vehicles of a specified class**

4. Where in Schedule 1 a parking place is described as available for vehicles of a specified class, the driver of a vehicle shall not permit it to wait in that parking place unless it is of the specified class.

### **Position in which a vehicle may wait**

5. The driver of a vehicle shall not permit it to wait in a parking place other than in a position wholly within a parking bay where such has been marked out.

### **Parking bays for disabled persons' vehicles**

6. —(1) The driver of a vehicle, other than a disabled person's vehicle, shall not permit it to wait in a parking bay indicated by a sign or surface marking as being reserved for a disabled person's vehicle.

(2) A vehicle displaying a valid Blue Badge shall be entitled to one extra hour of free parking in addition to the time allowed following payment of the appropriate charge in accordance with the scale of charges specified in Schedule 2.

### **Parking bays for electric vehicles**

7.—(1) The driver of a vehicle, other than an electric vehicle, shall not permit it to wait in a parking bay indicated by a sign or surface marking as being reserved for an electric vehicle.

(2) An electric vehicle waiting in a parking bay indicated by a sign or surface marking as being reserved for an electric vehicle shall do so only if it is connected to an electric vehicle charging post.

### **Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait**

8. The driver of a vehicle shall not permit it to wait in a parking place for longer than the maximum period permitted for waiting specified in column 5 of Schedule 1 in relation to that parking place.

### **Use of parking place other than for parking**

9.—(1) The use of part of the parking places specified in Schedule 1 for advertising is authorised in accordance with a licence issued by the Council.

(2) The use of part of the parking places specified in Schedule 1 for displaying information to the public is authorised in accordance with a licence issued by the Council.

(3) The use of part of the parking places specified in Schedule 1 for the collection of recyclable materials is authorised in accordance with a licence issued by the Council.

### **Issue of licences**

**10.**—(1) A registered charity may apply to the Council for the issue of a licence authorising the use of part of a parking place specified in Schedule 1 for the collection of recyclable materials.

(2) A person may apply to the Council for the issue of a licence authorising the use of part of a parking place specified in Schedule 1 for advertising.

(3) A person may apply to the Council for the issue of a licence authorising the use of part of a parking place specified in Schedule 1 for displaying information to the public.

(4) A person may apply to the Council for the issue of a licence authorising the use of part of a parking place specified in Schedule 1 for any reasonable use or purpose or in such circumstances as the Council considers reasonable.

(5) The Council may require an applicant in any particular case to submit such additional information or documents as the Council determines are necessary to determine the application.

(6) On receipt of an application made under paragraph (1), (2), (3) or (4) the Council, upon being satisfied that the use of part of the parking place referred to in that application for the purpose referred to in that application will not materially affect or materially interfere with the provision of parking spaces in that parking place, may issue a licence in accordance with Article 13(15) of the Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 authorising the use by the applicant of part of that parking place for that purpose.

In this Article –

“registered charity” means a charity registered in the register of charities required to be kept by the Charity Commission by virtue of section 16(1) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008(a)

### **Surrender and revocation of licences**

**11.**—(1) A person to whom a licence is issued (“a licensee”) may surrender a licence to the Council at any time.

(2) The Council may serve on the licensee a notice revoking a licence, stating the reasons for the revocation if it appears to

the Council that one of the events set out in paragraph (4) has occurred, and the revocation shall take effect on the expiration of the period of one month from the service of that notice.

(3) A notice under paragraph (2) shall be served by delivering it to the person to whom it is addressed at their proper address, or by sending it to such address by telefacsimile or other electronic means, or by post.

(4) The events referred to in paragraph (2) are—

(a) if the licensee fails to comply with any condition of the licence;

(b) if the Council considers the withdrawal of the licence is necessary for the purpose of the exercise of its statutory functions.

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(a) 2008 c. 12

PART 3  
TARIFFS AND TICKETS

**Requirement to pay appropriate tariff**

**12.** The driver of a vehicle using a parking place during charging hours shall pay the appropriate tariff set out in Schedule 2 in accordance with the scale of charges specified in column 6 of Schedule 1 in relation to that parking place.

**Payment of charges**

**13.—(1)** Save as provided for in Article 18 the driver of a vehicle leaving it in a parking place specified in column 1 of Schedule 1 during the days and hours specified in columns 3 and 4 in relation thereto shall pay the appropriate charge in accordance with the scale of charges specified in column 6 in relation thereto and set out in Schedule 2.

(2) Charges may be paid by—

- (a) inserting into a ticket machine a coin or combination of coins of appropriate denominations;
- (b) inserting into a ticket machine a credit or debit card of a type indicated, and following the instructions displayed, on the machine;
- (c) the purchase of a pre-paid charge card for use in a ticket machine; or
- (d) the use of pre-paid tickets; or
- (e) a registered driver using the telephone parking system; or
- (f) use of Direct Debit where available.

(3) Telephone and credit/debit card charges incurred in the course of making any parking payment transaction shall be the responsibility of the registered driver.

**Pre-paid tickets**

**14.** In the case of pre-paid tickets the instructions given on the tickets in respect of making distinct perforations in the tickets or taking other appropriate action to clearly indicate the date and time of arrival shall be carried out by the driver as soon as he takes up position in the parking place.

**Use of telephone parking system**

**15.** If at any time a vehicle is left in a parking place during the specified hours and a check is carried out by, or on behalf of, the Council and no indication that a parking charge has been paid using the telephone parking system in respect of that vehicle for that controlled parking zone appears on a traffic attendant's hand-held device it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proved that either—

- (a) a parking charge had not been paid in respect of that vehicle; or
- (b) the parking period for which payment was made had already expired.

**Display of printed tickets**

**16.—(1)** The driver shall attach the ticket issued by a ticket machine or a pre-paid ticket duly perforated on the inside surface of the windscreen or a side window facing the kerb or place the ticket on the dashboard area immediately below the windscreen so that the particulars recorded on the front of the ticket are clearly visible to a person standing at the front or side of the vehicle.

(2) In the case of a motor cycle the ticket shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in a ticket holder or in front of the driver's seat.

## **Particulars of tickets**

**17.—**(1) Where a vehicle is left parked in a parking place where charges may be collected by means of a ticket machine and the particulars on the ticket indicate that the period in respect of which payment was made has expired, for the purposes of any appeal under Articles 13, 16 or 28 of the Traffic Management (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proved, that said particulars are evidence of the expiry of such period.

(2) Where a vehicle is left parked in a parking place where charges may be collected by means of a ticket machine, and a ticket is not displayed in accordance with the provisions of Articles 16 or 18(6) for the purposes of any appeal under Articles 13, 16 or 28 of the Traffic Management (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proved, that the absence of a ticket is evidence of the fact that a ticket has not been purchased.

## **Season tickets**

**18.—**(1) The Council or their service provider may on application from the driver or owner of a vehicle sell to that person a season ticket on payment of the appropriate tariff referred to in Article 12.

(2) A season ticket shall be valid only in respect of such parking places as are specified thereon for the period for which it is issued and for the vehicle in respect of which it is issued.

(3) The Council or their service provider may by notice in writing served on the season ticket holder by recorded delivery post to the address stated on the season ticket holder's application, require the surrender of a season ticket where:

- (a) the season ticket holder has not complied with the relevant Off-Street Parking Order; or
- (b) a season ticket has been issued upon receipt of a cheque and the cheque is subsequently dishonoured; or
- (c) the season ticket holder has ceased to have an interest in the vehicle in respect of which the season ticket was issued;

and the season ticket holder shall surrender the season ticket to the Council or their service provider within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the said notice.

(4) The issue of a season ticket shall not guarantee that any parking place will be available for the use of the season ticket holder.

(5) A season ticket shall include the following particulars:

- (a) the registration mark of the vehicle in respect of which the season ticket has been issued;
- (b) the period during which the season ticket shall remain valid; and
- (c) the names of the parking places for which the season ticket is valid.

(6) Where a vehicle in respect of which a season ticket has been issued is left parked in a parking place the driver shall display the ticket in a conspicuous position behind the windscreen of that vehicle so as to be clearly visible to the parking attendant.

PART 4  
RESTRICTION ON USE OF VEHICLES AND PARKING PLACES

**Requirement to stop the engine of a vehicle**

19. The driver of a vehicle using a parking place shall stop the engine as soon as the vehicle is in position in the parking place and shall not start the engine except when about to change the position of the vehicle in or to depart from the parking place.

**Trading in a parking place**

20.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) and save as provided in Article 24 of the Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, a person shall not use a parking place in connection with the selling of any article or thing or supplying a service for gain or reward whether or not in or from a stationary position to persons in or near the parking place unless the person holds a valid trading licence for the location issued by the Council under the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply in respect of any fee payable for the use of an electric vehicle charging post.

**Sounding of horn**

21. The driver of a vehicle using a parking place shall not sound any horn or other similar instrument except when about to change the position of the vehicle in or to depart from the parking place.

**Driving in a parking place**

22. A person shall not, except with the permission of any person duly authorised by the Council, drive any vehicle in a parking place other than for the purpose of leaving that vehicle in the parking place in accordance with the provisions of this Order or for the purpose of departing from the parking place.

**Ball games**

23. A person shall not play any ball game in a parking place.

**Miscellaneous activities**

24. A person shall not use any part of a parking place or any vehicle left in a parking place—

- (a) for sleeping or camping purposes;
- (b) for eating or cooking purposes; or
- (c) for the purposes of servicing or washing any vehicle or part thereof other than is reasonably necessary to enable that vehicle to depart from the parking place.

**Means of passage**

25. A person shall not use a parking place as a means of passage from one road to another road or to any premises unless a right of way has been granted in writing by the Council.

**Consumption of intoxicating liquor**

26. A person shall not use any of the parking places specified in Schedule 1, or any vehicle in any of those parking places, for the purpose of consuming intoxicating liquor.

### **Use of entrances and exits, and direction of travel**

**27.** Where in a parking place signs are erected or surface markings are laid for the purpose of—

- (a) indicating the entrance to or exit from the parking place; or
- (b) indicating that a vehicle using the parking place shall proceed in a specified direction within the parking place,

a person shall not drive or cause or permit to be driven any vehicle—

- (i) so that it enters the parking place otherwise than by an entrance, or leaves the parking place otherwise than by an exit, so indicated; or
- (ii) in a direction other than that specified, as the case may be.

### **Erection of structures and lighting of fires**

**28.** In a parking place a person shall not—

- (a) erect or cause or permit to be erected any tent, booth, stand, building or other structure without the written consent of the Council; or
- (b) light or cause to be lit any fire.

### **Supermarket trolleys**

**29.—**(1) A person shall not cause or permit a supermarket trolley to enter a parking place in or under a building, and any supermarket trolley left there may be removed by a person authorised by the Council.

(2) A person shall not cause or permit a supermarket trolley to be left in any other parking place, other than in an area set aside for that purpose, and any supermarket trolley so left may be removed by a person authorised by the Council.

### **Reserving a parking bay**

**30.** A person shall not reserve a parking bay in a parking place.

### **Use of car park or sections of for the purposes of temporary meeting place**

**31.** No persons shall use a parking place as a meeting place or point unless authorised by the Council in writing in advance.

# SCHEDULE 1 PARKING PLACES

Articles 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

	Name of Parking Place	Classes of Vehicle	Days of operation of Parking Place	Hours of operation of Parking Place	Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait	Scale of Charges
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Ashdale Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TL3 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m.	8 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge
2	Charlotte Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TM7 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m.	8 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	9 hours	No charge
3	Corporation Square, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TL4 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m.	14 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge
4	Corporation Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage, light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.	15 hours	Tariff TL4 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.	15 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge



	Name of Parking Place	Classes of Vehicle	Days of operation of Parking Place	Hours of operation of Parking Place	Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait	Scale of Charges
	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Cromac Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TL6 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.	9 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge
6	Dunbar Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TM10 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m.	8 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge
7	Dundela Crescent, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	All days	All hours	12 Hours	No charge
8	Exchange Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TM8 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m.	14 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge

	Name of Parking Place	Classes of Vehicle	Days of operation of Parking Place	Hours of operation of Parking Place	Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait	Scale of Charges
	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Glenburn Road, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	All days	All hours	12 hours	No charge
10	Grampian Avenue, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	All days	All hours	12 hours	No charge
11	Hope Street North, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TM12 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m.	8 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge
12	Kent Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	16 hours	Tariff TM10 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m.	8 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge
13	Little Donegall Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	8.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	15 hours	Tariff TB4 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.	9 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge

	<b>Name of Parking Place</b>	<b>Classes of Vehicle</b>	<b>Days of operation of Parking Place</b>	<b>Hours of operation of Parking Place</b>	<b>Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait</b>	<b>Scale of Charges</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Little Victoria Street, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>Monday to Saturday</b>	<b>8.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.</b>	<b>15 hours</b>	<b>Tariff TM8 as set out in Schedule 2</b>
				<b>11.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.</b>	<b>9 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
			<b>Sunday</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Marlborough Avenue, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Northumberland Street, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Parkgate Avenue, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Ravenscroft Avenue, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>

	Name of Parking Place	Classes of Vehicle	Days of operation of Parking Place	Hours of operation of Parking Place	Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait	Scale of Charges
	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	Sandown Road, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	All days	All hours	12 hours	No charge
20	Shaw's Bridge, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	All days	All hours	12 hours	No charge
21	Slievegallion, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	All days	All hours	12 hours	No charge
22	Smithfield Market, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	8.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	15 hours	Tariff TM8 as set out in Schedule 2
				11p.m. to 8.00 a.m.	9 hours	No charge
			Sunday	All hours	12 hours	No charge
23	Station Street, Belfast	Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle	Monday to Saturday	8.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.	15 hours	Tariff TB4 as set out in Schedule 2
				11.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.	9 hours	No charge

	<b>Name of Parking Place</b>	<b>Classes of Vehicle</b>	<b>Days of operation of Parking Place</b>	<b>Hours of operation of Parking Place</b>	<b>Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait</b>	<b>Scale of Charges</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Stranmillis, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>Wandsworth Road, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All day</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>Westminster Avenue East, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>Westminster Avenue West, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>Westminster Avenue North, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>

	<b>Name of Parking Place</b>	<b>Classes of Vehicle</b>	<b>Days of operation of Parking Place</b>	<b>Hours of operation of Parking Place</b>	<b>Maximum period for which a vehicle may wait</b>	<b>Scale of Charges</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>Whitla Street, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>All days</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>York Street I / Lancaster Street, Belfast</b>	<b>Motor car, motor cycle, invalid carriage and light goods vehicle</b>	<b>Monday to Saturday</b>	<b>8.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.</b>	<b>15 hours</b>	<b>Tariff TB3 as set out in Schedule 2</b>
				<b>11.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.</b>	<b>9 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>
			<b>Sunday</b>	<b>All hours</b>	<b>12 hours</b>	<b>No charge</b>

## SCHEDULE 2 TARIFFS

Articles 12 and 13(1)

### **Tariff TL3: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	30p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	60p
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	90p
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£1.20
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£1.50
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£1.80
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£2.10
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£2.40
Over 8 hours	£2.70
Within 1 hour of closing	30p
<b>4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£37.80</b>
<b>12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£91.80</b>

### **Tariff TL4: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	40p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	80p
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£1.20
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£1.60
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£2.00
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£2.40
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£2.80
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£3.20
Over 8 hours	£3.60
Within 1 hour of closing	40p
<b>4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£50.40</b>
<b>12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£122.40</b>

### **Tariff TL5: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	50p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£1.00
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£1.50
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£2.00
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£2.50
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£3.00
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£3.50
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£4.00
Over 8 hours	£4.50
Within 1 hour of closing	50p
<b>4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£63.00</b>
<b>12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£153.00</b>

**Tariff TL6: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	60p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£1.20
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£1.80
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£2.40
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£3.00
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£3.60
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£4.20
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£4.80
Over 8 hours	£5.40
Within 1 hour of closing	60p
<b>4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£75.60</b>
<b>12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£183.60</b>

**Tariff TL7: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	70p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£1.40
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£2.10
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£2.80
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£3.50
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£4.20
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£4.90
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£5.60
Over 8 hours	£6.30
Within 1 hour of closing	70p
<b>4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£88.20</b>
<b>12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£214.20</b>

**Tariff TM6: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	60p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£1.20
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£1.80
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£2.40
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£3.00
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£4.00
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£5.00
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£6.00
Over 8 hours	£7.00
Within 1 hour of closing	£1.20
<b>MOTOR CYCLES</b>	
Up to 4 hours	50p
Over 4 hours	£1.00
After 5.00 p.m. until closing	50p



**Tariff TM7: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	70p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£1.40
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£2.10
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£2.80
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£3.50
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£4.50
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£5.50
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£6.50
Over 8 hours	£7.50
Within 1 hour of closing	£1.40

**MOTOR CYCLES**

Up to 4 hours	50p
Over 4 hours	£1.00
After 5.00 p.m. until closing	50p

**Tariff TM8: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	80p
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£1.60
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£2.40
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£3.20
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£4.00
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£5.00
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£5.00
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£7.00
Over 8 hours	£8.00
Within 1 hour of closing	£1.60

**MOTOR CYCLES**

Up to 4 hours	50p
Over 4 hours	£1.00
After 5.00 p.m. until closing	50p

**Tariff TM10: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	£1.00
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£2.00
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£3.00
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£4.00
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£5.00
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£6.00
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£7.00
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£8.00
Over 8 hours	£9.00
Within 1 hour of closing	£2.00

**MOTOR CYCLES**

Up to 4 hours	50p
Over 4 hours	£1.00
After 5.00 p.m. until closing	50p

**Tariff TM12: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 1 hour	£1.20
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£2.40
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£3.60
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£4.80
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£6.60
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£8.40
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£10.20
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£12.00
Over 8 hours	£13.80
Within 1 hour of closing	£2.40

**MOTOR CYCLES**

Up to 4 hours	50p
Over 4 hours	£1.00
Within 1 hour of closing	50p

**Tariff TP: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles***Park and Ride: Includes Bus Fare*

Up to 1 hour	£1.20
Over 1 hour and not exceeding 2 hours	£1.20
Over 2 hours and not exceeding 3 hours	£1.80
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 4 hours	£1.80
Over 4 hours and not exceeding 5 hours	£2.40
Over 5 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	£2.40
Over 6 hours and not exceeding 7 hours	£3.00
Over 7 hours and not exceeding 8 hours	£3.00
Over 8 hours	£3.60
Within 1 hour of closing	£1.20

**4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)** £54.00**12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)** £144.00**MOTOR CYCLES**

Up to 4 hours	50p
Over 4 hours	£1.00
Within 1 hour of closing	50p

**Tariff TS3: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 3 hours	30p
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	60p
Over 6 hours	90p
Within 1 hour of closing	30p

**4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)** £14.20**12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)** £34.60

**Tariff TS4: Motor Cars, Invalid Carriages and Light Goods Vehicles**

Up to 3 hours	40p
Over 3 hours and not exceeding 6 hours	80p
Over 6 hours	£1.20
After 5.00 p.m. until closing	40p
<b>4 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£19.00</b>
<b>12 Week Season Ticket: (Valid Monday-Friday)</b>	<b>£46.00</b>

## **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

This Order:

- (a) Reproduces and amends provisions of The Off-Street Parking Order (Northern Ireland) 2000, as amended by The Off-Street Parking (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, to facilitate Belfast City Council in the operation of the car parks it took responsibility for from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.
- (b) Harmonises the tariff structure and varies parking charges (Schedule 1)
- (c) Includes 3 additional existing public car parks and removes 2 existing car parks
- (d) Introduces concession for Blue Badge parking (Article 19)

This Order does not revoke the provisions and amendments of previous Orders, this Order is intended to supersede those Orders. The Department for Infrastructure retains responsibility for the revocation of previous and amended Orders.

## Draft Belfast Off Street Parking Order

### Why we are consulting.

Council wishes to seek views on the actions it proposes for inclusion in a new and consolidated Belfast Off Street Parking Order. Should you require the document in a different format or in another language, please email [bellg@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:bellg@belfastcity.gov.uk) with your request.)

It is envisaged that the main body of the current Off Street Parking Order will remain unchanged, with several proposed amendments under consideration.

Should these proposed amendments be accepted, they will be incorporated within the new order and enacted after the appropriate approvals and statutory process have been completed.

The public consultation process is an essential component to the overall development of the final order. We want to know what the residents, visitors, and other stakeholder to think about our proposals. We will use this feedback to agree and refine the proposals.

Council had endeavoured to create their own Order in 2020 but following a discussion with DfI and an independent legal opinion, it was confirmed that the two orders could not be in place at the same time and the DfI legislation would always be the preminent legislation.

To facilitate an efficient transition, it was agreed that councils make the minimum number of changes to the existing order, within their draft orders. proposed changes would benefit council but have minimal legislative change and be in a position of readiness when DfI are ready to revoke the Off-Street Parking Order (Northern Ireland) 2000.

Belfast City Council may seek to introduce the Belfast Order initially into the 4 car parks outside of the NI 2000 order and then to create an amendment order to bring the order 26 car parks into the new Belfast Order.

### Key proposals

1. Make additional provisions for Blue Badge holders by giving one hour free additional parking time (after requisite car parking tariff paid).
2. Increase the number of Blue Badge bays.
3. Improve accessible parking arrangements.
4. Include 4 public car parks in the new order.
5. Remove 2 car parks no longer managed by the Council from the order.
6. Introduce a mechanism to suspend parking bays and parking places.
7. Introduce a mechanism to improve the use of the car park as a temporary meeting place.

***Please give us your views***

***Online Survey***

**Blue Badge parking**

## Appendix 3

We currently provide Blue Badge parking at all council public off-street car parks. This is monitored on an annual basis.

Blue Badges are issued against clear criteria to support mobility needs. It is not means tested.

Following engagement with IMTAC we are proposing to retain the parking fees for Blue Badge holders. However, we recognise that customers who hold Blue Badges may require additional time due to their mobility issues. Therefore, we are proposing that vehicles displaying a valid Blue Badge will be permitted to park for free for an additional hour following payment of the appropriate charge in accordance with the scale of charges.

How supportive or unsupportive are you of the following proposals relating to blue badge holders?

Blue Badge holders should be allowed an extra hour of free parking:

Blue Badge holders should be allowed an extra hour of free parking:

☐ Very supportive    ☐ Supportive    ☐ Not very supportive    ☐ Not at all supportive    ☐ Don't know

Please explain your reasons for supporting or not supporting these proposals:

Are you a Blue Badge holder or do you drive someone with a Blue Badge?

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Don't know

### **Arrangements for temporary closure of parking bays and car parks**

As part of the new Belfast Off-Street Parking Order, we want to introduce a mechanism that enables the prompt closure of car parks under specific circumstances. Currently, we need to go through a legal Order to regulate or restrict the use of a designated parking place, including closing or suspending operations in part of a car park. This can be an arduous and time-consuming legal process. The proposed change will help us close the car parks for maintenance, council events, alterations to the car parks or development of the car parks, in a more efficient and timely manner.

How supportive or unsupportive are you of our proposal to introduce a process to facilitate the temporary closing car parks?

## Appendix 3

- ☐ Very supportive
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Not very supportive
- ☐ Not at all supportive
- ☐ Don't know or no opinion

If you have any comments relating to our proposed arrangements for temporarily closing our car parks, please tell us here

### Allowing temporary alternative use of off-street car parks

Currently, we are restricted with how the parking bays and parking places are used. The existing legislation states that parking places are specifically used for parking. Often, we must deny access to council services or other organisations who wish to use the car park for events. Council is seeking to introduce a mechanism whereby the parking bays and parking places may be used temporarily for activities other than parking. This will assist in facilitating wider council work and partnership activities.

How supportive or unsupportive are you of our proposal to introduce a mechanism to allow temporary use of off-street car parks?

- ☐ Very supportive
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Not very supportive
- ☐ Not at all supportive
- ☐ Don't know or no opinion

### Designation of car parks into the Belfast Off-street Parking Order

Four car parks, operated and managed by council, are not regulated by the current Off Street Parking Order (2000) NI (as amended). For administrative purposes they need to be officially included in the new Belfast off-street parking order. Two car parks listed in the 2000 order are no longer within the council portfolio and need to be removed.

More information about these car parks can be found under our [FAQs](#).

## Appendix 3

If you have any comments relating to the designation of these car parks within the Belfast City Council off-street parking order, please tell us here:

### Equality considerations

Are you aware of any equality implications in relation to these proposals or our Draft Belfast Off-Street Parking Order?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If you have you any further comments or suggestions on the changes to car parking being proposed by the council, please tell us here:

Are you responding as an individual (member of the public) or on behalf of a group or organisation?

☐ I am responding on behalf of a group or organisation

☐ I am a member of the public





Subject:	Update on City protection Role in Planning.
Date:	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
Reporting Officer:	David Bone, City Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Vivienne Donnelly, City Protection Manager

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	At its meeting on the 4 <sup>th</sup> November 2025, the People and Communities Committee agreed that an update report outlining the current staffing and capacity levels relating to Environmental Health Officers, particularly regarding roles associated with responding to planning consultations, and that the report would include reference to the role of Building Control in enforcement matters.
1.2	This report examines the role, resources and capacity of the Environmental Protection and Scientific Unit Teams within City Services in providing expert technical environmental advice to planning applications for new development. This support assists the Council's Planning Service in meeting its statutory responsibilities for the delivery of planning services and aids the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in carrying out its responsibilities for regionally strategic planning services.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>
	<b><u>Background</u></b>
3.1	The Environmental Protection and the Scientific Teams primary role is to respond to requests for service and carry out wide range of investigations related to pollution, noise and air, and contaminated land as well as carry out assessments of air quality of the city and pollution permitting for business including monitoring at the North foreshore site. We also have statutory consultation responsibility with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in relation to assessing planning applications of strategic development. In relation to the internal advice to colleagues in Planning, this input to the planning process can be beneficial in assessing impacts to human health and reduces the potential for statutory nuisance complaints, as the necessary controls/mitigation are applied through planning conditions at the developmental stage.

3.2	The Council's Planning Service aims to provide a planning decision, on average, within 15 weeks for local plans and within 30 weeks for major plans, in accordance with statutory targets set by DfI. When the Planning Service publicises planning applications and issues consultations to statutory and non-statutory consultees, there is a 21 day (3 week) target in which to respond. Meeting consultation targets is fundamental to meeting the overall determination timescales.
3.3	When determining an application for planning permission, a range of material planning considerations must be taken into account; the full list can be found at <a href="https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/Documents/Planning-application-process-guide#material">https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/Documents/Planning-application-process-guide#material</a>
3.4	The Planning Service will internally consult with the Environmental Protection (EP)/Scientific Teams where they seek our advice on the applicants/or their appointed specialist consultants own assessment of the impact of the development.
3.5	Planning colleagues then send the consultants reports to EP for comment. The EP/Scientific Teams will review the reports and make advisory comments back to colleagues. Where a risk to human health or amenity has been identified by the consultants, the Environmental Protection Unit/Scientific Officers will advise on the suitability of controls proposed by the developer to prevent adverse impact and subsequently provide the Planning Service with suggested planning conditions based on those controls.
	<p><b><u>Main report</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Current planning resource within the Environmental Protection and the Scientific Team/s</u></b></p>
3.6	The EP Team is first and foremost responsible for responding to all statutory nuisance complaints/requests for service related to Environmental Protection legislation and investigating noise complaints arising from commercial and industrial premises. The team are also required to provide formal responses to DfI for strategic planning consultations. The team then has a long-established role to assist and provide an internal advisory service to Planning colleagues. In 2022, following an assessment of workflows and patterns and resources, it was concluded that planning matters would be more effectively managed within a team of officers assigned to focus on this work. In the previous model, all officers within the Public Health & Housing Team and the EP Team, were assigned planning cases. However, differing levels of expertise often affected their core responsibilities, leading to delays in the overall delivery of our Core Statutory Responsibilities.
3.7	<p>The new approach allows both teams to concentrate on defined functions, enabling the EP Team to build on the specialist knowledge required for planning consultations and responses. At its inception, the team comprised of two Senior Environmental Health Officers (SEHOs) and four Environmental Health Officers (EHOs). However, in response to increasing workload demands, the volume of consultations in the system and the complexity of cases, 2 x posts have since been reallocated from the Public Health &amp; Housing Unit, in addition a 4th SEHO was recruited in 2025, supported through growth in the 2025/26 rate setting. The team structure is currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 Senior Environmental Health Officers (SEHOs) and</li> <li>• 5 Environmental Health Officers (EHOs)</li> </ul>
3.8	The Scientific Team also provide expert guidance on the environmental acceptability of proposed planning applications, including considerations of noise, land contamination and ambient air quality using the following resources:

- 1 Contaminated Land Officer
- 1 Environmental Noise Officer and
- 1 Air Quality Officer

### **Environmental Protection Team Resourcing and Challenges**

- 3.9 Over the past three years, the EP Team has faced significant resourcing challenges due to the departure of experienced staff to other roles, as well as absences related to career breaks, maternity leave, parental leave, and sickness. Temporary vacancies have been difficult to fill, primarily due to a shortage of EHOs and the complex nature of the work allowing the officers to focus only on this as a specialist area.
- 3.10 These staffing issues have directly impacted the team's ability to respond to planning consultations in a timely manner. This was particularly evident during the summer of 2024, when the team experienced a 43% vacancy rate. At that time, there were 160 planning consultations in the system, with a backlog of 94 unallocated plans resulting in a 16 week backlog, based on the available resources.
- 3.11 Assessing planning applications requires officers to possess substantial technical knowledge and competence, which can only be developed through ongoing training and mentorship from senior staff. The loss of experienced officers due to normal turnover e.g. maternity or career leave combined with unfilled vacancies, has hindered the team's ability to build capacity across key technical areas such as noise, contaminated land, odour, lighting, and air quality. This has further delayed the turnaround of planning consultation responses.
- 3.12 Additionally, securing temporary cover for posts vacated due to maternity or career breaks has proven difficult. Once appointed, most new officers require at least a year of training before they are equipped to assess and respond to planning consultations, which further extends response times.
- 3.13 The reduction in skilled staff has placed additional pressures on SEHOs and the Scientific Team Officer, who are also responsible for reviewing and assessing the DfI's regionally significant planning applications. These planning applications are often complex and require a high level of scrutiny and technical expertise to determine appropriate control measures to protect local amenity. This alongside our EP response and investigation to complaints remain our core priority area.
- 3.14 The nature of development sites under consideration within the Council area has also increased the demand for specialist knowledge. Many are brownfield sites or involve mixed residential and commercial developments in close proximity, necessitating robust controls to protect future occupants from potential environmental impacts.
- 3.15 Assessing planning applications usually requires the review of multiple technical reports, relating to noise, contaminated land, odour, lighting, and ambient air quality. These reports can be highly complex and lengthy, some extending to thousands of pages which may contribute to delays, particularly when the accuracy and adequacy of the information are lacking. Poor quality submissions can occur and these significantly increase workloads, as officers often need to liaise with consultants to resolve technical issues. This process can lead to multiple rounds of re-consultation before a final response and recommended conditions can be issued to the Planning Service.
- 3.16 In addition, officers support additional work streams associated with planning work such as preparing for planning appeals, contributing towards the development of planning policy or guidance documents, Local Development Plan and requests to attend the planning committee for certain planning applications under consideration.

	<p><b><u>Service Improvement Measures</u></b></p>
3.17	<p>Since Covid there has been an ongoing challenge internally with a backlog of plans in the EH system at one point reaching 125 unallocated cases and it was recognised that the creation of a new team alone would not resolve the issue. Consequently, a service process review was undertaken in collaboration with colleagues from the Planning Service to develop a programme of interventions designed to streamline processes, improve response times and reduce the backlog of plans within the system.</p>
3.18	<p>In 2021, the City Services and Planning Service management teams began working collaboratively to reduce the number of planning consultations referred to the EP Team. At that time, the Planning Service was issuing approximately 60–70 plans per month to City Services (total of 878 plans) for review and assessment, in fact more than we have capacity to support. Adopting a risk-based approach, it was agreed that the Planning Service would consult only on specific categories of plans where potential environmental impacts required assessment and the application of conditions to mitigate the effects of new development.</p>
3.19	<p>Since the implementation of a range of service improvements in 2023, the number of unallocated plans has fallen from on average of 125 to 40. This reduction equates to a backlog of approximately eight weeks, compared with the previous 16 weeks backlog. Whilst this is a significant improvement, taking eight weeks to allocate a case to an EHO will exceed the 3 weeks consultation response target. Members are also advised that a CNS Department growth bid in 2026/27 for additional resources of 2 EHO's within the departmental establishment has been suggested. This has the potential to further reduce the backlog and improve turnaround times.</p>
3.20	<p>The following collaborative service improvements and interventions have been implemented and include for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workload Prioritisation – clearer separation of planning and noise complaint responsibilities, ensuring resources are directed efficiently.</li> <li>• Performance Monitoring – regular management reviews to track consultation response rates, backlog levels, and service delivery outcomes.</li> <li>• Strengthened Management Structure – SEHOs assigned supervisory and mentoring responsibilities for EHOs.</li> <li>• Onboarding and Training – structured induction process for officers new to the role.</li> <li>• Guidance Development for Officers– creation of a comprehensive document to assist officers in understanding environmental elements within the planning process.</li> <li>• Guidance Development for Consultants – to improve the quality of technical noise reports submitted by consultants which allows officers to makes timely assessments and decisions, guidance is available on the Council's <a href="#">Environmental Protection Advice Note 1 (EPAN 1)</a>.</li> <li>• Application Streamlining – specific categories of planning applications have been streamlined (e.g. hot food takeaways, housing developments) by reducing the requirement for technical reports and applying model conditions.</li> <li>• Model Conditions – developed for noise, odour, and artificial lighting, complementing existing contaminated land and air quality conditions.</li> <li>• Concise Consultation Responses – streamlined consultation responses to improve clarity and efficiency.</li> <li>• Regular Technical Team Meetings – for training, support and consistency.</li> <li>• Targeted Allocation – improved allocation to reduce the backlog of unassigned plans and shorten response times by assigning consultations based on case complexity, officer competency, and the Planning Service's priorities.</li> <li>• Application Sifting – closer review to identify consultations that can be withdrawn.</li> <li>• Quarterly Meetings – with the Planning Service to review and improve overall provision.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fortnightly Meetings – with Planning Management to review cases, expedite advice, agree priority plans, and identify further service improvements.</li> </ul>
3.21	<p>It should also be noted that following consultation, the Planning Service has introduced a statutory Validation Checklist which is intended to improve the quality of applications and supporting information entering the Planning System. The checklist stipulates where supporting information is required and will therefore ensure that EH can be consulted as quickly in the process as possible. By stipulating what supporting information is required at submission of a planning application, the checklist should also go some way to ensure the quality of supporting information, reducing the need for further information requests, as a result of insufficient information, re-consultations and re-assessments.</p> <p><b><u>Internal Service Level Agreement (SLA) Development</u></b></p>
3.22	<p>Officers are currently developing a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to provide the Planning Service with clear guidance on the scope, minimum standards, constraints, performance expectations, and extent of services to be delivered by the Environmental Protection Unit and Scientific Teams. The SLA will define the capacity of these teams to manage a specified number of planning applications in line with available resources.</p>
3.23	<p>This agreement will specifically cover the environmental assessment of planning applications for developments within the Belfast City Council area, ensuring consistency, transparency, and accountability in service provision.</p>
3.24	<p>Following implementation of the SLA, its effectiveness will be reviewed and evaluated. Consideration will also be given to the development of additional performance indicators to help manage service demand and ensure continued alignment with emerging expectations and priorities.</p>
3.25	<p>Both City Services and the Planning Service remain committed to building on the progress achieved to date, driving forward service improvements that will underpin timely and effective planning decisions for the benefit of the city.</p> <p><b><u>Building Control Service - out of hours dangerous structure inspections</u></b></p>
3.26	<p>The Building Control (BC) Service is responsible for inspecting and taking enforcement action on dangerous structures. At times this includes requests to inspect potentially dangerous structures out of normal working hours. These requests can come from the emergency services, for example, and are mainly captured through the City and Neighbourhood Services emergency phone. The BC Service has a number of technical staff members who volunteer to be contacted by the emergency phone operator and are willing to respond on site.</p>
3.27	<p>Staff get paid overtime each time they respond, however they are not obliged to respond, and receive no remuneration for being on the call out list. In seeking a more robust approach to these out of hours inspections, a request was put to Continuous Improvement asking that this issue be considered. For example, the possibility of an on-call type allowance to be paid to technical staff who would be available to respond on a rota basis. This proposal is similar to what happens in other jurisdictions and would give greater assurance that staff will be available to respond and acknowledge the on-call nature of the duty.</p>
3.28	<p>It is understood that this issue is being considered during Stage 3 of the Pay and Grading Review.</p>
3.29	<p>The Service also plans ahead for specific storm events to seek additional volunteers to assist at these times.</p>

	<b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b>
3.30	Members are also advised that a CNS Department growth bid in 2026/27 for additional resources to help further reduce the backlog and improve turnaround times has been suggested.
	<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b>
3.31	N/A
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
4.1	N/A



<b>Subject:</b>	Alleygate Delivery Update
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Jim Girvan – Director Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Pól Hamilton – Lead Officer Community Safety

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

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b> <span style="float: right;"> <b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/> </span>	

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of the following report is to update members on a proposed amendment to the installation of an Alleygate at Rosetta Park.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	Members to note the amendment to the proposed location of the Alleygate at Rosetta Park.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	An Alleygate was previously approved by committee for installation in Phase 5, to a location between 47 – 49 Rosetta Park.
3.2	Following engagement with residents and elected members, a preference emerged which would place the Alleygate approx. 20m further back within the alleyway, between 47 Rosetta Park and 14 Knockbreda Road.
3.3	Formal consultation will be undertaken with residents of Rosetta Park and Knockbreda Road with publication of a formal notice of intention.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices - Documents Attached</b>
4.1	Notice of Traffic Regulation Order



## **Notice of Traffic Regulation Order**

### **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011**

**Belfast City Council** Notice is hereby given that the Council in the exercise of the powers conferred on it by Articles 69A to 69E of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 as inserted in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 proposes to amend the Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation (Phase 5b) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026. The amendment being made consists of a change to one location within the order.

The purpose of the Order is to prohibit the use by vehicles and pedestrians of the following streets in Belfast:

#### **Affected Roads**

6. To the rear of Nos. 366 – 372 Ormeau Road, Nos. 2 – 14 Knockbreda Road, Nos. 35 - 47 Rosetta Park and to the side of No. 2 Knockbreda Park.

Vehicles requiring access in specified circumstances are exempted from the provisions of this Order. It is proposed to give effect to this by erecting gates at entrances to the back and side of street specified above.

Objections or other representations may be made in writing to Sharon Traynor, City and Neighbourhood Services Department, Belfast City Council, 4 – 10 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8DP.

Full details are contained in the draft Order which together with a map showing the roads affected may be inspected free of charge during office hours within the said period at the above address. A draft of the order will also be available in your local area community centre.

Dated this day

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2026**

David Sales  
Director of City and Neighbourhood Services  
Belfast City Council

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