

# Public Document Pack

## BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

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

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

Notice is hereby given that the monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Belfast on Monday, 2nd September, 2019 immediately following the conclusion of the special meeting scheduled for 5.30pm, for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Council (Pages 1 - 30)
  - a) Extract of Minutes of Special Meeting of 1st July, 2019 (Pages 31 - 36)
5. Changes to Committees
6. Official Announcements
7. Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 37 - 148)
8. People and Communities Committee (Pages 149 - 186)
9. City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 187 - 226)
10. Licensing Committee (Pages 227 - 232)
11. Planning Committee (Pages 233 - 266)
12. Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee (Pages 267 - 274)
13. Brexit Committee (Pages 275 - 288)
14. Notices of Motion

a) Equal Protection for Children Legislation

Proposed by Councillor Heading

Seconded by Councillor Lyons

“This Council notes and welcomes the work of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People’s work in promoting positive parenting and Equal Protection for Children.

In recognition of this work by the NICCY and in support of other agencies such as the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, this Council will write to Assembly Party Leaders, the Executive Office and other NI Councils to champion the inclusion of Equal Protection for Children legislation in the Programme for Government.”

**(To be debated by the Council)**

b) Climate Strikes

Proposed by Councillor Matt Collins

Seconded by Councillor Smyth

“This Council notes the global call made by young people, workers, environmental organisations and concerned citizens to mobilise “climate strikes”, beginning on 20th September, 2019.

The Council wishes to see an immediate end to the age of fossil fuels and the implementation of urgent action to avoid climate breakdown and catastrophe.

Belfast City Council supports the climate strikes taking place in this city on 20th September, and pledges to help publicise, facilitate and lend practical support to climate activists taking to the streets on this historic day.”

**(To be debated by the Council)**

c) Soft Opt-Out Organ Donation

Proposed by Councillor Donnelly

Seconded by Councillor Hargey

“This Council will support the introduction of soft opt-out organ donation legislation here in the North which will follow the example led by the introduction of the same legislation in Wales (2015), Scotland and England (2020) and the calls from the Minister of Health in the South of Ireland, Simon Harris TD, for the same to be introduced there”.

**(To be debated by the Council)**

d) Rally for Choice

Proposed by Councillor Ferguson

Seconded by Councillor Groogan

“Belfast City Council notes the recent Westminster amendment which will decriminalise abortion in Northern Ireland on 21st October, unless an Executive is formed before that date.

This Council also notes the trauma experienced by 20 women and pregnant people each week who have to leave our shores to avail of reproductive healthcare as we continue to criminalise them.

This Council therefore welcomes and supports the Rally for Choice on September 7th, 2019, as an expression of public protest against the current law and the need to ensure decriminalisation of abortion so that no other woman or healthcare professional faces the prospect of arrest and prosecution over the procurement of necessary reproductive healthcare services.”

**(To be debated by the Council)**

e) Rewilding Our Wards

Proposed by Councillor Garrett

Seconded by Councillor Canavan

“We commend this Council for the work and projects it undertakes across the city to enhance biodiversity and increase environmental protection.

Rewilding spaces in the heart of our communities not only enhances and adds to the good work already undertaken to protect the environment; but also confirms our commitment as a Council to challenge the climate emergency we have already recognised is upon us.

We call on this Council in each of our city’s 60 electoral wards to rewild, as a minimum, 1 extra space each year outside of what is already planned or programmed.

We further call on this Council to promote this initiative and working alongside members in each ward to identify achievable and appropriate sites, where working with the community we create rewilded spaces that local communities can feel part of challenging climate change.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the People and Communities Committee)**

f) EuroPride

Proposed by Councillor S. Baker

Seconded by Councillor McAteer

“This Council recognises the significant impact that Belfast Pride has on our City. It makes our City a more diverse and welcoming city for all. We also recognise the economic impact that Belfast Pride creates within the city, generating income for business and creating employment.

This Council will task our officers to work with Belfast Pride and assist in their bid to bring EuroPride to our City.

EuroPride will have a huge economic and social impact to Belfast and showcase to the world on how progressive and open our City is.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

g) Play Facilities for Children with Disabilities

Proposed by Alderman McCoubrey

Seconded by Councillor Smyth

“This Council recognises the need to improve play facilities for those children with disabilities, and undertakes to engage with those in the sector who can best advise on making play facilities more accessible.

An audit should be undertaken of current facilities across the city and opportunities for disability improvements identified, work to be completed through the course of the current council term.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the People and Communities Committee)**

h) Desecration of Graves within Belfast City Cemetery

Proposed by Alderman Copeland

Seconded by Alderman Rodgers

“That this Council:

Notes with grave concern and mounting anger the recent desecration of graves within Belfast City Cemetery, and resolves to renew and redouble its efforts to upgrade the facilities at the cemetery and to work with other partner agencies to ensure that such wanton rampage of destruction is never repeated, and that those responsible are brought before the courts.

This facility is for everyone, and we as a Council need to look after the needs of all the communities who are buried, visit and are bereaved.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the People and Communities Committee)**

i) Silver Poppies of Remembrance

Proposed by Councillor T. Kelly

Seconded by Councillor Graham

“With the 75th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War approaching, this Council wishes to recognise the contribution of those who fought in that war from Belfast.

It notes that every year the number of surviving veterans is reducing and time to provide appropriate recognition is running out. The Council, therefore, should come together to provide all surviving veterans of WW2 (including those in the Merchant Navy) with a silver Poppy of Remembrance, to mark their service in the fight against Fascism and Nazism.

These poppies will be presented to all surviving veterans who live in the Belfast Council area week commencing 4th November 2019.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

j) Transgender Day of Visibility

Proposed by Councillor Flynn

Seconded by Alderman Copeland

“This council recognises the contribution that our Transgender community makes to the city of Belfast and Northern Ireland. This council notes that many within the Trans community still suffer discrimination and that visibility of the community is a hugely important part of raising awareness and overcoming discrimination.

As a statement of our solidarity with the Trans community, this Council agrees to illuminate the City Hall in the colours of the Trans flag to coincide with the Transgender Day of Visibility every year on 31st March; as a continuation of our solidarity with the community, this Council also agrees to fly the Transgender flag over the City Hall from dawn to dusk on 31st March every year to coincide with Transgender Day of Visibility.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

k) E-Petition Mechanism

Proposed by Councillor O'Hara

Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson

"This Council supports the development of an e-petition mechanism for Belfast City Council.

E-petitions are an opportunity for citizens of the City to bring forward issues of concern over which this Council has authority. They widen access to the democratic process and bring governmental structures closer to the citizens we represent. Similar processes are in place across these islands and Europe at a variety of administrative levels. In the continuing absence of a local Assembly and the democratic deficit it creates, it is imperative that this Council does what it can to enhance and broaden access to the democratic process."

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

l) Citywide Multi-Agency Task Force on Mental Health and Suicide

Proposed by Councillor D. Baker

Seconded by Councillor Magennis

"This Council notes with serious concern the growing number of people who have taken their own life over recent times and extends its deepest sympathy to all those effected. We call on the Lord Mayor to convene a citywide multi-agency task force to respond to the serious concerns regarding mental health and suicide in our City.

The task force, using all their collective resources, should map out an action plan of front facing initiatives such as the successful Multi agency `road safe road show` to engage schools, youth organisations, businesses and citizens on our response to resilience, emotional well-being and positive mental health.

This Council needs to use every partner, every power and every strategy at its disposal to reach out to our citizens, let them know we care and we are there for them and that is ok not to be ok."

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the People and Communities Committee)**

m) Economic Future Planning

Proposed by Councillor Beattie

Seconded by Councillor Hargey

“This Council recognises that economic future planning is crucial in the period ahead, particularly given the impending withdrawal from the European Union.

This Council should plan for, and bring forward an economic plan for the future of this Council area in the event of the north of Ireland retaining membership of the European Union, following a referendum on Irish Unity.

The economic plan should draw on the numerous existing reports of an all-island economy, including, but not limited to; ‘Modelling Irish Unification’ by Dr Kurt Hubner, ‘The Economic Effects of an All Island Economy’, by Paul Gosling, ‘The Economic Case for Irish Unity’, by Michael Burke and the Joint Oireachtas Committee Report, ‘Brexit and the Future of Ireland – Uniting Ireland & Its People in Peace & Prosperity’.

This Council should be prudent in planning for the future to maximise our potential and secure future economic growth and to compete effectively with other Cities across the Island of Ireland.

The economic plan should examine how this Council would prepare for this scenario and how this Council area could position itself within this potential new constitutional arrangement, in order that Belfast maximizes all opportunities for city growth in this context.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

n) Community Impact of Needle Finds

Proposed by Councillor McLaughlin

Seconded by Councillor Donnelly

“This Council notes with alarm the increased volume of needles found on streets in inner city surrounding communities, both used and otherwise. The safety ramifications for families who reside in such areas are extensive and obvious.

This Council has a duty of care to the citizens of Belfast including assisting them in fulfilling their ambitions and striving towards the goals of the Belfast Agenda.

Urban inner city surrounding communities are lived in neighbourhoods, not fully part of the City Centre but neither are they suburbs. Such localities face problems associated to air pollution, high volumes of commuter car parking, dense housing developments, fractured infrastructure and historical failings associated to place and space planning.

One contemporary impact of such failings resides in limited usable green and natural safe play sites.

The evidenced needle finds across urban inner city surrounding communities are ordinarily in sites of overgrown shrubbery, vacant green sites, beside hedge rows and alongside well used play and walking areas.

This Council cannot and should not accept increased street needle finds as a natural and inevitable consequence of a growing City. Such an acceptance is a direct contradiction to the aims and visions of the Belfast Agenda. This neither supports those at risk of addiction or resident families.

Whilst we recognise the massive value of the work undertaken by the Council’s Community Safety structures and the Sharp Removal Programme, this motion seeks a report focused on the immediate areas surrounding the city centre in the contemporary context, detailing the volume of finds, associated costs of removal, correlations if and where they exist, site contexts and recommendations moving forward based on good practice elsewhere.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the People and Communities Committee)**

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



Chief Executive



## **Council**

### **SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL**

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 1st July, 2019  
at the hour of 10.45 o'clock a.m., pursuant to Notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); the High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston and Rodgers; and Councillors S. Baker, Beattie, Brooks, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Dorrian, Garrett, Graham, Howard, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magennis, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Murphy, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

### **Summons**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors de Faoite, Groogan, Harvey, M. Kelly, Long, McAllister, McDonough-Brown, Mulholland, Newton and Smyth.

### **Battle of the Somme Anniversary**

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane),  
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds) and

Resolved – That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the 103rd Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division, the 16th (Irish) Division and other forces who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their people and whose heroism will never be forgotten.

The Council stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect to all those who had lost their lives in the Battle of the Somme.

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson

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# **Council**

## **SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL**

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 1st July, 2019  
at the hour of 5.30 o'clock p.m., pursuant to Notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); the High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, Nicholl, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

### **Summons**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Spence and Councillors Donnelly, Groogan, Long and Smyth.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Notice of Motion**

#### **Removal of Banners and Paramilitary Flags in Belfast**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Beattie proposed:

“This Council is alarmed at the increasing number of offensive displays of banners and paramilitary flags across Belfast.

Paramilitary flags and banners supporting British regiments are being used to divide, offend and cause hurt to victims.

The British Ministry of Defence and the Parachute Regiment do not endorse these flags or banners and have stated they should only be displayed in certain circumstances.

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Re-traumatising victims with offensive displays is wrong and should have no place in our society.

Standing by and allowing our citizens to be divided and hurt is no longer an option.

This Council agrees to take legal action against the Department for Infrastructure enforcing it to remove:

1. all Paramilitary flags, unless permission is granted by the Department for Infrastructure with protocols that protect citizens; and
2. all banners without planning permission on Department for Infrastructure property, unless permission is granted with protocols that protect citizens.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor D. Baker.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,  
Seconded by Councillor Matt Collins,

That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words “This Council” in the first sentence and the insertion of the following:

“condemns the increasing number of offensive displays of banners and paramilitary flags across Belfast and the recent erection of banners such as “Support Soldier F”, which gave great offence to victims of the parachute regiment.

Paramilitary flags and banners supporting British regiments are being used to divide, offend and cause hurt to victims.

The British Ministry of Defence and the Parachute Regiment do not endorse these flags or banners and have stated they should only be displayed in certain circumstances.

Re-traumatising victims with offensive displays is wrong and should have no place in our society.

Standing by and allowing our citizens to be divided and hurt is no longer an option.

This Council agrees to take legal action against the Department for Infrastructure, enforcing it to remove: “Support Soldier F” banners

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1st July, 2019**

and other such materials which have serviced to re-traumatise victims of the Paratroopers, and are erected on Dfi property.”

On a recorded vote nine Members voted for the amendment and forty-six against and it was declared lost.

<b><u>For 9</u></b>	<b><u>Against 46</u></b>
Councillors Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Ferguson, Heading, Lyons, McCusker, McKeown and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Corr, Dorrian, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McDonough-Brown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, Nicholl, O’Hara, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.

**Amendment**

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

That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker be amended to provide for the deletion of points 1 and 2 at the end of the motion and the insertion of the following:

- “1. all flags, unless permission is granted by the Department for Infrastructure with protocols that protect citizens; and
2. all banners on Department for Infrastructure property, unless permission is granted with protocols that protect citizens.”

On a recorded vote fifteen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-nine against and it was declared lost.

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<b><u>For 15</u></b>	<b><u>Against 39</u></b>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); and Councillors de Faoite, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, M. Kelly, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McMullan, Mulholland, Nicholl and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McLaughlin, Murphy, Newton, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Whyte,  
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words "This Council" in the first sentence and the insertion of the following:

"agrees to take legal action against the Department for Infrastructure, enforcing it to remove:

1. all paramilitary flags; and
2. all flags and banners erected where lawful authority from the Department has not been sought and granted."

On a recorded vote fifteen Members voted for the amendment and forty against and it was declared lost.

<b><u>For 15</u></b>	<b><u>Against 40</u></b>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); and Councillors de Faoite, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, M. Kelly, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McMullan, Mulholland, Nicholl and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McLaughlin, Murphy, Newton, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.

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On a recorded vote, thirty-four Members voted for the original motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker, and eighteen against, with three 'no votes', and it was declared carried.

<b><u>For 34</u></b>	<b><u>Against 18</u></b>	<b><u>No Vote 3</u></b>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Canavan, Carson, Corr, de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Howard, M. Kelly, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Nicholl, O'Hara, Walsh and Whyte.	The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Newton, Pankhurst and Verner.	Councillors Matt Collins, Michael Collins and Ferguson.

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson

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# **Council**

## **MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL**

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 1st July, 2019  
at 6.45 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); the High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, Nicholl, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

### **Summons**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Spence and Councillors Donnelly, Groogan, Long and Smyth.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Murphy declared an interest in relation to the decision of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June, under the heading "Financial Reporting Quarter 4", in that he was on the Board of the Ligoniel Improvement Association, which provided accommodation to the Belfast City Wide Tribunal Service. As the matter did not become the subject of debate, he was not required to leave the meeting.

### **Minutes of the Council**

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane),  
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds) and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Council of 21st May be taken as read and signed as correct.

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**Official Announcements**

**Expressions of Sympathy**

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, extended his condolences to Alderman Kingston on the death of his mother, Marion.

At the request of Councillor Hutchinson, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council extended his condolences to the family of Mr. Ricky O’Rawe who had in the past provided consultancy support to the Council.

**Mr. Stephen McCrory**

The Lord Mayor pointed out that this would be the last meeting which would be attended by Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager, as he was due to retire at the end of July after completing thirty-nine years’ service in Local Government.

He, together with a number of Members, highlighted the significant contribution which Mr. McCrory had made to the democratic process and the work of the Council generally and wished him well in his retirement.

**Congratulations**

At the request of Councillor Lyons, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated Belfast poet and Freeman of the City, Mr. Michael Longley, on his forthcoming eightieth birthday.

Councillor de Faoite congratulated the parents of pupils attending Harding Memorial Primary School who had voted overwhelmingly in favour of pursuing integrated status and wished everyone associated with the school well for the remainder of the transformation process and beyond.

At the request of Alderman Rodgers, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated the Irish Men’s International Bowls Team on winning the 2019 British Isles International Team Championship.

Councillor McKeown congratulated Rosario Youth Football Club, following the recent announcement of its innovative partnership agreement with St. Mirren Football Club, and wished both clubs well for the future.

**Anniversary**

The Council noted, at the request of Councillor Flynn that, on the previous weekend, the world had marked the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Stonewall Riots in New York.

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**Requests to Address the Council**

**Save Our Sunflower Campaign**

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Mr. J. Whyte Jnr. to address the Council in advance of the motion on the Save Our Sunflower Campaign which Councillor D. Baker would be proposing later in the meeting.

The Council approved the request and Mr. J. Whyte Jnr. and Mr. J. Whyte Snr., of the Save Our Sunflower campaign, together with Ms. A. McIlwaine, representing the Anthony Nolan Trust, were welcomed by the Lord Mayor.

Mr. Whyte Jnr. informed the Council that his sister, Mrs. Sharon Whyte McCloskey, a mother of three boys, had, in February, been diagnosed with leukaemia. His sister had been advised by consultants that, in order to fight the disease, she would require a stem cell transplant. However, because she had a rare tissue type, it would be difficult to find a suitable donor. He and his brother had been tested as potential donors but both had been found to be incompatible.

He explained that he had been disappointed to learn that, at that point, only 2% of people in the United Kingdom and Ireland had signed up to the stem cell donation register. That had inspired Mrs. Whyte McCloskey's family and friends to establish the Save Our Sunflower campaign in order to increase awareness of the register and to encourage as many people as possible to add their names to it. As a result of the campaign and the valuable work of the Anthony Nolan Trust and the DKMS charity, the number of donors signing up to the register had risen significantly, which, importantly, offered encouragement to leukaemia sufferers. He paid tribute to Belfast resident Mrs. Eimear Smyth Gooderham, who had died on 27th June, who had campaigned tirelessly to raise awareness of the stem cell donation register, since being diagnosed in 2016 with a form of blood cancer and concluded by inviting the Council to support Councillor D. Baker's motion.

Ms. A. McIlwaine explained that the Anthony Nolan Trust maintained the United Kingdom's stem cell and bone marrow donation register. She provided a brief overview of the charity's work and, in terms of education, highlighted its targeted campaigns across schools, sports clubs etc. to recruit young donors, particularly between the age of sixteen and thirty, who provided the best long-term outcomes for patients. She pointed out that, each year, two thousand people across the United Kingdom required a life-saving match and welcomed the impact which the Save Our Sunflower campaign and similar initiatives had had in expanding the register. However, she stressed that further work was needed in order to address, for example, under-representation amongst minority groups. She concluded by urging the Council to identify ways in which to support the Save Our Sunflower and related campaigns.

The deputation was thanked by the Lord Mayor and they left the meeting.

The Council noted the information which had been provided and that Members would have an opportunity to discuss the issue later in the meeting.

**Meeting of Council,  
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**Social Housing**

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Ms. E. Morris, of Build Homes Now, to allow a deputation to address the Council in relation to the motion on Social Housing, which had been passed by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 13th November, 2018.

The Council agreed to receive the deputation and Ms. E. Seymour, Mr. Saad Al Shawamreh, Mr. Saeb Shah and Ms. J. Woodside were welcomed to the meeting.

Ms. Seymour reported that Ms. Woodside and Mr. Al Shawamreh represented approximately 15,000 children who were waiting currently to find a home within the City. In the interim, many were forced to live in overcrowded accommodation, much of which was sub-standard and prejudicial to their health. She explained that both Ms. Woodside and Mr. Al Shawamreh were involved in the Build Homes Now campaign, which she claimed offered a simple solution to the housing crisis by building homes on vacant land across the City which were in areas of chronic housing need. Some of that land was publicly owned and had been vacant for a considerable period of time and included the Gasworks, Hillview, Mackies and Sirocco sites. She urged the Council to do everything within its power to ensure that sufficient homes were built on those sites to alleviate the current housing crisis.

Ms. Woodside outlined the impact which homelessness had had upon her and her family and pointed out that she was now helping other young people who found themselves in a similar situation. She reminded the Members that the Planning Committee had, in November 2018, passed a motion calling for action to be taken to ensure that housing provision met current and projected needs in the City. However, that Committee had, recently, approved an outline application for the Sirocco site which, disappointingly, had designated only sixty-seven out of seven hundred houses for social housing. She pointed out that this would not solve the current social housing shortage and that it was imperative that the Council support the Build Homes Now campaign.

Mr. Al Shawamreh explained that his family had moved to Belfast from Syria. However, they, along with a number of other families, had been relocated to temporary accommodation as a result of hate crimes. Much of that accommodation was of a poor quality and had health implications. He urged the Council to support the Syrian community and other homeless people across the City by addressing the social housing crisis.

The Lord Mayor thanked the deputation and they left the meeting.

The Council noted the information which had been provided.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**

Moved by Alderman Kingston,  
Seconded by Councillor Nicholl,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June be approved and adopted.

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st July, 2019**

**Amendment**

**Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances**

Moved by Councillor Garrett,  
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June, under the heading “Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances”, in so far as it relates to the basic allowance, be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees not to increase the basic allowance.

On a vote by show of hands, eighteen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-two against and it was declared lost.

**Submission of Report**

At the request of Councillor Garrett, the Council agreed that a report be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee examining the potential for utilising any savings to be derived from not implementing future increases in the basic responsibility allowance for other purposes.

The Council agreed also, at the request of Councillor Matt Collins, that the report should examine the feasibility of linking Members’ allowances directly to staff pay.

**Amendment**

**Invitation to join the International  
Shared Societies Project**

Moved by Councillor Garrett  
Seconded by Councillor Black,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June, under the heading “Invitation to join the International Shared Societies Project”, be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees not to participate in the project.

On a vote by show of hands, twenty Members voted for the amendment and thirty against and it was declared lost.

**Update on Motion: Support for  
Roads Infrastructure in Scotland**

At the request of Alderman Kingston, the Council agreed, given the timescales involved, that officers submit responses to the draft findings of the South West Scotland Transport Study and to the review of Scotland’s National Transport Strategy, as alluded to within the correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st July, 2019**

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June were thereupon approved and adopted.

**People and Communities Committee**

Moved by Councillor Michael Collins,  
Seconded by Councillor D. Baker,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 4th June be approved and adopted.

**Update on Grass Cutting at Sites  
not owned by Belfast City Council**

At the request of Councillor McLaughlin, the Council granted approval to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to discuss with the Department for Infrastructure the potential for adding a site outside Milltown Cemetery and a site at the Monagh By-Pass to this year's grass cutting schedule.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 4th June were thereupon approved and adopted.

**Resolution: Belfast City Council Traffic  
Regulation Order (Northern Ireland) 2019**

Moved by Councillor Michael Collins,  
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite and

Resolved - That the Council agrees to pass a Resolution to make a Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation Order (Northern Ireland) 2019, covering those streets set out within pages C1321 to C1323 of the minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 4th June, and to come into effect on 1st July, 2019.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee**

Moved by Councillor Hargey,  
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 5th June be approved and adopted.

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st July, 2019**

**Amendment**

**Update on International Relations**

Moved by Councillor Kyle,  
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson,

That the decision of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 5th June, under the heading "Update on International Relations", be amended to provide that the Council agrees to participate in the trade mission to Israel in the week commencing 29th July, 2019 and authorises the attendance of the Director of Economic Development (or his nominee) at a cost not exceeding £1,500.

On a recorded vote sixteen Members voted for the amendment and twenty-seven against, with seven "no votes", and it was declared lost.

<b><u>For 16</u></b>	<b><u>Against 27</u></b>	<b><u>No Vote 7</u></b>
The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Haire, Kingston and McCoubrey; and Councillors Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Newton, Pankhurst and Verner.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCusker, McKeown, McLaughlin, O'Hara, Walsh and Whyte.	Councillors Harvey, M. Kelly, McAllister, McDonough-Brown, McMullan, Mulholland and Nicholl.

**City Centre Recovery and Revitalisation Programme**

The Council agreed, in response to issues which had been raised by Councillor Ferguson around the contract for the City Currency initiative, that a report be submitted to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

**Castle Place and Pedestrianisation**

At the request of Councillor Lyons, the Council agreed that the proposed research around models of pedestrianisation or other initiatives, as alluded to within paragraph 3.22 of the report, should consider fully pedestrianised streets, where access was not shared between vehicles and pedestrians on a 24-hour basis but where vehicular access to businesses for deliveries etc. was allowed for short designated periods.

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st July, 2019**

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 5th June were thereupon approved and adopted.

**Licensing Committee**

Moved by Councillor S. Baker,  
Seconded by Councillor McAteer and

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

**Planning Committee**

Moved by Councillor Carson,  
Seconded by Councillor Murphy and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 11th and 13th June, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Brexit Committee**

Moved by Councillor de Faoite,  
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 20th June be approved and adopted.

**Amendment**

**Support for Backstop as part  
of any Withdrawal Agreement**

Moved by Councillor Brooks,  
Seconded by Councillor Newton,

That the decision of the Brexit Committee of 20th June, under the heading "Support for Backstop as part of any Withdrawal Agreement", be amended to provide that the letter to be sent to the incoming Prime Minister and to the Taoiseach should indicate that the Council's overall position in relation to Brexit, as outlined in the letter, represented a majority rather than a unanimous view.



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On a vote by show of hands, fifteen Members voted for the amendment and twenty-four against and it was declared lost.

**Adoption of Minutes**

The minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 20th June were thereupon approved and adopted.

**Notices of Motion**

**Homeless Status**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Hargey proposed:

“This Council commends the #FDANODELAY campaign and recognises that people living in hostels and other temporary/emergency accommodation across our society are homeless and deserve to be legally recognised as such by having Full Duty Applicant status awarded.

The Council calls on the NIHE Chief Executive to respond, outlining what measures the NIHE will now take to accurately audit the extent of the problem regarding homeless people who are not recognised as such and what steps will be taken to remedy these oversights.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Walsh.

At the request of Councillor Ferguson, the proposer agreed to amend her motion to the effect that the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive be invited to meet with an all-Party delegation from the Council to discuss the motion.

After discussion, the motion, as amended, was put to the Council and passed.

**TV Licences for Over 75s**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Groves proposed:

“This Council notes with serious concern the plans that the British Broadcasting Corporation has announced relating to the means testing of the provision of TV licensing for the over-75s.

The Council agrees to request the BBC to immediately cease these plans and agrees also that the Mayor of Belfast convene a meeting with BBC senior officials and the Council’s Reference Group on Older People to hear at first hand the impact that this decision will have on our most valued and respected Citizens of Belfast.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor S. Baker.

**Meeting of Council,  
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At the request of Councillor Heading, the proposer agreed to amend her motion to provide for the deletion of the words “requests the BBC to immediately cease these plans” at the start of the second paragraph and the insertion of the following:

“The Council agrees:

1. to write to the BBC to highlight our opposition to its decision, at a time when pay for BBC senior managers is at unjustifiable levels;
2. to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise our objections and call for the provision of adequate funding to sustain this benefit;
3. to write to the National Pensioners’ Convention to indicate our support for its ongoing campaign.”

Accordingly, the motion, as proposed by Councillor Groves and seconded by Councillor S. Baker, as amended and set out below, was thereupon put to the Council and passed:

“This Council notes with serious concern the plans that the British Broadcasting Corporation has announced relating to the means testing of the provision of TV licensing for the over 75s.

The Council agrees:

1. to write to the BBC to highlight our opposition to its decision, at a time when pay for BBC senior managers is at unjustifiable levels;
2. to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise our objections and call for the provision of adequate funding to sustain this benefit;
3. to write to the National Pensioners’ Convention to indicate our support for its ongoing campaign; and
4. that the Mayor of Belfast convene a meeting with BBC senior officials and the Council’s Reference Group on Older People to hear at first hand the impact that this decision will have on our most valued and respected citizens of Belfast.”

**Welfare Mitigation Schemes**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Canavan proposed:

“This Council recognises that mitigation packages have provided vital support to the most vulnerable members of our society and should continue to be provided as Tory austerity measures continue to impact.

The Council notes with deep concern the range of reports published recently which highlight the serious risk of greater hardship for many within our

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community, if welfare mitigations do not continue beyond March 2020. These reports include:

- Welfare Reform: Mitigations on a Cliff Edge
- Cliff Edge Coalition NI
- NIAO: Welfare Reforms in NI

The Council calls on all parties to support the need to continue welfare mitigations beyond March 2020 and agrees to write to the Department for Communities calling for it to take all steps necessary to ensure that mitigations schemes will continue to help the most vulnerable in our community.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Black.

**Amendment**

Moved by Alderman Kingston,  
Seconded by Councillor Pankhurst,

That the motion under the heading “Welfare Mitigation Schemes”, as proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Black, be amended to provide for the addition of the following at the end of the motion:

“and calls for the immediate restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive so that it can take decisions and actions on this important issue.”

On a vote by show of hands twenty-eight Members voted for the amendment and nineteen against and it was declared carried.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,  
Seconded by Councillor Michael Collins,

That the motion under the heading “Welfare Mitigation Schemes”, as proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Black, as amended, be amended to provide for the removal of everything after the words “This Council” in the first paragraph and the insertion of the following:

“condemns the decision to allow Welfare Reform into Belfast by the Executive in 2015, via a legislative consent motion.

The Council recognises that mitigation packages have provided vital support to the most vulnerable members of society and should continue to be provided as Tory austerity measures continue to impact.

The Council recognises also that said mitigation packages do not go far enough. Thousands are already suffering, are at food banks, are

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homeless, all because of Welfare Reforms, all while the mitigations have been in place.

The Council calls on all Parties to support: the call to end Welfare Reform and to replace it with a welfare system that is more equal and humane; the need to continue welfare mitigations as an alleviating measure until such time as a fairer system is implemented, as outlined in the range of reports published recently, which highlight the risk of greater hardship if mitigations do not continue post 2020. The reports include:

- Welfare Reform: Mitigations on a Cliff Edge;
- Cliff Edge Coalition NI; and
- NIAO: Welfare Reforms in NI.

The Council agrees to write to the Department for Communities calling for it to take all steps necessary to ensure that mitigation schemes will continue to help the most vulnerable in our society.”

On a recorded vote, ten Members voted for the amendment and thirty-eight against and it was declared lost.

<b><u>For 10</u></b>	<b><u>Against 38</u></b>
Councillors Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Ferguson, Flynn, Heading, Lyons, McKeown, O’Hara and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); The High Sheriff (Councillor Sandford); Aldermen Haire, Kingston and McCoubrey; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Corr, Dorrian, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Newton, Nicholl, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Magee,  
Seconded by Councillor Hargey,

That the motion under the heading “Welfare Mitigation Schemes”, as proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Black, as amended, be amended further to provide for the addition of the following at the start of the motion:

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“The policy of austerity and welfare cuts imposed by the British Government is wrong and should be reversed.”

On a vote by show of hands thirty-three Members voted for the amendment and twelve against and it was declared carried.

The original motion, as amended, was thereupon put to the Council as the substantive motion and passed as follows:

“The policy of austerity and welfare cuts imposed by the British Government is wrong and should be reversed.

This Council recognises that mitigation packages have provided vital support to the most vulnerable members of our society and should continue to be provided as Tory austerity measures continue to impact.

The Council notes with deep concern the range of reports published recently which highlight the serious risk of greater hardship for many within our community, if welfare mitigations do not continue beyond March 2020. These reports include:

- Welfare Reform: Mitigations on a Cliff Edge;
- Cliff Edge Coalition NI; and
- NIAO: Welfare Reforms in NI.

The Council calls on all parties to support the need to continue welfare mitigations beyond March 2020, agrees to write to the Department for Communities calling for it to take all steps necessary to ensure that mitigations schemes will continue to help the most vulnerable in our community and calls for the immediate restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive so that it can take decisions and actions on this important issue.”

**Save our Sunflower Campaign**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor D. Baker proposed:

“This Council recognises the efforts of the Anthony Nolan and DKMS charities to raise awareness, through the use of media, publications and other avenues, of blood cancer and the urgent need to get more people on the stem cell donation register.

The Council agrees to work with the Save our Sunflower campaign group and charities to further the goal of increased registration.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Carson.

After discussion, the motion was put to the Council and passed.

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**Voting Rights for Irish Citizens in Presidential Elections**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor de Faoite proposed:

“This Council:

- recognises the unique ability of people living in Northern Ireland to hold citizenship of Britain, Ireland or both, as a result of the Good Friday Agreement;
- welcomes the announcement from An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD and the Irish Government of their intent to hold a Referendum on the right of all Irish Citizens to take part in the election of Uachtarán na hÉireann, the President of Ireland; and
- believes that this is an important opportunity to expand the democratic participation of people across Northern Ireland in the election of the Irish Head of State.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

At the request of Councillor Flynn, the proposer agreed to amend his motion to provide for the addition of the words “and Irish Diaspora” after the word “Ireland” in the final bullet point.

Accordingly, the motion, as proposed by Councillor de Faoite and seconded by Councillor Heading, as amended and set out below, was thereupon put to the Council and passed:

“This Council:

- recognises the unique ability of people living in Northern Ireland to hold citizenship of Britain, Ireland or both, as a result of the Good Friday Agreement;
- welcomes the announcement from An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD and the Irish Government of their intent to hold a Referendum on the right of all Irish Citizens to take part in the election of Uachtarán na hÉireann, the President of Ireland; and
- believes that this is an important opportunity to expand the democratic participation of people across Northern Ireland and Irish Diaspora in the election of the Irish Head of State.”

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**Domestic Violence**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor M. Kelly proposed:

“This Council is saddened at the levels of domestic violence in Belfast and recognises that this manifests in many different forms, including emotional and economic abuse.

Belfast needs to become a city that has zero tolerance towards domestic violence or abuse – a “Safe City” which is proactive in supporting victims of domestic violence and challenging perpetrators. A Safe City recognises that domestic violence impacts upon many residents, regardless of age, religion, ethnic or cultural background.

This Council pledges to build on the work already achieved by engaging with relevant partners to support victims of domestic abuse and challenge perpetrators and to update the Belfast City Council Domestic Violence Strategy.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Nicholl.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

**Water Refill Points**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor McMullan proposed:

“This Council recognises the over reliance on single use plastic water bottles. It notes innovative solutions to tackle this issue and support sustainable living, for example, the water refill stations recently installed by Mayo County Council.

The Council agrees to the installation of water bottle refill stations across the Council Estate. This aims to help encourage a growing culture of using personal, reusable bottles to tackle single-use plastic use.”

The motion was seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds).

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

**Webcasting of Committee Meetings**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Nicholl proposed:

“This Council agrees to introduce webcasting of all Committee meetings in order to increase openness and transparency.”

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The motion was seconded by Councillor Harvey.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

**Centenary of the Foundation of Northern Ireland**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Dorrian proposed:

“This Council notes the centenary of the foundation of Northern Ireland in 2021, the commitment to celebrate this as part of the Decade of Centenaries programme and the pivotal role that Belfast City Hall played in the establishment of its political institutions.

The Council agrees that a significant programme is developed by the Council to celebrate, to educate and to fully examine the different perspectives on its creation and to recognise the role of the City Hall.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Hutchinson.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

**Abortion Imagery**

In the absence of Councillor Groogan, the Council agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 13(i), that the motion standing in her name be withdrawn from the agenda.

**Glyphosate-Based Weedkiller**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Ferguson proposed:

“This Council recognises the dangers associated with the use of glyphosate-based weedkillers, including the World Health Organisation's warning about carcinogenic side effects and the damaging impact on the environment and biodiversity.

The Council notes that other councils and government agencies have introduced bans across the world and agrees to immediately investigate and implement the use of safer weedkilling methods in order to protect Council staff, the general public, and local flora and fauna.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Matt Collins.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the People and Communities Committee.



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**Air Quality in Belfast**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor O'Hara proposed:

"This Council notes that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) monitoring of Air Quality in Belfast has identified breaches of the Air Quality legal limits, alongside the Council's own monitoring of and the data collected by Greens across the City.

Poor Air Quality reduces life expectancy, increases incidents of respiratory conditions, rates of lung cancers, strokes and asthma. These are more prevalent amongst older people, younger people and vulnerable groups. In addition, this disproportionately impacts inner city and working class communities.

In view of these issues and in support of all 5 objectives of the Belfast Agenda, particularly outcome 5 to make 'Belfast a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable City', the Council agrees to engage formally with DAERA and the Department for Infrastructure on the areas of concern and to produce reports on:

1. Enhancing monitoring and reporting of air pollution, including recommended limits in line with the more stringent World Health Organisation Standards; and
2. Introducing a Clean Air Zone in Belfast, in line with UK Government Guidance."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Kyle.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the People and Communities Committee.

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson

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# **Council**

## **SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL**

Held in the City Hall on Friday, 2nd August, 2019  
at the hour of 1.30 o'clock p.m., pursuant to Notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); Aldermen Haire, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Spence; and Councillors D. Baker, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Donnelly, Dorrian, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, McAllister, McAteer, McCusker, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Newton, Nicholl, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Smyth, Verner and Walsh.

### **Summons**

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of the High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford), Aldermen Copeland and Kingston and Councillors Beattie, Cobain, Ferguson, Groogan, Howard, Hussey, Long and McKeown.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Requests to Film Proceedings**

The Chief Executive reported that requests had been received from a number of broadcasting companies to film the proceedings of the meeting.

The Council approved the requests.

### **Request to Address the Council**

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received to allow a deputation of Trades Union officials to address the Council in advance of the motion on Harland and Wolff Shipyard being proposed by Councillor Heading.

The Council agreed to receive the deputation and, accordingly, Mr. B. Reid and Mr. P. Beattie, representing GMB, and Ms. S. Fitzgerald and Mr. J. Passmore, from Unite the Union, were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Reid reported that he had worked in the Harland and Wolff Shipyard for the past thirty-three years and was the fourth generation from his family to be employed there. He highlighted the Shipyard's close historical and economic links to the City of Belfast

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over the years and stressed that every effort should be made to secure the future of the business.

Mr. Passmore explained that the impact of the closure of the Harland and Wolff Shipyard would be felt well beyond those 123 jobs which would be lost immediately. He pointed out that each new contract generated a significant number of additional direct and indirect jobs and highlighted the fact that £261 million had been paid to sub-contractors, agency staff and employees over the past seven years. That, in turn, had created substantial economic benefits for the City. He added that the closure of the Shipyard would lead to a loss of skilled workers and confirm the demise of the industrial sector in Belfast.

Mr. Beattie, who had worked in the Shipyard since 1981, provided details of potential future contracts, some of which could last for up to fifteen years. Whilst those would generate additional employment and offer apprenticeship opportunities, work could only commence when a suitable owner had been found. He added that there would, post-Brexit, be increased demand for United Kingdom input in terms of the offshore renewable industry and that Harland and Wolff had the facility and expertise to deliver on that. However, he stressed that all of the aforementioned work was dependent upon the Shipyard's immediate difficulties being resolved.

Ms. Fitzgerald confirmed that the Trades Union movement was supportive of the workers' demand for the re-nationalisation of the Harland and Wolff Shipyard. She stressed that the support of the Council had contributed to the success of the campaign to secure jobs in Bombardier Aerospace in Belfast and concluded by urging it to support the current campaign by endorsing Councillor Heading's motion.

The Lord Mayor thanked the deputation for their contribution.

The Council noted the information which had been provided and that Members would, shortly, have an opportunity to discuss the matter.

**Notice of Motion**

**Harland and Wolff Shipyard**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Heading proposed:

“This Council notes the economic importance of the Harland and Wolff Shipyard to the workers, sub-contractors and the City of Belfast.

The Council will convene an urgent forum between the relevant Trades Unions, Invest NI, Department for the Economy and the UK Government to identify any measures possible to secure the continued operation of the Harland and Wolff Shipyard.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Flynn.

The proposer agreed to amend his motion to reflect the following requests:

**Councillor Hanvey** – That the following wording be inserted between the first and second paragraphs: “The Council calls on the UK Government to provide immediate

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interim funding to allow Harland and Wolff to explore long-term opportunities for a substantive solution to save the yard.”;

**Councillor Hargey** – That the forum referred to within the motion be led by the leaders of the Political Parties represented on the Council;

**Councillor Matt Collins** – That the following wording be added to the end of the final sentence: “,including the possibility that the existing skill set of workers could be used to transform the site into a hub for the creation of green energy, helping to save jobs whilst simultaneously tackling climate change”; and

**Alderman Rodgers** – That the Council agrees to seek an immediate meeting with the Secretary of State to discuss the matter.”

The motion, standing in the name of Councillor Heading and seconded by Councillor Flynn, as amended and set out hereunder, was thereupon put to the meeting and passed:

“This Council notes the economic importance of the Harland and Wolff Shipyard to the workers, sub-contractors and the City of Belfast.

The Council calls on the UK Government to provide immediate interim funding to allow Harland and Wolff to explore long-term opportunities for a substantive solution to save the yard.

The Council will convene an urgent forum, led by the leaders of the Political Parties represented on the Council, between the relevant Trades Unions, Invest NI, Department for the Economy and the UK Government to identify any measures possible to secure the continued operation of the Harland and Wolff Shipyard, including the possibility that the existing skill set of workers could be used to transform the site into a hub for the creation of green energy, helping to save jobs whilst simultaneously tackling climate change.

In addition, the Council will seek an immediate meeting with the Secretary of State to discuss the matter.”

The Council agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (2) (c), that the decision would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council’s or the public’s interest.

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson

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Extract of Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council of 1st July, 2019

## **“Removal of Banners and Paramilitary Flags in Belfast**

*In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Beattie proposed:*

*“This Council is alarmed at the increasing number of offensive displays of banners and paramilitary flags across Belfast.*

*Paramilitary flags and banners supporting British regiments are being used to divide, offend and cause hurt to victims.*

*The British Ministry of Defence and the Parachute Regiment do not endorse these flags or banners and have stated they should only be displayed in certain circumstances.*

*Re-traumatising victims with offensive displays is wrong and should have no place in our society.*

*Standing by and allowing our citizens to be divided and hurt is no longer an option.*

*This Council agrees to take legal action against the Department for Infrastructure enforcing it to remove:*

- 1. all Paramilitary flags, unless permission is granted by the Department for Infrastructure with protocols that protect citizens; and*
- 2. all banners without planning permission on Department for Infrastructure property, unless permission is granted with protocols that protect citizens.”*

*The motion was seconded by Councillor D. Baker.*

### **Amendment**

*Moved by Councillor Ferguson,  
Seconded by Councillor Matt Collins,*

*That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words “This Council” in the first sentence and the insertion of the following:*

*“condemns the increasing number of offensive displays of banners and paramilitary flags across Belfast and the recent erection of banners such as “Support Soldier F”, which gave great offence to victims of the parachute regiment.*

*Paramilitary flags and banners supporting British regiments are being used to divide, offend and cause hurt to victims.*

*The British Ministry of Defence and the Parachute Regiment do not endorse these flags or banners and have stated they should only be displayed in certain circumstances.*

*Re-traumatising victims with offensive displays is wrong and should have no place in our society.*

*Standing by and allowing our citizens to be divided and hurt is no longer an option.*

*This Council agrees to take legal action against the Department for Infrastructure, enforcing it to remove: "Support Soldier F" banners and other such materials which have serviced to re-traumatise victims of the Paratroopers, and are erected on Dfi property."*

*On a recorded vote nine Members voted for the amendment and forty-six against and it was declared lost.*

<b><u>For 9</u></b>	<b><u>Against 46</u></b>
<i>Councillors Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Ferguson, Heading, Lyons, McCusker, McKeown and Whyte.</i>	<i>The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Corr, Dorrian, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McDonough-Brown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, Nicholl, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.</i>

### **Amendment**

*Moved by Councillor McAllister,  
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown,*

*That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker be amended to provide for the deletion of points 1 and 2 at the end of the motion and the insertion of the following:*

*"1. all flags, unless permission is granted by the Department for Infrastructure with protocols that protect citizens; and*



2. *all banners on Department for Infrastructure property, unless permission is granted with protocols that protect citizens.”*

*On a recorded vote fifteen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-nine against and it was declared lost.”*

<b><u>For 15</u></b>	<b><u>Against 39</u></b>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); and Councillors de Faoite, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, M. Kelly, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McMullan, Mulholland, Nicholl and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McLaughlin, Murphy, Newton, O’Hara, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.

### **Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Whyte,  
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words “This Council” in the first sentence and the insertion of the following:

“agrees to take legal action against the Department for Infrastructure, enforcing it to remove:

1. all paramilitary flags; and
2. all flags and banners erected where lawful authority from the Department has not been sought and granted.”

On a recorded vote fifteen Members voted for the amendment and forty against and it was declared lost.

<b><u>For 15</u></b>	<b><u>Against 40</u></b>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); and Councillors de Faoite, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, M. Kelly, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McMullan, Mulholland, Nicholl and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McLaughlin, Murphy, Newton, O’Hara, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.

On a recorded vote, thirty-four Members voted for the original motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Beattie and seconded by Councillor D. Baker, and eighteen against, with three ‘no votes’, and it was declared carried.

<b><u>For 34</u></b>	<b><u>Against 18</u></b>	<b><u>No Vote 3</u></b>
<p>The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane);  The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); and  Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Canavan, Carson, Corr, de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Howard, M. Kelly, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Nicholl, O'Hara, Walsh and Whyte.</p>	<p>The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford);  Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and  Councillors Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Newton, Pankhurst and Verner.</p>	<p>Councillors Matt Collins, Michael Collins and Ferguson.</p>

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## Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 3rd July, 2019

### SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Kingston (Chairperson);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Beattie, Black, Carson, Dorrian, Garrett,  
Groogan, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, McAllister,  
McDonough-Brown, Murphy, Nicholl, Pankhurst and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillor Kyle.

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. A. Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

#### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Spence and Councillors Graham and Long.

#### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### Restricted Items

#### Bonfire-Related Issues

The Committee was reminded that the Council's Bonfire Governance Arrangements stated that the Press and public will be excluded from meetings in relation to bonfire-related issues having regard to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted and for the protection of officers who might be required to provide information to assist in decision-making. In addition the information provided was to be treated as sensitive and confidential.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting.

The Committee was advised also that, in accordance with Standing Order 37a - Duties of Committees: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had full delegated authority to take decisions in relation to bonfire related issues.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Wednesday, 3rd July, 2019**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which provided details on a number of bonfire sites and current issues on which the Committee was required to make a decision. In addition, the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided an update on additional sites on which it would be required to make a decision at either today's meeting or at a further meeting to be held the following week.

**Lismore Street**

The Committee agreed to remove the tyres both around the site and from within the bonfire at Lismore Street but that, prior to their removal, the Interagency Group, at its meeting on 5th July, be advised of the Committee's decision, and that their assistance is requested, following which the tyres would be removed the next day or on a day as advised by the contractor.

**Navarra Place Playground Site**

The Committee agreed:

- To approve the provision of a beacon at the Navarra Place Playground on 11th July; and
- That officers implement mitigation measures to minimise potential damage to the fence and other items around the play area.

**Orangefield**

The Committee agreed not to accede to a request for access to be provided on the night of 11th July to the electrical supply in Council premises at Orangefield Park in connection with bonfire-related events.

**Thistle Court/Madrid Street**

The Committee agreed to defer, until a further special meeting, consideration of the provision of a beacon at the above-mentioned site to enable further discussions to take place with the residents and with the Short Strand Partnership on the possibility of using another location in the area.

**Other sites**

The Members also received an update on Cluan Place and were reminded that the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), being the landowner, was the decision maker with regards to this site and, as with other DfI owned sites, there might be a request to engage our contractor if an intervention was required. This would be undertaken within the parameters of the availability of the contractor and costs being met by DfI.

Noted.

The Committee agreed also to defer decisions on the other sites addressed by the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services, that is, Avoniel, Ashdale Street and Inverary until the next special meeting.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Wednesday, 3rd July, 2019**

**Next Meeting**

The Committee agreed that the next meeting to consider bonfire-related issues be held on Monday, 8th July at 1.00p.m.

**Call-in**

The Committee agreed further, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (a) (2) (c), that the decisions would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest.

Chairperson

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# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Monday, 8th July, 2019

## SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Kingston (Chairperson);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Beattie, Black, Carson, Dorrian, Garrett,  
Graham, Groogan, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, McAllister,  
McDonough-Brown, Murphy, Nicholl, Pankhurst and Walsh.

Also attended: Alderman Rodgers and Councillor Kyle.

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. A. Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Spence and Councillors Long and Nicholl.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Restricted Items

#### Bonfire-Related Issues

The Committee was reminded that the Council's Bonfire Governance Arrangements stated that the Press and public will be excluded from meetings in relation to bonfire-related issues having regard to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted and for the protection of officers who might be required to provide information to assist in decision-making. In addition the information provided was to be treated as sensitive and confidential.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting.

The Committee was advised also that, in accordance with Standing Order 37a - Duties of Committees: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had full delegated authority to take decisions in relation to bonfire related issues.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Monday, 8th July, 2019**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which provided details on a number of bonfire sites and current issues on which the Committee may consider it appropriate make a decision. The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services then provided a verbal update on each of the sites.

**Thistle Court/Madrid Street**

The Committee agreed:

- To approve the provision of a beacon, as an alternative to a traditional bonfire, at a location identified at Thistle Court/Madrid Street on 11th July and that Council officers manage the issue of no constituted group being responsible for any liability; and
- That officers implement mitigation measures to minimise potential damage.

**Avoniel Site**

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Beattie,  
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That the Committee agrees to the removal of all of the bonfire materials at the Avoniel site and to the removal also of all the flags on the site.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Dorrian,  
Seconded by Alderman Haire,

That the Committee agrees to allow for more discussions to take place in relation to the removal of the tyres only at the Avoniel site.

On a vote by show of hands, five Members voted for the amendment and twelve against and it was declared lost.

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and Seconded by Councillor Walsh was put to the meeting, when twelve Members voted for and five against and it was declared carried.

**Ashdale Street**

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Beattie,  
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That the Committee agrees to the removal of all of the bonfire materials at the Ashdale Street site.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Monday, 8th July, 2019**

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Dorrian,  
Seconded by Alderman Haire,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the matter for a period of 24 hours to allow for more discussions to take place in relation to retaining the bonfire at its current height and that a further special meeting be held to consider the outcome of those discussions.

On a vote by show of hands, five Members voted for the amendment and twelve against and it was declared lost.

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Beattie and Seconded by Councillor Walsh was put to the meeting, when twelve Members voted for and five against and it was declared carried.

**Inverary Site**

The Committee agreed that at the present time no action be undertaken with regard to the bonfire at the Inverary site, but that discussions commence on the suitability of the use of the site for a bonfire in future years.

**Cluan Place and Bonfires on Others' Land**

The Committee agreed to grant approval to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), as the landowner, to use the Council's contractor, if a request was made, for the removal of bonfire materials at Cluan Place or at other sites. The Committee noted that DfI was the decision maker with regards to sites in its ownership and any request would be met within the parameters of the availability of the contractor and costs being met by DfI.

The Committee agreed also to accede to any further requests from landowners for the use of the Council's contractor for the removal of bonfire materials from their land under the same terms and conditions.

**Call-in**

The Committee agreed further, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (a) (2) (c), that the decisions would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest.

Chairperson

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# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 9th July, 2019

## SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Kingston (Chairperson);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Beattie, Black, Carson, Dorrian, Garrett,  
Groogan, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, McDonough-Brown,  
Murphy, Nicholl, Pankhurst and Walsh.

Also attended: Alderman Rodgers and Councillor Kyle.

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. A. Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager  
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Spence and Councillors Graham, Long, McAllister and Nicholl.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Restricted Items

#### Bonfire-Related Issues

The Committee was reminded that the Council's Bonfire Governance Arrangements stated that the Press and public will be excluded from meetings in relation to bonfire-related issues having regard to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted and for the protection of officers who might be required to provide information to assist in decision-making. In addition the information provided was to be treated as sensitive and confidential.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting.

The Committee was advised also that, in accordance with Standing Order 37a - Duties of Committees: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had full delegated authority to take decisions in relation to bonfire related issues.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Tuesday, 9th July, 2019**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which provided details on a number of bonfire sites and current issues on which the Committee was asked if it wished to make any decision.

**Ashdale Street/King George V Playing Fields**

The Committee was advised that, subsequent to its decision the previous day, that is, to remove all of the bonfire materials at the Ashdale Street site, the bonfire had been dismantled by the bonfire builders and the majority of the materials moved to the Council-owned King George V Playing Fields, but that a substantial amount of discarded materials remained on Ashdale Street.

After discussion, the Committee noted that, in line with its previous decision, the remaining bonfire materials would be removed from Ashdale Street and a clean-up of the site would be undertaken by the Council's contractors. A discussion took place in relation to the King George V Playing Fields. However, no decision was taken in respect of this bonfire in that, at present, it did not constitute a risk to life or property and no tyres appeared to be present. The Committee also did not give explicit consent and officers were asked to keep a watching brief. In addition, the Committee considered that its perspective this year should not constitute any agreement that the site could be utilised for a bonfire in future years.

**Avoniel Site**

The Committee was advised that, subsequent to its decision the previous day, that is, to the removal of all of the bonfire materials at the Avoniel site and to the removal also of all the flags on the site, the bonfire builders had removed the tyres from the bonfire.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Dorrian,  
Seconded by Councillor Pankhurst,

That the Committee agrees, in light of the bonfire being smaller and the problem in relation to the tyres having been removed, to rescind its previous decision and allows the bonfire at the Avoniel site to proceed.

On a vote by show of hands, four Members voted for the proposal and eleven against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to affirm its previous decision of 8th July to remove all of the bonfire materials at the Avoniel site and to the removal also of all the flags on the site.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Tuesday, 9th July, 2019**

**Call-in**

The Committee agreed further, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (a) (2) (c), that the decisions would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest.

Chairperson

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# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 10th July, 2019

## SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Kingston (Chairperson);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Beattie, Black, Carson, Dorrian, Garrett,  
Graham, Groogan, Hargey, Long, Lyons, McAllister,  
McDonough-Brown, Murphy, Pankhurst and Walsh.

Also attended: Alderman Rodgers and Councillors Flynn, Hutchinson,  
Kyle and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. A. Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Spence and Councillors Heading and Nicholl.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Restricted Items

#### Bonfire-Related Issues

The Committee was reminded that the Council's Bonfire Governance Arrangements stated that the Press and public will be excluded from meetings in relation to bonfire-related issues, having regard to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted and for the protection of officers who might be required to provide information to assist in decision-making. In addition, the information provided was to be treated as sensitive and confidential.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting.

The Committee was advised also that, in accordance with Standing Order 37a - Duties of Committees: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had full delegated authority to take decisions in relation to bonfire-related issues.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Wednesday, 10th July, 2019**

The Chief Executive provided the Members with an update in relation to the following sites:

**Ashdale Street/King George V Playing Fields**

The Committee was advised that, subsequent to its decision to remove all of the bonfire materials at the Ashdale Street site, the remaining materials had now been cleared and the site returned to its original status. With regard to the bonfire at the King George V Playing Fields, as agreed, officers were keeping a watching brief and there was no significant change to the site

**Avoniel Site**

The Committee was advised that, subsequent to its decision, that is, to the removal of all of the bonfire materials at the Avoniel site and to the removal also of all the flags on the site, correspondence had been sent to the Police Service of Northern Ireland regarding the decision. A letter had subsequently been received from the Police Service outlining the actions which it could take to support the Council and the current status of risks associated with interventions.

In light of the Police Service response and advice, the Chief Executive tabled, for the information of the Members, a draft copy of a further letter which she was seeking approval to forward to the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

After discussion, the Committee approved the contents of the letter and agreed the wording and the issuing of a statement in relation to the Committee's decision.

**Call-in**

The Committee agreed further, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (a) (2) (c), that the decisions would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest.

Chairperson

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Thursday, 11th July, 2019

## SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Kingston (Chairperson);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Beattie, Black, Carson, Dorrian, Garrett,  
Graham, Groogan, Hargey, Heading, Long, Lyons,  
Murphy, Pankhurst and Walsh.

Also attended: Aldermen Copeland and Rodgers; and  
Councillors Brooks, Hutchinson, Kyle, O'Hara and Whyte.

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. A. Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Spence and Councillors McAllister and Nicholl.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Restricted Items

#### Bonfire-Related Issues

The Committee was reminded that the Council's Bonfire Governance Arrangements stated that the Press and public will be excluded from meetings in relation to bonfire-related issues, having regard to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted and for the protection of officers who might be required to provide information to assist in decision-making. In addition, the information provided was to be treated as sensitive and confidential.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting.

The Committee was advised also that, in accordance with Standing Order 37a - Duties of Committees: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had full delegated authority to take decisions in relation to bonfire-related issues.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Thursday, 11th July, 2019**

**Avoniel Site**

The Chief Executive provided the Members with an update in relation to the Avoniel site with regards to the contractor employed for the removal of the bonfire materials at the site and the position of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, following a complaint of aggravated trespass by the Council.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

- to the establishment of an All-Party Working Group to put in place a framework to achieve more effective management of bonfires on Council-owned sites/facilities, with a report on the Terms of Reference of the Working Group to be submitted to the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 23rd August;
- to reiterate its support for the Police Service of Northern Ireland to take action against those committing and orchestrating aggravated trespass at Avoniel; and
- that appropriate investigations be undertaken by the Council and the Police Service for Northern Ireland in relation to any leaks of confidential/restricted information regarding the Council's contractor for the removal of bonfire materials.

**Call-in**

The Committee agreed further, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (a) (2) (c), that the decisions would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest.

Chairperson

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 23rd August, 2019

## MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- Members present: Alderman Kingston (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Haire and Spence; and  
Councillors Beattie, Black, Carson, Garrett, Groogan,  
Hargey, Heading, Lyons, McAllister, Murphy, Nicholl,  
Pankhurst and Walsh.
- Also attended: Councillors Matt Collins, Ferguson, M. Kelly, McMullan and  
O'Hara.
- In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;  
Ms. S. Grimes, Director (Operational) of Physical Programmes;  
Ms. G. Long, Commissioner for Resilience; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Dorrian, Graham, Long and McDonough-Brown.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 21st June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to item 1(d) – Request to Present – Belfast Harbour Commissioners, in that he was a member of the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, and took no part in the decision-making process.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in relation to item 2(c) – Asset Management, on the basis that she had supported an organisation which had applied, unsuccessfully, to lease the Council's property in the Ormeau Park. As the item did not become the subject of discussion, she was not required to leave the meeting.

**Request to Present – Belfast Harbour Commissioners**

The Committee acceded to a request from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners to attend a future meeting in order to present the Belfast Harbour Strategy.

**Restricted Items**

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

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

**Bonfire Framework - All-Party Working Group**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 11th July, it had agreed to establish an All-Party Working Group to put in place a framework to achieve more effective management of bonfires on Council-owned sites/facilities.

The Chief Executive drew the Committee's attention to a draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group, which covered the following elements:

- Background;
- Objectives;
- Membership;
- Governance/decision-making;
- Role of the Chairperson
- Meeting protocols; and
- Minutes.

She recommended that the Committee approve the draft Terms of Reference and agree to the Working Group being chaired by her (or her nominee).

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre**

The Director of Finance and Resources drew the Committee's attention to issues which had prevented the contractor from completing work on a small section of the Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre site and outlined the potential implications for the Council.

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee agreed that the Council should do everything within its power to ensure that the contractor fulfilled the contract and agreed that legal advice be sought on the actions open to the Council should the work not be progressed.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Friday, 23rd August, 2019**

The Committee agreed also that the Council should request the Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards to investigate the leaking of confidential information which had been discussed on 15th August at the meeting of the Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum.

**Financial Reporting – Quarter 1 2019/20**

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which set out the Quarter 1 financial position for the Council, including a forecast of the year end outturn. The report included a reporting pack, providing an overview of the financial indicators, together with an executive summary. It provided also a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators and the forecast outturns for the year.

He reported that the Departmental year-end forecast was an over spend of £149k, which represented a variance of 0.1% of the annual net expenditure budget, and that an underspend of £1.92m was forecast for the Capital Financing Budget.

In terms of expenditure, the District Rate forecast by Land and Property Services was a clawback of £1.98m. He explained that, whilst the Estimated Penny Product for 2019/20 had been set at a level which should provide adequate cover for the recurring element of valuation appeal losses and normal backdating, there was a risk that a number of outstanding appeals could incur a substantial backdated penalty, resulting in an impact on the level of general reserves. Officers would be meeting with representatives of Land and Property Services to discuss the forecasted position and an updated position would be submitted to the Committee in November.

In terms of other expenditure, £75k was required to replenish the fuel reserve, following the Committee's decision on 21st June to fund the City-wide Tribunal Service for three months, and approximately £770k would be required, should the Police Service of Northern Ireland's appeal for holiday back pay be upheld. There was, therefore, an anticipated funding shortfall of just over £1m. In light of that shortfall, the balance of general reserves was forecast to decrease to £11.7m by the year end.

Accordingly, he recommended that, given the Departmental and District Rate forecasts, no further reallocations or cash flow payments be considered until the Quarter 2 position was presented to the Committee in November.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Asset Management**

The Committee:

- i) Kent Street and Station Street Off Street Car Parks – Renewal of Licence Agreements**
  - approved the renewal of licence agreements for Council operated off street car parks at Kent Street and Station Street;
- ii) Corporation Street Off Street Car Park – Renewal of Licence Agreement**

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Friday, 23rd August, 2019**

- approved the renewal of a licence agreement with the Department for Infrastructure for the off street car park at Corporation Street.
- iii) Parkgate Avenue Off Street Car Park – New Licence Agreement**
- approved a new licence with the Directors of Argento Contemporary Jewellery Ltd for a right to pass and repass across Parkgate Avenue Car Park.
- iv) 9 Adelaide – Acquisition of Freehold**
- approved the acquisition of the freehold interest in 9 Adelaide otherwise known as 9/13 Adelaide Street and 2/10 Donegall Mews.
- v) Lyons Park – New Licence Agreement**
- approved a licence agreement with the Belfast Hills Partnership to allow the excavation of a pond within Lyons Park.
- vi) Finvoy Street – Acquisition and New Lease**
- approved the acquisition of lands at Finvoy Street to facilitate the development of a new Community Centre funded by the Social Investment Fund and to the subsequent lease of this land to Walkway Community Association.
- vii) Ormeau Park – New Lease to Bumbles Day-Care Limited**
- approved the grant of a new Lease to Bumbles Day-Care Limited, subject to detailed terms to be agreed between the Estates Manager and Legal Services
- viii) Proposed Licence to Limelight Ltd for Emergency Escape at Dunbar Link**
- granted a licence to Limelight Belfast Ltd for a period of one year for use of Council land to facilitate an emergency access and delegated authority to the Director of Physical Programmes and City Solicitor to approve the terms of the licence agreement.
- ix) Olympia Commercial Sites – disposal to a Major Food Retailer**
- approved the appointment of a major food retailer as preferred bidder following the revised lower offer received from Kirk Bryson Limited. Approval was granted to enter into a contract with the major food retailer for disposal of the site, subject to planning permission and an agreed timeframe for development completion and other terms, as agreed by the Estates Manager and Legal Services.
- x) Ballymacarrett Walkway – Acquisition to Rectify Boundary**
- approved the acquisition of two strips of land from Connswater Homes at Ballymacarrett Walkway for a nominal sum, with the costs associated with the transfer being paid by the Council.



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**xi) The Stables, First Floor Office, Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park – New Lease to Church Mission Society Ireland**

- approved the grant of a new Lease to Church Mission Society Ireland, subject to detailed terms to be agreed between the Estates Manager and Legal Services.

**xii) St George's Market – New Lease Unit 3 to Harriette Foods Ltd.**

- approved the grant of a new Lease to Harriette Foods Ltd., subject to detailed terms to be agreed between the Estates Manager and Legal Services.

**xiii) City Lighting Pilot Project – City Revitalisation Project**

- granted approval, in principle, to enter into suitable agreements with the owners of buildings in Castle Street and Castle Arcade to facilitate the installation of 12 projector units and a neon artwork as part of the lighting pilot under the enhanced lighting and dressing strategy, subject to detailed terms to be agreed between the Estates Manager and Legal Services.

**xiv) Little Donegal Street and Kent Street Car Parks – Contractor's Compound**

- granted approval to enter into a licence agreement with Graham Construction for a Contractor's Compound at Little Donegal Street or Kent Street Car Park.

**Proposed Governance Arrangements for  
Spending Financial Developer Contributions  
secured through Section 76 Planning Agreements**

The Committee agreed, with fifteen Members voting for and one against, to defer consideration of the report to allow for a briefing to be held. It was agreed that this should follow the briefing on the review of business rates which, subject to approval being granted later in the meeting, would take place on Friday, 27th September at 9.30 a.m.

**Innovation and Growth Commission**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 22nd March, it had agreed to the establishment, for one year, of an Innovation and Growth Commission. The Chief Executive reported that the Commission was a collaboration across the Council, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Queen's University and the University of Ulster, supplemented by a number of strategic advisors from both inside and outside Northern Ireland. The Commission would review economic prospects, consider inclusivity and other challenges and opportunities and produce a growth plan. It would seek also to integrate and join up major strategic projects facing the city of Belfast over the next ten to twenty years.

She pointed out that several key opportunities had emerged recently, such as the Belfast Region City Deal, the development potential of the City centre and Waterfront district and the Belfast – Dublin Economic Corridor, which had the potential to deliver transformational impacts for the City.

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She explained that the Innovation and Growth Commission would consider evidence from key sectors, as well as various scenarios, and would seek to develop a growth plan for the City, which would deliver on the priorities identified within the Belfast Agenda, and advise on how to make growth more inclusive. It would do so by ensuring integration between major projects, such as those mentioned above, to maximise potential opportunities for the City. Relationships between the Commission and formal decision-making structures across the City would, therefore, be critical.

She provided details of the initial membership of the Commission and confirmed that she would act as Chair and be accountable for ensuring that it met its goals and worked within its terms of reference. Accountability for the day-to-day operation of the Commission would rest with the Commissioner for Resilience, who would be tasked with providing advice and support, identifying resources and producing final outputs, as part of her requirement to implement a Resilience Strategy for the City. The Commissioner would work alongside the Director of City and Organisational Strategy to ensure that effective mechanisms were in place to support the Commission and its work streams, provide research and ensure that it was linked to Community Planning and the City Deal. The Commission would take evidence from the eight Political Parties represented on the Council and would engage regularly with both the City Growth and Regeneration Committee and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

After discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided, stressed that a greater emphasis needed to be placed on inclusivity and sustainability and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining how inclusive growth and sustainability would be central to the Commission's work, including additions to membership to reflect this, and how the engagement process would interact with Members and the wider sectors representing these issues.

**Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

**Motion – Domestic Violence**

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 1st July, the following motion on Domestic Violence had been proposed by Councillor M. Kelly and seconded by Councillor Nicholl:

“This Council is saddened at the levels of domestic violence in Belfast and recognises that this manifests in many different forms, including emotional and economic abuse.

Belfast needs to become a city that has zero tolerance towards domestic violence or abuse – a “Safe City” which is proactive in supporting victims of domestic violence and challenging perpetrators. A Safe City recognises that domestic violence impacts upon many residents, regardless of age, religion, ethnic or cultural background.

This Council pledges to build on the work already achieved by engaging with relevant partners to support victims of domestic abuse and challenge

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perpetrators and to update the Belfast City Council Domestic Violence Strategy.”

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion had been referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor M. Kelly, who had proposed the motion, informed the Committee that the Police Service of Northern Ireland had, in the previous year, received 12,000 complaints in relation to domestic violence in Belfast. She welcomed the fact that the Council had updated its Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace and suggested that it should work with other statutory agencies to develop a wider domestic violence strategy for the City. She concluded by requesting an update on the progress which had been made in designating Belfast as a Safe City and on the Safe Place scheme, in the context of Council properties.

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting addressing the issues which had been raised by the Member.

**Motion – Water Refill Points**

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 1st July, the following motion on Water Refill Points had been proposed by Councillor McMullan and seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds):

“This Council recognises the over reliance on single use plastic water bottles. It notes innovative solutions to tackle this issue and support sustainable living, for example, the water refill stations recently installed by Mayo County Council.

The Council agrees to the installation of water bottle refill stations across the Council Estate. This aims to help encourage a growing culture of using personal, reusable bottles to tackle single-use plastic use.”

The motion had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), been referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor McMullan, who had proposed the motion, referred to the facility within Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park as being an excellent example of a water refill point and requested that other potential Council locations and models be identified and costings provided. He requested also an update on the motion which had, on 1st February, 2018, been referred by the Council to the People and Communities Committee, around the provision by local shops and business of access to public drinking water.

The Committee agreed that a report, incorporating the issues which had been raised by the Member, be submitted to a future meeting.

**Motion – Webcasting of Committee Meetings**

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 1st July, the following motion on the Webcasting of Committee Meetings had been proposed by Councillor Nicholl and seconded by Councillor Harvey:

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This Council agrees to introduce webcasting of all Committee meetings in order to increase openness and transparency.”

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion had been referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Committee agreed that a report on the matter be submitted to a future meeting.

**Motion – Centenary of the Foundation of Northern Ireland**

The Committee agreed that this item be considered later in the meeting in the context of the report on the Decade of Centenaries Programme.

**Motion – Climate Emergency**

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th March, the following motion on Climate Emergency had been proposed by Councillor Matt Collins and seconded by Councillor Heading:

“This Council congratulates the Extinction Rebellion movement and other activists who have recently protested in Belfast and across the world in order to highlight the threat of catastrophic climate change. The Council recognises this as one of the greatest threats facing citizens in Belfast, and believes that urgent action must be taken in Belfast and globally in order to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change. Accordingly, the Council agrees to immediately declare a “Climate Emergency”.

The Council also urges other local Councils to follow suit, and calls on both British and Irish governments to also declare a climate emergency. Such a call aims to see Belfast move away from fossil fuels and fully toward renewable energy sources. This initiative would see the Council doing everything it can to tackle climate change and reduce carbon emissions, including, for example, ensuring that all new buildings are ecologically friendly, that the retrofitting of homes is a priority, and that public transport is expanded. The Council agrees to immediately establish a multi-agency team across the city, which should include various governmental departments, political parties and other relevant agencies, to ensure that tackling the causes of climate change is an immediate priority.”

The motion had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion had been referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Commissioner for Resilience outlined the actions which had been undertaken since the motion had been presented to the Council, particularly:

- the recent establishment of the Working Group on the Climate Crisis;
- the establishment, in partnership with Queen’s University, of a Climate Commission for the City;

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- the commissioning of a mini-stern to provide an economic analysis on carbon reduction; and
- ongoing engagement and research on the development of a Resilience Strategy, which would be present to the Committee in September for approval.

In view of that work, she recommended that the aforementioned motion be referred to the Working Group for consideration and confirmed that a detailed report, setting out the associated actions, timeframes and costs and aligning with timescales for consultation on the City's Resilience Strategy, would, in due course, be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

Councillor Matt Collins, who had proposed the motion, welcomed the work which was being undertaken across the Council to address climate change and related issues. He highlighted the need for Belfast to declare a Climate Emergency as a matter of priority and suggested that the Lord Mayor host an event to launch the Declaration. He concluded by requesting that the report which had been alluded to by the Commissioner for Resilience be prioritised and submitted to the next monthly meeting of the Committee.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to refer the motion on Climate Emergency to the Working Group on the Climate Crisis. The Committee agreed also that a report be submitted to its monthly meeting in September, setting out proposed actions to be undertaken in advance of Belfast being in a position to declare a Climate Emergency, with the aim of that being before the end of 2019.

**Motion – CCTV in Care Homes –  
Response from Department of Health**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 21st May, had passed the following motion on CCTV in Care Homes, which had been proposed by Councillor Heading and seconded by Councillor Whyte:

“This Council notes the campaign by the Dunmurry Manor Relatives Organisation to highlight the need for CCTV cameras in communal areas of residential homes. The Council calls on the Department for Health to include the provision of CCTV in any contract made with a private home where the care of the elderly is carried out.”

The Democratic Services Officer reported that a letter had subsequently been forwarded to the Permanent Secretary in the Department of Health advising him of the motion.

The Permanent Secretary had, in his response, explained that the compulsory introduction of CCTV into residential and nursing homes was a complex issue and that it would, initially, be likely to require Ministerial agreement, along with the probable introduction of new legislation.

He had highlighted the fact that the Commissioner for Older People had, within his “Home Truths” report into Dunmurry Manor Care Home, included a recommendation for the Department for Health/Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority to produce

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comprehensive guidance on the potential use of covert and overt CCTV in care homes, compliant with human right and data protection law.

The Permanent Secretary had concluded by pointing out that, as a Health and Social Care Service, advice was currently being developed for any incoming Minister and that the views of stakeholders would be considered as part of that process.

After discussion, the Committee noted the response from the Permanent Secretary and agreed that a further letter be forwarded to him seeking clarification on whether the aforementioned advice had now been drafted and, if so, calling for it to be published.

**Motion – Support for Roads Infrastructure  
In Scotland – Consultation Response**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 4th March, had passed the following motion on Support for Roads Infrastructure in Scotland, which had been proposed by Alderman Kingston and seconded by former Councillor Reynolds:

This Council:

- recognises the long-standing cultural and economic ties between Northern Ireland and Scotland, and that fundamental to increasing the benefit to Belfast from this connection is the need to improve transport connections between Scotland and Northern Ireland;
- welcomes that the ferry services between Cairnryan and Belfast, by Stena Line, 6 times per day, and between Cairnryan and Larne, by P&O, 7 times per day, are among the busiest services in the UK and represent a strong opportunity for economic and tourism growth; however, the inadequate transport infrastructure beyond the ferry terminals at Cairnryan is inhibiting that growth and require investment to bring them up to standard;
- supports the campaign in Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway for investment in the roads infrastructure - along the A77 towards Glasgow/central Scotland and along the A75 towards the Scotland/England border, which are both predominantly single carriageway routes and pass through a number of small towns and villages – and in the rail infrastructure along the same routes, and agrees to write to the Scottish Government in support of calls for a long-term programme of such investment in the transport infrastructure of South West Scotland.”

The Democratic Services Officer reported that the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity had, within his response to the motion, referred to the draft findings of the South West Scotland Transport Study and the review of Scotland’s National Transport Strategy and their ongoing consultations. Accordingly, the Council, at its meeting on 1st July had agreed that officers should engage in the consultation process.

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He explained that the consultation on the Transport Study was due to close on the day of the meeting and recommended that the motion, as passed by the Council and set out above, be submitted as the Council's response to the Transport Study. In addition, Political Parties could submit separate responses to reflect their respective positions. He added that the consultation on the review of the draft National Transport Strategy for Scotland was due to close on 23rd October and that, should approval be granted to submit a response, it would be drafted by officers in the Place and Economy Department, given the potential linkages between infrastructure and planning, and submitted to the relevant Committee for approval.

The Committee approved the response to the South West Scotland Transport Study, subject to the title of the Council motion referred to therein being amended to read as "Support for Investment in Transport Infrastructure in South West Scotland and agreed that officers draft a response to the draft National Transport Strategy for Scotland.

**Motion – Welfare Mitigation Schemes –  
Response from Department for Communities**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st July, had passed the following motion on Welfare Mitigation Schemes, which had been proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Black:

"The policy of austerity and welfare cuts imposed by the British Government is wrong and should be reversed.

This Council recognises that mitigation packages have provided vital support to the most vulnerable members of our society and should continue to be provided as Tory austerity measures continue to impact.

The Council notes with deep concern the range of reports published recently which highlight the serious risk of greater hardship for many within our community, if welfare mitigations do not continue beyond March 2020. These reports include:

- Welfare Reform: Mitigations on a Cliff Edge;
- Cliff Edge Coalition NI; and
- NIAO: Welfare Reforms in NI.

The Council calls on all parties to support the need to continue welfare mitigations beyond March 2020, agrees to write to the Department for Communities calling for it to take all steps necessary to ensure that mitigations schemes will continue to help the most vulnerable in our community and calls for the immediate restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive so that it can take decisions and actions on this important issue."

The Democratic Services Officer reported that a response had since been received from the Permanent Secretary, Department for Communities. The Permanent Secretary had stated that the legislation made following the Fresh Start Agreement, which had provided authority to make welfare supplementary mitigation payments, would end on 31st March, 2020 and that no funding would be allocated beyond that date. In the continued absence of the Assembly, the Department for Communities was, therefore, unable to amend the existing

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welfare supplementary mitigations legislation beyond March, 2020, as such regulations would be subject to Affirmative Resolution.

She had explained that, in line with the Fresh Start Agreement, the Department for Communities had undertaken a review of Welfare Mitigation Schemes. The outcome of that review had been published on 25th March. The Department had held a series of public engagement events with stakeholders, primarily from the advice sector, voluntary/community groups and Housing Associations, in order to obtain feedback on the review.

The Permanent Secretary had concluded by pointing out that the Department for Communities was aware of the challenges which were likely to arise from the termination of the welfare mitigation package and was considering all of the evidence surrounding the potential impact.

After discussion, the Committee noted the response from the Permanent Secretary and agreed that officers seek from the Assembly's All-Party Working Group on Poverty an update on the work which was being undertaken to address the issue of welfare mitigation beyond March, 2020.

**Governance**

**Northern Ireland Local Government Code  
Of Conduct – Acceptance and Registration  
of Gifts and Hospitality**

The Committee was informed that Paragraph 4.20 of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors stipulated that a Member must:

- a) in accordance with any standing orders of your council and within 28 days of receipt of any gift, hospitality, material benefit or service, which is above a value specified in a resolution of your council, provide written notification to your Chief Executive of the existence and nature of that gift, hospitality, material benefit or service;
- b) not accept from anyone gifts, hospitality, material benefits or services for yourself or any other person, which might place you, or reasonably appear to place you, under an improper obligation; and
- c) discourage gifts and offers of hospitality to any family members which might place you, or reasonably appear to place you, under an improper obligation.

The City Solicitor explained that the value above which a Member was required to inform the Chief Executive of any gift, hospitality, material benefit or service was currently £50 and he recommended that it be maintained at that figure for this Council term.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.



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**National Association of Councillors –  
Attendance at National Executive Meetings**

The Committee was reminded that it had eight Members on the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region). Alderman Sandford had been appointed to represent the Northern Ireland Region on the Association's National Executive, which would require him to attend a meeting on 9th September in London and on 23rd November in Chester.

The Committee approved the attendance of Alderman Sandford at the aforementioned meetings of the National Executive of the National Association of Councillors and authorised the payment of the appropriate travel and subsistence allowances.

**National Association of Councillors –  
Annual Conference**

The Committee was advised that the National Association of Councillors' annual conference would this year be held in Carlisle from 13th till 15th September. The theme for the event would be "Community Hubs and Community Engagement", with a particular focus on the establishment of hubs and how they could be used to improve outcomes for the public and local/national service. In previous years, the Committee had granted authority for any of the eight Members appointed by the Council to the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region) to attend the conference. The fee per delegate was £350 and there would also be travel and accommodation costs.

The Committee approved the attendance of any of the eight Members appointed to the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region) at the conference.

**Appointment of Panel for the Recruitment of  
Independent Members to the Belfast PCSP  
and Four DPCSPs**

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that the Council was required, under Part 3 of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, to establish the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership (BPCSP) and four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs).

He reported that independent members of the BPCSP and DPCSPs were appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board, which had overall responsibility for the process, from nominations made by the Council. The nomination process consisted of three stages, the first of which involved an eligibility sift by the Policing Board. The shortlisting and interviewing of potential candidates by the Council would follow and, finally, independent members would be appointed by the Policing Board from the appointable pool of candidates.

He explained that the Policing Board was aiming to have new independent members appointed in advance of the BPCSP and DPCSPs being re-constituted by the target date of 1st April, 2020. He confirmed that the nomination process had now reached stage 2 and that, to enable it to move forward, the Council had been requested to nominate a panel, comprised of four Elected Members from the current DPCSP, including a Chairperson, to shortlist and interview potential candidates. The Council should ensure that the panel was representative

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in terms of community and gender background and, in order to ensure consistency and to avoid overlap in membership, the same panel would be involved in the selection process for the BPCSP and four DPCSPs. A reserve should also be nominated for each nominated panel member. It was pointed out that the panel members, including reserves, would be required to undertake a half day training session in September and, based on previous recruitment exercises, would be required for two days of shortlisting and eight to ten days for interviewing.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that nominations for the aforementioned positions be sought from the leaders of the four largest Political Parties represented on the Council.

**LGBT Stained Glass Window Working Group**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 23rd November, 2018, it had, in response to a Council motion, agreed to establish a Working Group to oversee the installation of an LGBT stained glass window in the City Hall. Following that decision, nominations had been sought from the Party Leaders. However, despite a number of reminders, only two Parties had nominated representatives to the Working Group.

The City Solicitor explained that the cancellation by the Committee of meetings of Working Groups from the end of March until after the Local Government Elections had meant that the LGBT Stained Glass Working Group had never been properly established. Therefore, it had been omitted from the Governance report which had, on 21st June, been presented to the Committee in relation to the reconstitution of Working Groups.

The Committee agreed to re-establish the LGBT Stained Glass Working Group and that it should, in line with other Working Groups, consist of one Member from each of the Political Parties represented on the Council. The Committee agreed also that the Council's LGBT Staff Network and the LGBT community in the City should have an input into the design of the window.

**Code of Conduct for Councillors – Response from  
Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner  
for Standards**

The City Solicitor informed the Members that, following an adjudication by the Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards and consideration by this Committee of a motion highlighting the need for clarity and guidance on the Code of Conduct for Councillors, he had written to the Commissioner seeking clarification on her interpretation of Paragraph 6.9 of the Code and inviting her to attend a future meeting to discuss the motion and the issues relevant to it.

He explained that Paragraph 6.9 of the Code of Conduct dealt with a dispensation permitting Members to vote on issues where their appointment had been made by the Council or otherwise permitting them to remain and speak on an issue when they had an association with an organisation which had been formed for a public purpose. He confirmed that the Commissioner had, within her adjudication report, appeared to have misstated the correct legal position and had now accepted that the position which he had adopted in respect of Paragraph 6.9 had been correct. The Commissioner had declined the invitation to attend a future meeting of the Committee, on the basis that it would be inappropriate.

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Accordingly, his advice to Members regarding dispensations and significant non-pecuniary interests was that, should their relationship with a public body or organisation formed for a public purpose arise, they may participate and vote on decisions affecting that organisation, other than in cases where they were on a management committee and the decision to be taken related to finance or property.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

**Update on Belfast Region City Deal**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

**1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD).**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- i. note the progress of the advisory boards in the development of the BRCD;**
- ii. agree that the four Members representing Belfast City Council on the re formatted Joint Members Forum be one each from the four largest Political Parties; and**
- iii. note that the Joint Member Forum has no decision making powers and all investment decisions relating to BCC BRCD projects will be brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 At its meeting in June, the Committee received details of the resources and frameworks being put in place to deliver Phase 2 of the BRCD, which includes:**

- A Financial Plan and Agreement**
- A Deal Document- detailed document covering all elements included within Heads of terms, including Governance Framework**
- An Implementation Plan- summarising milestones for key deliverables, outputs, resources and risk mitigation for each project**

- Outline Business Cases (OBCs) for the individual BRCD projects
- 3.2 Members also approved the resources and governance arrangements to develop and deliver the Destination Hub – Belfast City Council’s key city deal project.

Programme Update

- 3.3 In order to support the development of the overall BRCD Programme a number of advisory boards have been set up and they have been working over the summer months to progress the development of the Outline Business Case for the 22 projects. The Innovation strand, being led by the two universities are well advanced with the development of the OBCs underway. They have held a number of consultative workshops with partners, industry and government departments and are now engaging with the UK government as part of this process.
- 3.4 The Employability and Skills workstream has been focussing in the first instance on developing guidance for all other BRCD projects to ensure they maximise inclusive job creation and training opportunities as they are designing their projects and developing OBCs. The Board has also developed a programme of work and are recruiting a dedicated Programme Manager, funded by the regional colleges, to take this forward.
- 3.5 The Tourism and Regeneration Board are also guiding councils through the development of their OBCs and all projects have begun this process or are about to procure specialist advice to assist in their development. Given the nature of these projects this Board has also been engaging with DfE and DfC as well as seeking specific guidance from DoF on business case development.
- 3.6 The Fraunhofer Institute which is leading the way in digital innovation and smart districts / testbeds, have undertaken an initial piece of work to develop proposals on how the digital strand of the BRCD can be taken forward. We are now working with them to develop governance structures and an implementation plan to support the development of the digital OBCs.
- 3.7 The final Investment pillar of Infrastructure is being led by DfI, given they will be solely responsible for the delivery of the projects. They have developed proposals for the role and membership of an infrastructure Advisory Board which includes representation from both Belfast City Council and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council given the two key

projects are BRT 2 and the Southern Relief Road. This Board will report through the current BRCD governance structures.

#### Programme Structures

- 3.8 The BRCD programme office continues to support the overall management and delivery of the programme as well as developing internal frameworks in areas including;
- Governance and Decision Making
  - Financial Planning and Management
  - Programme and Project Management
  - Performance Monitoring and Assurance
  - Communication and Engagement
- 3.9 A key element of the Governance Structure is the Joint Member Forum which during phase 1 of the development of the BRCD provided an opportunity for members from all six partner councils to jointly discuss the emerging programme before formal approval through each individual council.
- 3.10 As with phase 1 of the Programme individual councils will be responsible for all decisions relating to investment in their individual projects and in Belfast SP&R will continue to receive regular updates on the both the council's projects and the overall programme. However it is important the members from all six councils continue to meet through a Joint Members' Forum to provide overall political leadership for the programme and jointly discuss issues, progress and benefits.
- 3.11 In order to allow more discussion and debate at the Forum it has been proposed by the BRCD Executive Board that each council nominates four members to the Forum, a member from each of the four largest parties. As well as championing the opportunity created by the BRCD and building support from key stakeholders the role of the Forum will be to support wider political engagement across the councils and at a regional and national level. This will include engagement events with a larger number of elected members.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.12 All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets.

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

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

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Update on City and Neighbourhood Service  
Transition and Improvement Programme**

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

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

- 1.1 At its meeting on 23rd November 2018, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee noted an update report and progress achieved in relation to the City and Neighbourhood Service (CNS) Transition and Improvement Programme (T&IP).
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a further update on the progress of the CNS T&IP.

**2.0 Recommendation**

The Committee is requested to note the contents of the report and the progress achieved in relation to the CNS T&IP and priorities since November 2018.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1 The CNS T&IP is part of the Continuous Improvement (CI) programme for the Council. It is one of the biggest, most ambitious and complex change programmes undertaken by the council. It directly supports the delivery of the outcomes, objectives and priorities within the Belfast Agenda, Corporate Plan and the Council’s Improvement plan.

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**3.2** The programme name was refreshed in April 2019 from “Change” to “Transition and Improvement” to better describe our approach to delivering improved ways of working and service delivery transition. The CNS T&IP will improve customer service, remove duplication, make long-term cost savings, make services more sustainable, and empower staff improve decision-making. The core objectives of the programme are to:

- Improve customer focus;
- Increase efficiencies and creating a fit for purpose service design
- Improve service delivery (city and neighbourhoods)
- Integrating services to enhance working practices
- Delivering the waste agenda

**3.3** The programme has evolved as projects have concluded, became part of other programmes, such as Customer Focus to provide better alignment, or are now part of normal business improvements. In 2019/20, the programme will focus on creating fit for purpose services, and improving neighbourhoods. Projects have been prioritised based on organisational and departmental needs and four interrelated priorities were identified, see below:

Priority	SRO	CNS Lead
Creation of an Open Spaces and Streetscene Service	Ryan Black Director (Neighbourhood Services)	Stephen Leonard Neighbourhood Services Manager
Regulatory and Enforcement Services improvements	Siobhan Toland Director (City Services)	Valerie Brown City Services Manager (Regulation)
Resources and Fleet Services improvements (which includes waste management, waste collection and fleet services)	Siobhan Toland Director (City Services)	Tim Walker City Services Manager (Resources and Fleet)
Review of Community Provision (which is the start of a process looking at the umbrella of community-type services i.e. community safety, good relations, community development, health and well-being)	Ryan Black (Neighbourhood Services)	Alison Allen Neighbourhood Services Manager

*\*Area and neighbourhood working, and better integration and coordination of service provision will be themes running through these priorities, which is a cross cutting priority for the council.*

**3.4** An update of the Departmental functional model, previously agreed by Committee in June 2017 and November 2018, has been circulated. There are some minor amendments to the

previous versions. The functional model facilitates the development and design of integrated services and the regeneration of neighbourhoods. The model will be further developed as the programme progresses and where applicable structures will be stabilised to address any temporary arrangements currently in place and provide permanent employment opportunities. In relation to the management structure, the senior leadership posts have been established and filled (i.e. two Director posts, four Neighbourhood Services Managers, City Services Manager (Regulation) and City Services Manager (Resources and Fleet). These managers work collaboratively together and play a pivotal role in leading priorities within the T&IP.

- 3.5 The Continuous Improvement (CI) team is also supporting the delivery of the priorities. A service design approach to transition and improvement has been introduced, focusing on the need to deliver integrated services to customers, making sure that the right people, skills, infrastructure and processes are in place to enable this. The involvement of stakeholders i.e. customers, Elected Members, Trade Unions, management and staff at the outset is crucial and any changes will be designed and delivered in collaboration with them, to help understand needs and improve our ways of working. The CI team are combining this with a programme/ project management approach to help deliver the pace of change required.
- 3.6 The communications and engagement plan has been refreshed for the programme and also supported by project level plans. The Marketing and Communications Team continue to support the programme and priority projects and support managers through the transition and improvement process. Given the number of staff within the CNS Department, to enable effective cascade of key messages, 'toolkits' have been developed for managers to use when communicating with their staff, so that wider audiences are reached and managers are equipped to deliver concise and consistent messages and answer questions. This enables all staff to understand changes and the future vision of our services. Context briefings have been organised for managers and staff to attend over the summer, see project level information below for more detail. Change management workshops have also been organised for managers in August/ September to help them to support their teams through transition.

**Priority Project Delivery Progress (since November 2018)**

- 3.7 Each of the priority projects are at different stages of development and/ or delivery. A snapshot of progress has been provided for each of the priorities below.



### 3.7.1 Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS)

- The OSS vision is to create: *“A service where we see it, do it, or report it. We have pride in our work, maintain environmental standards, and work together to maintain the public realm with and for our city’s residents and visitors.”*
- An important objective is to create permanent employee opportunities, ensuring that local people can avail of good jobs that pay well and provide opportunity for advancements. The new management structure includes a wider career pathway in terms of public realm cleanliness and environmental upkeep (Open Spaces and Streetscene).
- Consultation on the OSS new management structure and JDs is now complete.
- APSE<sup>1</sup> representatives visited the council on the 6/ 7 June 2019, where CNS and the TUs had the opportunity to ask questions about experiences of implementing similar models in other councils.
- Staff engagement on the service vision is underway with context briefings organised for approx. 100 managers and supervisors in August 2019, which will be rolled out to wider staff (approx. 500) in September/ October.
- Good practice study visits have been planned for officers - 10 October 2019 (Nottingham) and 11 October 2019 (Wakefield), two similar sized and well performing authorities.
- Going forward the applicability of frequencies, routes, and quality standards will be assessed. <sup>2</sup>Evidence suggests that the success of our anti-litter campaigns and enforcement activities over a number of years have meant that littering has reduced in certain parts of the city. Likewise trends in parks to reduce ornamental planting, install 3G/ 4G pitches and more playgrounds, or introduce wildflower meadows and increase bio-diversity, will mean we plan things differently when compared to historic arrangements. Any changes to service delivery in terms of

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<sup>1</sup> The Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) is owned by its members and, working on their behalf, maintains and develops a network of local government officers, managers and Councilors from local authorities across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Working on a not-for-profit basis, APSE is dedicated to promoting excellence in the delivery of frontline services to local communities around the UK.

<sup>2</sup> People and Communities Committee, 13 June 2016: Item 6e. Anti-litter campaign update:  
<http://gsintmin01:9077/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=8304&Ver=4>

routes or frequencies will be based on actual need, and aligned to the Customer Focus Programme. An equality screening is underway in relation to service users in addition to a rural impact assessment.

### **3.7.2 Regulatory and Enforcement Services**

- The service vision is to: *“Provide a fit for purpose regulatory service, delivered both city wide and at a neighbourhood level. An integrated service that maximises resources, reduces duplication and is customer focused, responsive, accessible, visible, and evidence based.”*
- The City Services Manager (Regulation) appointed in November 2018.
- Staff engagement workshops (with cross service representation) have been ongoing since January 2019 reviewing how the different services manage front line regulatory interventions such as dog fouling, littering and ASB, and using a simple process mapping to identify good practice and opportunities for working better together.
- A draft regulatory tool kit is being developed to support consistency and cohesiveness in the delivery of regulatory services, particularly in the front line. Further development will include standard process maps for key front line services, competency framework, standardised performance management and a training and development framework.
- Work continues on the service design approach based on the service delivery option agreed i.e. single multi-functional regulatory service, which a focus on developing integrated front line neighbourhood teams.
- Work continues to stabilise the senior and functional management tiers for regulatory services and recruitment of the second City Protection Manager was completed on 14th August 2019.
- A draft proposal is currently being developed outlining how we move to an improved service, incorporating plans for transition and improvement and stakeholder communications and engagement.

### **3.7.3 Resources and Fleet Services**

- Waste collection, waste management and fleet services merged together in 2018 and reporting lines realigned to enhance single point accountability across the functions.
- Regular update reports have been presented to the People and Communities Committee over the past year. These reports have provided updates in relation to the continued interventions being implemented with regards to waste management, waste collection and fleet services. Some update highlights since November 2018 include:
  - Public waste framework consultation concluded and results presented to members in January 2019;
  - Currently exploring options to replace vehicles with modern alternatives;
  - An application for DEARA funding secured to introduce a pilot wheelie box scheme in 2019/20; and
  - Continue to invest in communications and outreach activities to engage with partners and stakeholders to promote ‘reduce, reuse and recycle’ behaviour change and making it easy for people to do this.
- This is currently being re-scoped and following a prioritisation exercise, an improvement plan will be developed to be implemented over the next 2/3 years. The improvement plan will include the development of a combined service vision and application of the service design approach.
- Additional resources will be required to support this priority work going forward, so that the pace of change required is accelerated.
- Note that the OSS project includes the development of two new multi-functional designations, which will be deployed based on service demand, on a more departmental basis. Around 180 posts will continue to be allocated to Resources and Fleet. These are drivers and general operatives, and will help to develop the conditions where the department and its workforce can be more flexible.

### **3.7.4 Review of Community Provision**

- The review of community provision was commissioned following council approval in November 2018.
- Phase 1 discovery ‘think piece’ has been completed, which was based on research and informed by feedback

from staff via 5 engagement workshops (attended by 105 staff) and an online survey (32 responses), with participation from the 7 service areas.

- The draft ‘think piece’ report was presented to DMT in June 2019 and a visioning exercise took place on what future community provision might look like.
- Feedback on Phase 1 will be shared with staff in August/September including the approach for Phase 2.
- Work is underway to scope the work required to take forward Phase 2.

The CNS T&IP and the important priorities and projects outlined above are inter-related and aligned to other improvement programmes delivered across the council, including the Customer Focus programme and the suite of organisational improvement projects being delivered by CI, who will continue to co-ordinate interdependencies. Cognisance will also be taken as we move towards area/neighbourhood working, which will be a cross-cutting priority for the council.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.8 At present there are no financial or resources implications associated with this report.

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

- 3.9 As part of the CNS T&IP, where necessary projects, programmes and activities will be subject to equality screening and rural needs assessments in line with the council’s processes.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation.

#### Belfast Agenda – Statement of Progress

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 This report provides an update for Members on the publication of a Belfast Agenda Statement of Progress in November 2019, which is a legislative monitoring requirement for the Council and its community planning partners.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- a) note the statutory requirement for the Council and its community planning partners to publish a Statement of Progress in November 2019;
- b) note the proposed content of the statement of progress, which is in line with legislative guidance provided by DfC; and
- c) note the proposed timeline associated with the publication of the Statement of Progress.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1 The Belfast Agenda, the city's first community plan, was published in November 2017 and was led by the Council, in partnership with its community planning partner organisations. It is a long term framework outlining how the Council and its community planning partners will work collaboratively to deliver an ambitious and inclusive vision that will create a better quality of life for all citizens in Belfast.
- 3.2 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires the Council and its community planning partners to make arrangements to monitor progress against meeting the objectives of the Belfast Agenda and the effectiveness of the actions taken in aiming to achieve these objectives. The legislation also requires the Council to publish a statement of progress on progress towards the outcomes and actions taken every two years, with the first statement of progress due for publication in November 2019.
- 3.3 The statement of progress, therefore, provides an opportunity for the Council and its community planning partners to update the public on the actions that have been taken, or are ongoing, and to demonstrate the impact that these actions are having on the achievement of the outcomes outlined in the Belfast Agenda. It also provides an opportunity to take stock in terms of embedding the partnership and collaborative arrangements and our focus and approach going forward.
- 3.4 The key elements of the statement of progress will include a restatement of the vision, a short narrative provided on what our long-term outcomes are trying to achieve and why they are important; recent available data for our population indicators; and an update on the collaborative actions being progressed among partners.

- 3.5 The document will also highlight good news stories, noteworthy achievements and good practice, which have led to sustainable change and improvement, particularly where there has been collaboration, engagement and innovative working.

**Reporting against Action Plans**

- 3.6 Detailed action plans have been developed in collaboration with city partners to deliver against the commitments outlined in the Belfast Agenda within the context of the 4 priority areas. A detailed update will be provided to Members in September, however, an outline of the main areas of activity underway across each area is summarised below:

- **Living Here**

Key areas of collaborative activity underway include, for example, the development of an integrated approach to address health inequalities within the city with a specific focus on helping to alleviate the significant societal challenges linked to Alcohol, Drugs and Mental Health - lead by the Public Health Agency and BHSC Trust; Development of an inter-agency and coordinated approach to reducing preventable deaths related to cold weather within the city – lead by the BHSC Board; Working with Department for Communities, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and city partners to deliver series of interventions and plan of activity to help support delivery of the housing and population growth ambitions set out within the Belfast Agenda; Development of an inter-agency approach to early intervention and improving outcomes for children and young people – working closely with the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership and Belfast Area Outcomes Group; Development of an integrated approach to neighbourhood regeneration and area working alongside community planning partners and city stakeholders.

- **Working and Learning**

Key areas of collaborative activity underway include for example, the development of ‘Belfast Works’ Integrated Employability and Skills pathway, which better links residents to employment opportunities and supports individuals to enter, sustain and progress in employment -led by the Council with support from wider partners including Belfast Metropolitan College, Department for Communities, Department for the Economy, Invest NI, Queens University Belfast, Ulster University, Belfast Health Trust, Urban Villages and business sector

representatives; Development of an integrated approach to address educational inequalities/underachievement within the city with a focus on an individual's journey through nursery, primary, post primary and further and higher education - the Education Authority is leading on this work programme alongside the Department for Education, CVS organisations, Queens University Belfast, Ulster University, St Mary's University College, Stranmillis University College, Urban Villages and other CPP partners.

- **City Development**

Key areas of collaborative activity underway include, for example, developing, in partnership with the Department of Infrastructure and other key partners, a Belfast Infrastructure Study which will bring forward specific proposals for enhancing and future sustainability of the city's urban infrastructure which is critical in unlocking and driving future economic growth across the city; Continued work on the production of the Belfast City Local Development Plan 2035, which will set out a clear vision for how Belfast should look in the future; Continued focus on the delivery of the Belfast Regeneration and Investment Strategy and working with city partners to deliver transformational regeneration schemes including the City Centre Revitalisation Programme; Promoting and enhancing the city's competitiveness and attracting investment through specific targeted programmes including the delivery of a shared Belfast city promotional brand and participation in major events to showcase to an international audience the investment opportunities within the city and position Belfast as a key investment location.

- **Growing the Economy**

Key areas of collaborative activity underway include for example, the development of an enterprise framework which will inform a city-wide approach to addressing the key challenges associated with starting and growing a business in Belfast; Increasing the level of enterprise helps diversify the economy and provide improved routes to opportunity to those who are disadvantaged; Development of a Resilience Strategy; Developing the city's cultural and tourism infrastructure and offering and positioning the Belfast as a destination of choice; Development and implementation of an 'Inclusive Growth Strategy' and call to action for CPP partners to support the creation of an inclusive city.

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- 3.7** Work is already underway in collaboration with action leads / key partners to measure progress on Belfast Agenda commitments through monitoring report cards. The statement of progress will provide an update, where possible, on each action that has been completed/commenced from the respective action plan. A more detailed update on activity, outlined in the Belfast Agenda, will be brought to September Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
- 3.8** Common across all council areas, community planning is at an early stage of development. A key focus up to now has been the formal establishment the Community Planning Partnerships and building relationships, working with partners to define the specific programmes of work, alongside putting in place the infrastructure and support required to enable collaborative action/delivery. Whilst the statement of progress will outline this journey, it will also set out the good progress has been made in many areas and evidence of success.
- 3.9** **Timeline for the publication of the Statement of Progress**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
<b>Collation of all progress information from internal and external partners to be completed</b>	<b>Mid-August</b>
<b>Produce a first draft to begin formal review process</b>	<b>Early September</b>
<b>Commence review process (internal and external)</b>	<b>9th September</b>
<b>CMT Review</b>	<b>24th September</b>
<b>A draft report reviewed at Community Planning Partnership</b>	<b>30th September</b>
<b>Carry out Party Group Briefings</b>	<b>October</b>
<b>Finalised version and report submitted to Strategic Policy and Resources for approval</b>	<b>22nd November</b>
<b>Final version issued to Community Planning Partnership</b>	<b>25th November</b>
<b>Final document submitted to full Council for ratification</b>	<b>1st December</b>

- 3.10** Effective communication activity will be central to maximising awareness of the statement of progress and officers are working with corporate communications both in relation to the design, development, publication and circulation of the document e.g. press release, social media activity, website etc. It is envisaged that the publication of the statement of progress and associated publicity will also provide a platform for re-engaging with citizens and stakeholders during 2020 as the Community Planning Partnership prepares for the 1<sup>st</sup> 4-year review of the Belfast Agenda (due by November 2021).



**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.11 There are no additional resource implications as a result of this report. Alignment of resources to the delivery of the Belfast Agenda is part of the ongoing organisational and financial planning processes.

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

- 3.12 The Belfast Agenda has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment at a strategic level and a Rural Needs impact statement at the time of its publication.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities:  
Memorandum of Understanding –  
“All-Island Network of Learning Cities”**

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Belfast to sign a joint Memorandum of Understanding, as part of an all island Network of UNESCO Learning Cities including Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Derry and Strabane and Belfast.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- (i) agree that Belfast signs a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an all-island Network of Learning Cities to further enhance relationships with other cities who are members of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. If agreed, the MOU would be signed by the Lord Mayor;
- (ii) note the engagement and discussions underway around UNESCO and ‘Belfast A Learning City’ to explore and identify opportunities for alignment with Belfast Agenda; and
- (iii) note the recent consultation review undertaken on the future focus of the existing BSP Lifelong Learning Group

and the intention that this will inform the creation of a revised Learning City action plan.

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Background**

- 3.1** In early 2018, Belfast became a member of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) with a focus on the use of learning to tackle inequalities within the city. UNESCO GNLC is an international policy-orientated network which supports the sharing of best practice and capacity building; providing access to experts from across the world and allowing Belfast to showcase how the city is using learning to address inequalities and make life better for citizens.
- 3.2** The Belfast Agenda recognises that learning has a vital role in empowering citizens and helping lay the foundations for sustainable social, economic and environmental development and well-being within the city. The principles of learning are fundamental in helping alleviate and address some of Belfast's persistent societal-inequalities such as health, educational attainment and well-being. The inclusive growth focus of the Belfast Agenda is about improving the economy and ensuring the benefits of this can be felt by across the city. Learning is one mechanism through which inequalities can be addressed by raising aspirations, removing barriers and increasing emotional resilience. Enabling individuals to cope better in difficult times, create access to more and better jobs, build good relations, make healthier choices and empower individuals to reach their full potential.
- 3.3** Reflecting the importance of learning it has a key role in the four priority themes of the Belfast Agenda: Working and Learning, Living Here, Growing the Economy and City Development. Key work streams focused upon the importance of learning have been reflected across the Belfast Agenda including a commitment "to develop the city's status as a learning city by becoming a member of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning Global Network of Learning Cities".
- 3.4** Learning as a concept has far reaching consequences incorporating traditional forms of learning such as educational and skills development through to learning for health and community benefit. Additionally it should be recognised that the scope of the council's statutory responsibility in this area is limited, with the remit for learning spanning across a number of government departments. Action in this area will require collaborative approaches across a range of stakeholders including education, employment, community living and access to services and opportunities.

**UNESCO**

- 3.5 Developed to promote lifelong learning in urban communities, UNESCO sets out six areas of focus which reflect the major building blocks of a learning city. It includes key features for each of these areas and possible indicators on progress. The six areas of focus are:
- Inclusive learning throughout the education system (from basic to higher);
  - Revitalised learning in families and communities
  - Effective learning for and in the workplace
  - Extended use of modern learning technologies
  - Enhances quality and excellence in learning
  - Fosters a vibrant culture of learning throughout life

**Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP)**

- 3.6 The Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP), comprising Belfast City Council, the Public Health Agency and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust led on the submission of the UNESCO application supported by the Belfast Health Development Unit. The UNESCO application was submitted by the Council on behalf of the partnership and signed by the Lord Mayor.
- 3.7 Facilitated through the Life Long Learning Group (a subgroup of BSP), the application focused upon the learning as a means to address life inequalities, one of the five priorities of the BSP. The application created a connection between educational attainment, learning opportunities and life inequalities, and the extent to which family, community and environmental influences impact learning opportunities, particularly within population groups facing the highest level of deprivation.
- 3.8 Key activities undertaken to demonstrate the city's commitment to learning has included the recent Belfast Festival of Learning which took place between 4th and 10th March, 2019. This week long programme of activities incorporated interactive learning events and workshops as well as showcasing the range of learning opportunities that exist within the city for health, wellbeing and educational benefit. Events were specifically targeted towards the participation of groups and individuals who have experienced barriers in accessing learning opportunities.
- 3.9 In February 2015, BSP launched the 'Belfast a Learning City' strategic document, including a Learning Charter for Belfast, which sets out a vision of Belfast where learning is used as a positive force to expand and enhance life chances for all citizens in Belfast. The aim of the publication was to ensure that all Belfast citizens have equal access to learning

opportunities, creating conditions for a better quality of life for everyone in the city.

**All Island Network of Learning Cities –  
Memorandum of Understanding**

- 3.10 The Lord Mayor's office recently received correspondence from the Mayor of Cork inviting Belfast to sign a joint Memorandum of Understanding between a number of cities who are part of an all island Network of UNESCO Learning Cities including Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Derry and Strabane and Belfast. The purpose of the joint MOU is to further strengthen the co-operation across the Network, committing the cities to continue to work together on the Learning City agenda for the next three years, share good practice and support. If the Committee agree to enter into the Memorandum of Understanding it would require the signing of the Lord Mayor on behalf of the City.

**Potential Future Focus of a Learning City**

- 3.11 Members should note that engagement and discussions are taking place within the context of BSP and with key partners, including a recent consultation exercise undertaken by Colin Neilands, Communitus, to examine the future role and focus of the existing Lifelong Group with the view to inform the possible creation of a revised action plan for developing a learning city and a framework for collective action across partners to address inequalities. It is anticipated that the findings of the consultation exercise will become available in August.
- 3.12 Ongoing discussions are taking place to consider how elements of the existing or emerging plans around UNESCO and Lifelong Learning may be aligned and progressed, as appropriate, under community planning. Key points of note regarding this include:
- The UNESCO Learning City action plan incorporates a broad spectrum of activity that spans beyond the statutory powers of the council into the education, health and employability arenas;
  - A commitment to support the development and implementation of the UNESCO Learning City action plan will require the support from a range of external stakeholders including government departments;
  - Indications suggest there is an increasing expectation that the scale of delivery and ambition of the Life Long Learning

action plan will need to be increased. Requests such as the All Island Network of Learning Cities MoU will place an increasing focus upon this work. Consideration will also need to be given to resource implications and if this can be managed through existing mechanisms.

- 3.13 A further report will be submitted to a future meeting of Committee outlining potential opportunities for further collaboration taking account of the emerging findings/recommendations from the recent consultation undertaken to identify the future focus and priorities for a Learning City Plan.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.14 There are no financial or resource implications attached to this report or the proposed signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. Whilst the current dedicated support being provided around Learning City is through the Belfast Health Development Unit, any renewed focus or proposals for an enhanced programme of activity will need to be considered in terms of resource implications for the council as well as wider community planning partnership if appropriate.

#### Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 3.15 There are no equality or good relations implications attached to this report.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that officers engage with members of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities across the United Kingdom, with a view to developing similar relationships.

#### Update on Inclusive Growth

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 Members will be aware that officers are currently drafting an inclusive growth strategy to outline the council’s commitment to creating an inclusive city.
- 1.2 This report provides the Committee with a high level overview of the commitments contained within the strategy and outlines the next steps that will be undertaken to ensure that a final strategy is presented to committee in September and a public consultation commences in October.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i. note the wide range of commitments included within the inclusive growth strategy and that it will be accompanied with a one year action / delivery plan;**
- ii. note that a full version of the document will be sent to parties week in the commencing 26th August for review and comment and that officers will engage with political parties to receive comments;**
- iii. note that a final document will be brought before the Committee in September; and**
- iv. agree to an all-party launch of the strategy for consultation in October 2019.**

**Main Report**

- 3.1 At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 20th April 2018, Members agreed to a five step approach to developing an inclusive growth framework for the city, and following a series of one to one interviews with Party Group Leaders, Committee Chairs, Chief Officers and an all member workshop, as well as a detailed analysis of the data available in Belfast, an Inclusive Growth statement and definition was agreed.**
- 3.2 Subsequently, at the meeting on 7th December 2018, a draft bespoke Belfast City Council inclusive growth decision-making framework was presented and agreed. This framework is designed to ensure that inclusive growth is placed at the heart of policy, capital and programme decisions. Furthermore, members also agreed, that in the first instance, our efforts would be focused on the following four target inclusive growth groups:**
  - 1. Workless residents;**
  - 2. Residents with low skill levels;**
  - 3. In work, low earning individuals; and**
  - 4. Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).**
- 3.3 These inclusive growth groups have been determined based on a review of the evidence and the consultation carried out with Members. Furthermore, these groups align to the ambitions and priorities set out in the Belfast Agenda.**

- 3.4 During the one to one interviews and at the workshop, Members consistently highlighted a number of actions they felt needed taken forward as part of inclusive growth. Whilst these are not specifically part of the Inclusive Growth Decision Making Framework, they were felt necessary in moving forward the inclusive growth agenda. Since then officers from within the Strategy, Policy and Partnerships team have been working with departments to develop the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

The focus of the Strategy

- 3.5 The Inclusive Growth Strategy sits within the overarching framework of the Belfast Agenda and is closely aligned to its economic growth ambitions.
- 3.6 The Belfast Agenda is an ambitious plan for the city, with a strong economic focus and farreaching targets for population and jobs growth. In order to address the long term challenges facing people in Belfast such as health and educational inequalities, the need for good relations, ensuring people feel safe and have good living conditions, we need to focus on growing our economy and ensure the benefits are felt by everyone.



- 3.7 The Council has, therefore, rightly set out an ambitious economic growth agenda – this is highlighted by our success and commitment to securing the Belfast Region City Deal, the creation of a range of investment funds and interventions designed to make Belfast a great place to locate and start a business. We are also committed to creating a strong and vibrant city centre – its development is vital for attracting

private sector investment, creating revenue and enabling the sustainability of council expenditure and service delivery.

- 3.8 Of course, economic and population growth on its own is not enough. These are a means to an end to help us reduce inequalities and create opportunities for all. Not everyone in Belfast has benefited in the past and unless there is a paradigm shift in our policy framework this will continue. While Belfast currently displays great economic optimism, it is imperative the benefits of this growth are inclusive, where everyone has the opportunity and aspiration to succeed.
- 3.9 The Strategy is one aspect of the work that is underway with partners to ensure that the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda are met. Members are asked to note that further detail on core strands of work being implemented with Community Planning Partners will also be brought to Committee in September.
- 3.10 The document focuses strongly on our *role as an inclusive corporate body* looking at what we do in areas of:
- procurement – social value and sustainability
  - employment – recruitment, fair work and employability and skills
  - investment - decision making framework
  - service design/provision – inclusive
- 3.11 It also focuses on our *influencing and civic leadership role*, acting as a call to action to others across the City.
- 3.12 It has been designed to be a *living document* – therefore, as our expertise and evidence base develops we will strengthen commitments and set targets. To support this a *first year action plan* will be published alongside the consultation document and an updated action plan will be produced for each subsequent year thereafter. Members are asked to note that development of the policies and initiatives required to create an ‘Inclusive Belfast’ will continue alongside the public consultation.
- 3.13 It is important to note that implementation will require ongoing policy development and operational decisions e.g., procurement, City Charter, ring-fencing of budget for apprenticeships etc.

#### Key Commitments

- 3.14 The table below summaries key commitments:



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Chapter	High Level Commitments
Our Inclusive Growth Statement and Cohorts	This defines what inclusive growth means for us as a council and where, over the next few years, we will focus our efforts. It reiterates our inclusive growth cohorts.
Our Corporate Commitments	<p>This details how, as a corporate body, we will contribute toward inclusive growth and provide civic leadership for the city.</p> <p><b><u>Harnessing procurement to social value</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Social Value Procurement Framework and Toolkit;</li> <li>• Ensure environmental and sustainability considerations will be a key aspect of our social value framework;</li> <li>• Develop local supply base, remove barriers and increase capacity of underrepresented suppliers;</li> <li>• Support development of cooperatives or new business to meet demand;</li> <li>• Develop capacity building programme for local businesses; and</li> <li>• Pilot social value through two council procurement contracts and identify two Belfast based anchor institutions willing to develop their own social value procurement framework.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Promoting inclusive growth through our role as an employer</u></b></p> <p>Promotion of fair work and good quality jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay Real Living Wage and create a Real Living Wage City;</li> <li>• Mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion;</li> <li>• Work with employee networks to improve employee voice; and</li> <li>• Only endorse the use of casual contracts when both parties enjoy flexibility.</li> </ul> <p>Improving participation in employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer apprenticeships and commit to a target number of recruitment campaigns;</li> <li>• Ring-fence 25% of suitable entry level posts for inclusive growth groups and provide pre-recruitment programme support;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review employability support and design targeted workplan with partners; and</li> <li>• Develop a city wide Volunteering Strategy and Staff Volunteering Policy.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Embedding an Inclusive Growth Decision Making Framework</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our major decisions are aligned to our inclusive growth ambitions;</li> <li>• Test and implement Inclusive Growth Decision Making Framework; and</li> <li>• Encourage our city partners to use the decision making framework.</li> </ul>
<p>Creating an Inclusive City</p>	<p><b><u>City Inclusive Growth City Charter and growth sectors</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-design Inclusive Growth City Charter and assessment tools with key anchor institutions and partner organisations;</li> <li>• Work with organisations to seek alignment with CSR activity;</li> <li>• Develop a strategy to access private /philanthropic funding; and</li> <li>• Work with stakeholders to establish digital innovation and tech inclusion group – addressing barriers to participation and setting employment targets.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Prioritising employability and skills /Belfast Region CityDeal</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and deliver a Belfast Employability Pathway – working with partners to combine our collective requirement power, ring fencing entry level opportunities;</li> <li>• Deliver suite of sectoral employment academies;</li> <li>• Development and launch of citywide GCSE revision programme;</li> <li>• Deliver schools based employment academies supporting young people in year 12 at greatest risk of not achieving/dropping out; and</li> <li>• Improve connectivity of neighbourhoods to opportunity by maximising the opportunity of BRCD to deliver BRT II.</li> </ul>

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	<p><b><u>Promoting inclusive growth through planning powers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and adopt Developers Contribution Framework; and</li> <li>• Continue to pursue the Councils ambitions in relation to affordable housing.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Inclusive Civic Voice</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test a range of innovative approaches to harness civic voice; and</li> <li>• Develop and test new models of engagement with the CVSE sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Holding Ourselves to Account</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an Inclusive Growth Monitor and Dashboard;</li> <li>• Establish Inclusive Growth Oversight Board;</li> <li>• Continue to learn from best practice; and</li> <li>• Publish a yearly action plan.</li> </ul>

**Next Steps**

3.15 The following steps are recommended:

- A detailed document will be circulated to all parties week commencing 26th August;
- Strategic Policy and Resources Committee 20th September 2019 – bring draft strategy to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval. Final draft strategy to be agreed and ratified at 1st October 2019 Council;
- September 2019 – Early testing/engagement of draft strategy with key anchor institutions, businesses and trade unions;
- October 2019 – Public Launch of Inclusive Growth Strategy; and
- October – December 2019 – Undertake public consultation on draft strategy and associated comprehensive equality screening to further inform final strategy.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

3.16 While the Strategy Policy and Partnership team will continue to prioritise the work on Inclusive Growth, it is anticipated that additional developmental resource will be required to both mainstream the strategy within council and embed and develop the approach externally with partners.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/**

### Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.17 The Inclusive Growth Strategy is inherently inclusive and is aimed at bringing about inclusive economic growth to all residents, irrespective of identity. A draft comprehensive screening has been completed and will be consulted on alongside the draft strategy.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### Physical Programme and Asset Management

#### Update on Physical Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 The Council’s Physical Programme covers over 150 live regeneration projects across a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, Leisure Transformation Programme, Belfast Investment Fund, Local Investment Fund, Social Outcomes Fund and the projects which the Council is delivering on behalf of other agencies. This report outlines:

- an overview of physical projects which have recently been completed
- the Capital Programme and capital financing for 2019/2020
- a request for the Council to act as delivery agent for two externally funded projects

#### **2.1 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to note the update on the Physical Programme as at 3.1 below and that the Physical Programmes Department is willing to arrange a site visit to any projects that have been completed and/or are underway.

#### **Capital Programme and Capital Financing 2019/2020 (to be read in conjunction with the Medium Term Financial Plan and Efficiency Report which is also on the agenda)**

- note the update on the Capital Programme for 2019/2020 as outlined in 3.3 below and the update on Capital Financing as outlined in 3.6 below
- note the deficit in capital financing in 2021/22 and 2022/23 and the challenges to be taken into consideration in relation to the future Physical Programme and note that Party Group Briefings will be undertaken as part of the rates setting process to update Members on the status of projects along with the

emerging implications for future investment decisions and in particular the potential impact on the district rate. These will be delivered in conjunction with the Director of Finance and Resources.

- agree to add the 'Upgrade of the Waterfront Escalators' as a Stage 1 – Emerging project onto the Capital Programme due to operational requirements

#### Role of the Council as delivery agent

- agree in principle that the Council acts as the delivery agent for two projects which are receiving external funding from other sources (the Belfast Islamic Centre and the VOYPIC/Include Youth) subject to the Council receiving a management fee for the delivery, full funding packages being in place and further discussions with Legal Services.

#### Procurement

- agree that any necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated for any Physical Programme's projects including externally funded projects for 2019/2020 as required, with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

### 3.0 Main Report

#### Key Issues

#### Update - Capital Programme

- 3.1 The Council's rolling Capital Programme is a significant regeneration programme of investment across the city, which improves the existing Council assets or provides new council facilities. An update on the key projects under the programme is outlined below:

***Recently completed physical projects:***

- ***Navarra Place*** - Navarra playground includes MUGA and the removal of an interface structure at the boundary with Serpentine Road (DoJ / MUGA Programme Phase 2)
- ***Upgrades to parks, open spaces and playgrounds*** – including the refurbished playgrounds at Orangefield Park and Barnett Demesne (Shaws Bridge)
- ***Corporate Projects*** - including the replacement of the PA system at Waterfront, Wireless LAN, external brickwork at Ulster Hall and roof replacement at City Hall
- ***Local Investment Fund*** - Lambh Dhearg GAC (WLIF2-06), Cregagh Sports Club (ELIF2-11), Corpus Christi Youth Club (WLIF2-14), Colin Valley Football Club (WLIF2-16) and Brantwood and Loughside Football Club (NLIF061)

Photos of a number of the recently completed projects have been circulated. Members are asked to note that the Physical Programmes Department is happy to arrange site visits for Members/ Party Groups to any physical project.

**Capital Programme and Capital Financing 2019/20**

***Members are asked to note that this section should be read in conjunction with the Medium Term Financial Plan and Efficiency Report which is also on the agenda)***

- 3.2 The Council incurs both capital expenditure and capital financing costs in the delivery of its Capital Programme
- ***Capital Expenditure*** is the expenditure incurred in the actual delivery of contracts e.g. the actual payments to the contractor for a construction contract.
  - ***Capital Financing*** is the method the council uses to fund the capital expenditure. The capital financing costs include loan repayments (principle and interest); revenue contributions (cash payments to repay or avoid taking out loans); capital receipts and external funding.
- 3.3 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee has approved a capital financing budget of £21,524,022 for 2019/2020. Members will be aware however that the Council has already committed financing to a range of physical projects under the Capital Programme and a number of non-recurrent projects which accounts for £7.56m of this. Loan and interest repayments are an

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additional £12,037,982. The Capital Programme also includes a number of Stage 1- Emerging Projects.

Table 1- Existing Capital Financing Budget 2019/2020

Existing Capital Financing Budget		£21,524,022
Less: Physical Programme Commitments (capital programme and non-recurrent projects)	£7,562,829	
Existing BCC Loans	£11,439,307	
Lisburn/ Castlereagh Transferred Loans	£598,675	
		(£19,600,811)
<b>Balance Remaining</b>		<b>£1,923,211</b>

- 3.4 Members are asked to note that although the above shows that there is a balance remaining of £1.9m the Director of Finance in the Quarter 1 Finance Update Report which is also on the agenda for consideration by the Committee, is recommending that, given the departmental and district rate forecasts, no further reallocations or cash flow payments are considered until the Quarter 2 position is presented to the Committee in November 2019.
- 3.5 *Future financing* - Members are asked to note that there are a range of physical projects which the Council must undertake from a health and safety, legislative and/or operational perspective in order to ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory duties and continues to run 'fit for purpose' services. These will all require capital financing. A number of these are already on the Capital Programme (*Waste Plan – Kerbside Collection system and Waste Transfer Station, Reservoir Safety works, Fleet Programme and IT programme*). These are all either Stage 1 – Emerging or Stage 2 – Uncommitted projects currently which means that final budgets have not yet been agreed however estimates have been used in order to calculate the impact of these on the capital financing budget and the availability of capital financing in the future. Members are asked to note that there is a requirement from an operational perspective to upgrade the escalators within the Waterfront in 2021/2022 and this has also been built into scenario planning in respect of the impact on capital financing. Members are also asked to agree that the upgrade of the escalators is added as a Stage 1- Emerging Project onto the Capital Programme.
- 3.6 The table below shows that just to do the current committed projects on the Capital Programme plus the projects which are required from a health and safety, operational and/or legislative perspective means that there will be a capital financing deficit of £576k in 2021/22 and £574k in 2022/23.

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**Table 2 – Capital Financing – Impact of current committed projects**

	Expenditure financed	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total Financing Required	£279,616,052	19,600,811	20,061,872	22,100,029	22,098,272	20,706,550
Cap Financing Budget		21,524,022	21,524,022	21,524,022	21,524,022	21,524,022
Capital Financing Available		1,923,211	1,462,150	- 576,007	- 574,250	817,472

3.7 Members will be aware that there is an emerging list of future Physical Projects which have already been raised (detailed in the Medium Term Financial Plan and Efficiency Report) however Members are asked to note that none of these have financing associated with them. This evidences the increasing pressure in terms of overall affordability which the Physical Programme is facing. It is proposed Party Group Briefings will be undertaken as part of the rates setting process to update Members on the status of projects along with the emerging implications for future investment decisions and in particular the potential impact on the district rate. These will be delivered in conjunction with the Director of Finance and Resources.

**Council acting as delivery agent**

3.8 Members will be aware that over the past couple of years the Council has been requested to deliver a number of externally funded initiatives including Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Urban Villages (UV) projects and projects that received DfC match funding. These requests recognise both the successful track record of the Council as delivery agent as well as the unique role of the Council as civic leader in the city. *In total the Council is acting as delivery agent for over 90 projects worth in excess of £45m (this includes both completed, live and planned projects).* Members are asked to note that the Council's Insurance Unit has advised that the Council's Professional Indemnity Insurance only provides cover for services provided to third parties for a fee. This means that, where it is acting solely as the delivery agent for a third party project, the Council can only rely on its professional indemnity insurance policy if a management fee is received. Committee is asked to note therefore that the Council will be advising in the future that it will only be able to consider acting as the delivery agent for any third party projects if the proposal includes a management fee.

3.9 *Requests for Council to act as delivery agent* – Members are asked to note that the Council has recently been requested to act



as the delivery agent for two projects – the Belfast Islamic Centre and VOYPIC/Include Youth. Committee is asked to note that these projects are being 100% externally funded with DFC being a core funder for both. Final details of the funding package for both projects is being confirmed however the other funders require confirmation of the delivery mechanism for the projects before agreeing funding. There is no Council financial commitment to either project. Committee is asked to *agree in principle to the Council acting as delivery agent for these projects subject to the Council receiving a management fee for the delivery, full funding packages being in place and further discussions with Legal Services.*

- 3.10 Committee is asked to note that amended letters of offer have now been received for a number of projects where the Council is acting as the delivery agent. Amended letters of offer are commonly received to reflect minor adjustments required following tender returns. The majority of these projects are underway or nearing completion and several of these projects are match funded by the Council, either under the various funding streams i.e. LIF/BIF/SOF or through close alignment with ongoing Council initiatives.

#### Approval to Procure

- 3.11 Members are asked to agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated for any Physical Programme projects including externally funded projects for 2019/2020 as required, with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.12 *Financial* – As per report

*Resources* – Officer time to deliver as required

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

- 3.13 All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Finance, Resources and Procurement**

**Medium Term Financial Plan and Efficiency Programme**

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

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

1.1 This report provides an update on the assessment of the key financial factors which influence the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for 2020/21 - 2022/23 and the rate setting process for 2020/21, together with an overview of the priorities and work in progress to establish the 2020/21 - 2022/23 Efficiency Programme.

**2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the challenges to be taken into consideration as part of the annual and medium term rate setting. A further report on progress will be brought to Committee in September.

**3.0 Rate Setting Process**

A number of factors must be considered as part of the annual and medium term rate setting process. These include business as usual risks, existing priorities, growth priorities, efficiencies and the rate base.

**Business as Usual Risks**

3.1 There are three main uncontrollable costs likely to impact on business as usual budgets in the period 2020/21 to 2022/23:

1. *Externally imposed increases to the Council's pay bill.* This includes the nationally negotiated pay awards and employers' pension contributions increase. In April 2018, a National Pay Award of 2% was agreed for Local Government Staff for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The National Pay Award for 2020/21 has not yet been settled. In the interim, a 2% increase will be estimated for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. The current NILGOSC Triannual Valuation commenced in April 2019. This will set the increase in the contribution rate for the years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. As the previous valuation resulted in a 1% increase in the contribution rate for 2018/19 and 2019/20, for medium term planning purposes an increase of 1% has been assumed for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.

2. ***Future revenue running costs resulting from capital investment.*** The Council's asset base is growing as new schemes become operational. Members will be aware of the pressure faced by the Council to support local investment partnerships. These pressures are further exacerbated by the growing cost pressures and risks associated with the maintenance of an ageing estate. Existing maintenance budgets need to be reviewed to support the asset base.
3. **External economic factors** such as inflation, Brexit and the current political climate. The uncertainty around Brexit and levels of government funding make it difficult for services to budget for central government and European funding streams. Inflation is a further external pressure – the current CPI rate is 1.9% with a forecast rate of between 1.8% - 2.0% for 2021.

- 3.2 ***Existing Priorities:*** The organisation has committed to a number of priorities including the Waste Plan, City Deal and Physical Programmes.

The Council will face significant year on year increases in waste disposal costs as the arc21 residual waste contract and interim arrangements become operational. The likely impact of the Waste Plan for the period 2020/21 to 2022/23 will be considered as part of the 2020/21 estimates process.

All City Deals require the councils to make a financial contribution to the delivery of their own capital projects, such as the City's Visitor Attraction. In previous years Members have agreed to include rate supported funding to help build the City Deal fund for Belfast. Proposals to include a further recurring contribution to the fund will need to be considered as part of the 2020/21 estimates process.

***Physical Programmes*** – Members have approved the 2019/20 capital financing budget to support the current Capital Programme. A report on the Capital Programme is also on the agenda for discussion which shows that there will be a capital financing deficit of £576k in 2021/22 and £574k in 2022/23.

- 3.3 ***Growth Priorities:*** The City Regeneration and Growth Committee on 27th March 2019 agreed a 12 week consultation on the draft Cultural Strategy 2020 – 2030. The findings are due to be presented to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in September 2019. These proposals will be considered as part of the 2020/21 estimates.

Council work on Climate Resilience is currently funded on a non-recurring basis. Consideration will need to be given by Members if this priority to provide recurrent resources in order to develop and implement priority actions in this area.

The Inclusive Growth Strategy which underpins the Belfast Agenda will be considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in September. If agreed, its implementation will require a significant corporate commitment including a recurrent funding stream.

Future Physical Programme Priorities – there are a number of emerging future Physical Programme priorities including

- Cultural Strategy
- Pitches Phase 2
- Leisure facilities
- Belfast Zoo
- Parks Upgrades
- Civic Buildings and Grounds
- Waste Plan
- Community provision
- Alleygating
- Neighbourhood Tourism Feasibility
- Neighbourhood Tourism products
- Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

None of the above have any financing associated with them and Members will need to consider as part of the rate setting process whether they wish to consider building up the capital financing budget to support future physical priorities including the above.

#### Efficiencies

- 3.4 Over the past 14 years the Council has delivered over £29m year on year cash efficiency savings. In 2018/19 and 2019/20 this was realised through targeting reductions in spend (£2.5m) and increasing income (£0.5m). Revised targets are needed for 2021/21 and future years. Further analysis is underway and an update report including a proposed revised efficiency target will be brought to Committee in September 2019.

#### Rate Base

- 3.5 Rate income accounts for almost 78% of the Council's income. Council staff will be meeting with LPS and the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV) to provide an assurance on the estimated rate income (estimated penny

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product) for 2020/21 which will be notified by LPS in November.

The district rate increases and inflation increases over the past three years are shown below:

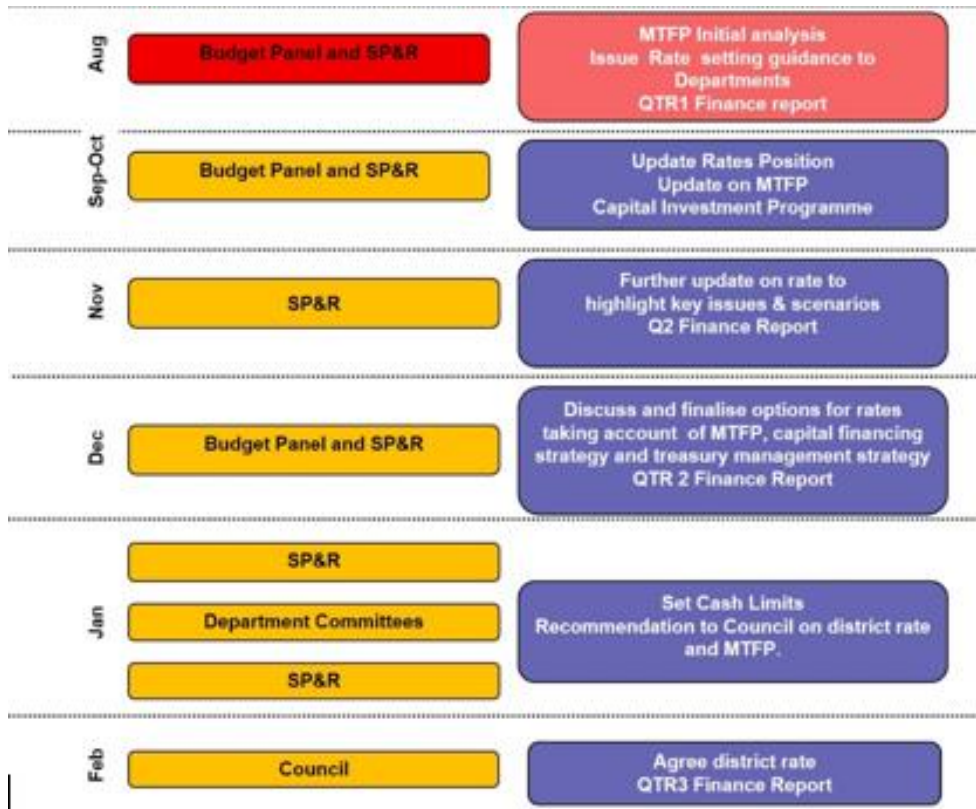
<b>Year</b>	<b>BCC District Rate Increase</b>	<b>Rate of Inflation at Rate Setting</b>
<b>2017/18</b>	<b>1.89%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>2018/19</b>	<b>1.98%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>2019/20</b>	<b>1.98%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>

**Next Steps**

- 3.6 Officers will continue to quantify the financial risks in the above areas, their impact on the revenue estimates for 2020/21 and the medium term and develop the efficiency programme to counter the cost pressures.
- 3.7 Progress in these areas will be reported to Committee in September as part of the Rate Setting timetable outlined in Table 1 below.
- 3.8 The high level guidance to be issued by the Director of Finance and Resources in September setting the parameters and timetable for completion of departmental estimates will advise that departments must deliver their business as usual estimates with a zero increase, with the exception of the uncontrollable cost increases. Any departmental growth proposals will be subject to the rate setting challenge process before any recommendations are presented to Committee as part of the process for setting the district rate.

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**Table 1: 2020/21 Rate Setting Process**



**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.10 This report outlines the key areas of financial risk for the Council to be considered as part of the 2020/21 revenue estimates and Medium Term Financial Plan.

**Equality Implications**

- 3.11 There are no equality implications with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Review of Business Rates**

The Committee agreed to hold a briefing session, to which all of the Members of the Council would be invited, on Friday, 27th September at 9.30 a.m. to receive a briefing from the Director of Rating Policy on the review of Business Rates.

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**Tenders and Contracts**

The Committee:

- i. approved the public advertisement and acceptance of tenders, as listed in Table 1 below, through the Council's electronic procurement system;
- ii. granted delegated authority to the appropriate Director, using pre-agreed criteria, to award the most economically advantageous tender;
- iii. approved the extensions as detailed in Table 2 below; and
- iv. agreed to accede to Standing Order 55(b) - exceptions in relation to those contracts set out within Table 3 below and requested, in terms of the contract for the build and hire of a stand at the Property and Investment Event 2020 (MIPIIM, which is supported financially by the private sector), that the report which had been requested previously by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on the benefits derived from attending MIPIIM, should be presented as soon as possible and include details of the contractual arrangements in place for next year's event.

**Table 1 - New Tenders**

Title of Tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed Contract Duration
T1994 - Tender for the Printing of City Matters Magazine	John Tully	Up to four years
T2000 - Tender for the Provision of Insurance Brokering Services	Ronan Cregan	Up to three years
T1964 - Tender for the Provision of Service Evaluation (up to three years approved in April 2019; Dept. have asked that this be increased to four years)	Alistair Reid	Up to four years
T2001 - Tender for the Provision of Window Cleaning Services	John Walsh	Up to three years
T2004 - Tender for the Provision of Travel Services	Ronan Cregan	Up to five years
T1996 - Tender for the Co-Ordination Design Development Fabrication Instillation and	Alistair Reid	Up to two years

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Maintenance of Projects Installation in Castle Street Belfast		
T1997 - Tender for City centre Connectivity Study	Alistair Reid	Up to three months
T2003 - Tender for the Development and Delivery of Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the Review of Community Provision	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to two years
T1993 - Tender for the Supply of Gas	Ronan Cregan	Up to five years
T1992 - Tender for the Supply of Electricity	Ronan Cregan	Up to five years
T1991 - Tender for the Management and Sourcing of Energy (Gas and Electricity)	Ronan Cregan	Up to five years
T2005 - Tender for Office Supplies	Ronan Cregan	Up to five years
T2006 - Tender for the delivery of support to policing and community safety networks across West Belfast to develop effective resolution of local concerns and priorities	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to three years

**Table 2 - Contract Extension**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Responsible Director</b>	<b>Proposed Extension</b>
T1561 - Tender for the Receipt Stock Control and Delivery of Waste Containers	Nigel Grimshaw	Month by Month until new Contract is in place

**Table 3 - Direct Award Contracts (Single Tender Action)**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Annual Estimate</b>
Hire of Stand at Property and Investment Event 2020	Reed Midem	109,710 Euro



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Technical Response to Comments on the Local Development Plan Strategy Growth Scenario	Turley & Edge Analytics	£42,538
Installation, Removal and Management of City Centre Christmas Lights 2019	BCCM	£141,000

**Brexit Committee – Proposed Visit to Brussels**

The Committee acceded to a request for funding of up to £10,000 from the Brexit Committee to enable an all-Party delegation, together with two officers, to undertake a visit to Brussels from 7th till 10th October to participate in European Week of Regions and Cities. The cost of the visit would be met from within existing Place and Economy Departmental budgets.

**Equality and Good Relations**

**Report – “A Prison Without Walls, Asylum, Immigration and Human Rights”**

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

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

**1.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting on 21st June 2019, the Committee had recommended that a report be brought back on the recommendations relating to Council arising from the report ‘A Prison Without Walls, Asylum, Migration and Human Rights’. This report was produced by Housing4All in June 2019.**

**1.2 The purpose of this paper is to provide Members with an overview of the recommendations relating to Belfast City Council and recommendations on how the Council may wish to proceed.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i. write to the Department for Communities to raise the issue of asylum seekers facing destitution and to seek clarity with regard to what statutory body has responsibility for people in this vulnerable situation; and**
- ii. seek legal opinion to consider the legal implications of the recommendations relating to Belfast City Council.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Background**

**3.2** Housing4All was formed in 2016 to campaign to ensure that all people seeking asylum are given the opportunity to lead dignified and secure lives.

**3.3** In 2019, Housing4All launched a report entitled *A Prison Without Walls, Asylum, Immigration and Human Rights*. The report raises issues faced by people seeking asylum including issues relating to destitution, housing conditions, food poverty, children, health matters and the impact of not being able to work.

**3.4** The report outlines a number of issues in relation to destitution and the impact of Home Office Policy that restricts asylum seekers from accessing the labour market. The report also highlights that in the UK, unlike in other EU countries, if a person's claim for asylum is refused then the accommodation and financial support that would have been provided by the Home Office is stopped after 21 days. The report notes that as asylum seekers are restricted from accessing public funds and not eligible to access emergency accommodation, once Home Office support is withdrawn, this results in destitution.

**3.5** The report estimates that there are over 100 asylum seekers that have been destitute for several years who fall away from established networks of support and go underground, where they are at serious risk of exploitation and abuse.

**3.6** The report also highlights that the system of seeking asylum in the UK causes serious damage to the mental health of people who are already suffering because of what they have experienced in the course of their flight. It noted that 'many of the issues could be resolved by lifting the ban on employment for people seeking asylum.'

**3.7** A copy of the report has been circulated. It contains a number of recommendations for organisations, including five that have been directed at Belfast City Council.

**Recommendation 1**

**3.8** Belfast City Council and Department for Communities establish a subcommittee in 2019/2020 to develop plans to introduce a digital money, similar to the MONI scheme in Finland, to pay additional financial allowances to asylum seekers outside of Home Office support.

- 3.9 The Finnish Immigration Service has been providing asylum seekers, who do not have bank accounts, with prepaid MasterCard instead of the traditional cash disbursements (MONI Scheme).
- 3.10 The MONI account functions like a bank account, people can use their accounts to buy things, pay bills, and even receive direct deposits from employers. Every transaction is recorded in a public database maintained by a decentralized global network of computers; this enables the Immigration Service to keep track of the cardholders and their spending.
- 3.11 Some analysis of the system in Finland shows that it has helped with the issue around asylum seekers /refugees not having papers and facing long waits to get a bank account which impacts on their ability to bank their wages, pay bills or start to recover their identities. It should be noted that in Finland, unlike the situation in the UK, asylum seekers are permitted to work.
- 3.12 The report recommends that this be introduced ‘to pay additional financial allowances to asylum seekers in Northern Ireland outside of the Home Office support.’
- 3.13 Members will be aware that Immigration policy is an excepted matter under paragraph 8, Schedule 2 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Therefore, Northern Ireland does not have the power to amend immigration policy, which remains the preserve of the Home Office.
- 3.14 However, while immigration policy is made in Westminster, Northern Ireland government departments have previously used powers to address some of the problems faced by those living under immigration control, including asylum seekers and refugees. In its Racial Equality Strategy 2015 – 2025, the Executive Office explains that Northern Ireland departments have exercised their powers to implement a number of initiatives including:
- Setting up a Crisis Fund for vulnerable migrants
  - Providing free English language classes for asylum seekers
  - Ensuring that all asylum seekers have access to free healthcare
  - Providing the legal framework that will give all unaccompanied asylum seeking children and trafficked children an independent legal guardian.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The Executive Office, ‘Racial Equality Strategy 2015-25’ (2015) at para 9.15

- 3.15 The Housing4All report estimates that there are over 100 asylum seekers who have been destitute for several years who fall away from established networks and are at serious risk of exploitation and abuse. This is mainly people who have claimed asylum and have had their claim refused and their £37.75 a week stopped. There are many reasons why people who have failed in their asylum claim may be unable to return to their home country. They physically may not be able to travel, and /or their country of origin may refuse to provide suitable travel documents for them to return. It may also be considerably unsafe for people to return home. Others are gathering the necessary evidence to make a fresh claim for asylum. People in this situation have no home, no access to benefits and no right to work. They become reliant on food parcels, charitable support and are at risk of exploitation. Such a situation has massive physical and mental health implications and impacts on social cohesion leaving people living on the margins of society.
- 3.16 Members may wish to consider writing to the Department for Communities to raise the issue of asylum seekers facing destitution and to seek clarity with regard to what statutory body has responsibility for people in this vulnerable situation at risk of destitution, exploitation and temporarily unable to return home.

#### Recommendation 2

- 3.17 Belfast City Council establish a sub-committee to develop plans to promote an Aspen Card discount scheme among local business.
- 3.18 While the Home Office is assessing an asylum seeker's claim, asylum seekers receive a weekly payment of £37.75 from the Home Office. This is paid through an aspen card, which is a form of debit card, different from the Moni card, it can be used to get cash from machines and to make payments in shops.
- 3.19 The report recommends that Council work with local businesses to provide a discount scheme for holders of the card, similar to how student discount works.

#### Recommendation 3

- 3.20 Belfast City Council confidentially provide free places for children to attend extra-curricular activities and summer clubs so that children in families seeking asylum can participate in activities with their peers without discrimination.

- 3.21 After-schools activities and play development sessions are free and open to residents in Belfast. Information about after-school activities is disseminated through the various Community Centres. Play development sessions are open to all communities in Belfast and have been delivered to many new community groupings.
- 3.22 Summer scheme registration is currently set at £4 per child for 4 weeks and £8 per family and is advertised through the Council web site. This pricing policy has been in place for several years, whilst the costs appears value for money for most; it would pose difficulties for asylum seekers who receive £37.75 a week per child. Being part of a local summer scheme offers many benefits for asylum seekers and aids integration and inclusion locally.
- 3.23 This recommendation will be considered by Legal Services and the Equality Unit with regard to potential implications in the context of current legislation.
- 3.24 Officers from the Good Relations Unit and Community Services will work together on how current provision within Community Centres is better advertised to reach sectors such as asylum seekers across Belfast. The Migrant Forum, which the Council Chairs' could be used as a conduit.

#### Recommendation 4

- 3.25 Belfast City Council, led by the Lord Mayor, seek a meeting with the Home Office to advocate for employment rights for asylum seekers.
- 3.26 People seeking asylum in the UK are generally unable to work. While in theory, some categories of asylum seekers are entitled to apply for work permission,<sup>4</sup> if such permission is granted, the asylum seeker is required to fill a role on the shortage occupation list, which includes very technical or specialized positions such as classical ballet dancer, prosthetist and reservoir engineer.<sup>5</sup> In practice, therefore, the large majority of asylum seekers are banned from working while they wait months, and often years, for a decision on their asylum claim.
- 3.27 The Lift the Ban Coalition, made up of 150 organisations from across the UK is calling on the government to give asylum seekers the right to work after six months of waiting for a

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<sup>4</sup> An asylum seeker who has not received a response to their asylum application for 12+ months and who can show that the delay cannot be attributed to her/him may apply for work permission.

<sup>5</sup> See Immigration Rules Appendix K: Shortage Occupation List

decision on their asylum claim.<sup>6</sup> The Coalition highlights that the UK's position on work permission is extremely restrictive compared to other European countries and that the UK has adopted a minimalist approach to implementing EU law.<sup>7</sup> The Coalition argue that granting work permission would bring benefits including: improved mental and physical health of people in the asylum system; helping to challenge forced labour, exploitation, and modern slavery; improved integration within local communities and benefits for the UK economy through tax.<sup>8</sup>

- 3.28 The UK's policy to restrict asylum seekers from the labour market has come under sustained criticism by a number of UN Human Rights bodies.
- 3.29 The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has repeatedly expressed concerns about the challenges faced by asylum seekers in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in the UK. In 2016, it expressed particular concerns about restrictions in accessing employment. The Committee advised the UK to ensure that asylum seekers are not restricted from accessing employment while their asylum claims are being processed.<sup>9</sup>
- 3.30 Previous Lord Mayors have raised the issue of asylum seekers being unable to work with the Home Office and have been advised that 'asylum seekers are only allowed to work in the UK if their asylum claim, or further submission, has been outstanding for more than 12 months through no fault of their own. Those who are allowed to work are restricted to jobs on the shortage occupation list.'
- 3.31 The Lord Mayor has recently met with the authors of the report and has agreed to raise the matter again with the Home Office.

#### **Recommendation 5**

- 3.32 **Belfast City Council and the Department for Communities establish a sub-committee to develop plans for 'Timebanking'**

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<sup>6</sup> See Lift the Ban Coalition accessible here: <https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/lift-the-ban/>

<sup>7</sup> In *ZO (Somalia)* [2010] UKSC 36 the Supreme Court ruled that the UK had failed to meet the minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers as required by Council Directive 2003/9/EC ("the Reception Directive"). The UK responded by permitting all asylum seekers who have waited for 12+ months to apply for work permission but also by limiting such employment to the Shortage Occupation List.

<sup>8</sup> Lift the Ban Coalition, 'Why people seeking asylum should have the right to work' (October 2018).

<sup>9</sup> ICESCR/E/C.12/GBR/CO/6. 'UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Concluding Observations on the sixth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland' 14 July 2016, at paras 24-25. See also, ICESCR/E/C.12/GBR/CO/5. 'UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Concluding Observations on the fifth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland' 12 June 2009, at para 27.

which provides non-monetary ways for asylum seekers and non-asylum seekers to exchange goods and services.

- 3.33 Timebanking is a way of spending one hour of time helping someone out by, for example, mowing someone's lawn, or doing their shopping. For every hour spent, you earn an hour in return. This can be spent on receiving an hour of someone else's time.
- 3.34 No money is exchanged. One hour of sharing skills or helping others is recognised by giving that person one hour as a time credit.
- 3.35 Timebanking is a creative way of incentivising people to take an interest in their communities. The benefits can be immense in terms of building social networks of people, who give and receive support from each other, enabling people from different backgrounds, who may not otherwise meet, to come together and form connections and friendships.
- 3.36 The concept has many benefits for all communities and would complement the Belfast Agenda, however, the Council would have to give consideration as to whether it is best placed to implement the concept and to provide the resource necessary to establish and provide oversight.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.37 The suggested options within this paper do not have any financial implications at this point. However, future financial implications will depend on member's recommendations.

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

- 3.38 This report intends to inform Members, there are no anticipated negative equality and good relations or rural needs implications."

The Committee adopted the recommendations

#### Update on Decade of Centenaries Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

##### **"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the Council's Decade of Centenaries Programme.

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1** The Committee is asked to note the update of the progress of the programme and that the Council will not develop its own exhibition for the final phase of the Decade.

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Background**

The Decade of Centenaries Programme marks the anniversaries of key events from 1912 – 1922, one hundred years ago. It aims to promote a greater understanding of our shared, but complex history, in a way that can promote better relationships and foster reconciliation.

**3.2** Prior to the onset of the Decade, the Council sought to take a leadership role. From the very first discussions in City Hall on the Decade of Centenaries, Councillors took a positive approach, agreeing that the marking of these events provided the City with an excellent opportunity to broaden our understanding of the past and to develop respect for the complexity of our inter-woven and shared history.

**3.3** In 2011, Members of the then Historic Centenaries Working Group had agreed a three phased approach to the whole Decade in chronological order:

- 1912 – 1914;
- 1914 – 1918; and
- 1918 – 1922.

**3.4** Members also agreed to a series of principles that would underpin Council activity as well as to guide external events taking place on Council premises, such as the City Hall.

**3.5** The first period, 1912-1914, was entitled “Shared History, Different Allegiances” and covered a range of historical events such as the Balmoral Review, the Home Rule crisis, the Ulster Covenant, the Gaelic Revival, the rise of the Suffragette and Labour movements, the formation of the YCV, along with the arming of the UVF and the Irish Volunteers. The Council hosted a large scale exhibition in the City Hall and delivered a range of civic events.

**3.6** The second period, 1914-1918, covered the period of World War I, including the Somme and the Easter Rising. The bulk of this activity took place over 2016, under the banner of “Belfast; Reflections on 1916”.



- 3.7 The third period, 1918-1922, which is currently being delivered, is covering the end of World War I, the 1918 Elections, Women's Suffrage, the Anglo-Irish war, the treaty negotiations and ultimately the establishment of the two parliaments on the island.
- 3.8 Major exhibitions were commissioned for the Covenant, the Somme and the Easter Rising and there was a Civic Dinner to mark each of these three events, as had been agreed in 2012. In addition, the Council rolled out an annual programme of events during each year of the Decade, open to the public and free to attend.
- 3.9 In 2016, at the August meeting of the Diversity Working Group, Members requested that officers develop a programme for the remainder of the Decade, from 2017 until 2022. Central to the programme, Members requested that:
- Activity being planned would continue with the objective of having a strong Belfast focus, exploring the human stories of lost lives and be respectful.
  - The current Principles, agreed in 2011, will inform all activity within the final phase of the Decade of Centenaries
- 3.10 The programme contains a number of themes and a series of events within each theme, which were approved by Party Group Leaders and further agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources meeting on the 20th October 2017.
- 3.11 Members also confirmed that the Shared City Partnership and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would form the governance for the programme, with Party Group Leaders also having a regular input into programme development. Party Group Leaders also requested that officers explore the possibility of delivering an exhibition covering a number of themes during this final phase of the Decade.

#### Exhibition

- 3.12 The two previous exhibitions undertaken for the first two phases of the Decade cost in the region of £50,000 each, which were very well attended by residents and visitors.
- 3.13 However, in relation to developing any exhibition for this final phase, Members should be aware that there is no resource set aside for such. More significantly, the public areas within City Hall have been hugely developed since the last exhibition was staged in 2016. With the new permanent exhibition, there is not the space to develop a comparable temporary exhibition in

City Hall. The only available space for a temporary exhibition would be in the small foyer area in the entrance of City Hall.

- 3.14 Officers are aware however that over the course of the next three years, other organisations will be developing thematic exhibitions on the Decade of Centenaries. One is the Ulster Museum's temporary exhibition on Partition, which will open in the autumn of 2020. The second exhibition is a mobile exhibition titled Ireland's Global Revolution, which has been commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It will be displayed at Irish embassies worldwide but would be made available to other venues as well.
- 3.15 At its August meeting, Party Group Leaders were of the view that the Council should not resource and develop its own exhibition for this final phase and requested that officers look at other options for engaging with any exhibition that may be in Belfast over the next three years relating to Decade of Centenaries.

#### Community Involvement

- 3.16 Members may be aware of the wider Centenaries programme contained within the PEACE IV Local Action Plan, titled Belfast and the World, under the Building Positive Relations theme. This programme is an engagement programme within communities, and is now in its second year. It has already delivered over 30 hours of contact learning and engagement work to 80 participants thus far and contains a budget of £190,891. It will run until December 2021.

#### Notice of Motion on the Centenary of the Foundation of Northern Ireland

- 3.17 Members will be aware that a Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Dorrian and seconded by Councillor Hutchinson on Council 1st July 2019. The notice reads:

*"This Council notes the centenary of the foundation of Northern Ireland in 2021, the commitment to celebrate this as part of the Decade of Centenaries programme and the pivotal role that Belfast City Hall played in the establishment of its political institutions.*

*The Council agrees that a significant programme is developed by the Council to celebrate, to educate and to fully examine the different perspectives on its creation and to recognise the role of the City Hall."*

The Notice of Motion has been referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and will be dealt with in a separate paper.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.18 The costs of the activities alluded to within paragraph 3.11 are being borne by the District Council's Good Relations Programme, which is 75% funded by the Executive Office.

Members are also asked to note that, in terms of those activities, officers have been approached to include the musical War's End in its event on 3rd October 2019. This production, would cost in the region of £4,000 to stage and can be covered within existing budgets.

**Equality and Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Needs assessment**

- 3.19 The Decade of Centenaries Programme is part of the Council's District Council's Good Relations Programme, which was screened for equality, good relations and rural needs and was screened out."

The Committee adopted the recommendation and agreed that the motion on the Centenary of the Foundation of Northern Ireland, which had been deferred earlier in the meeting, be incorporated into the Decade of Centenaries Programme and considered in the first instance by the Party Leaders.

**Minutes of Shared City Partnership**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership held on 5th August, including the recommendations to:

**PEACE IV Secretariat**

1. agree to progress the Supplemental Agreement to the PEACE IV Partnership for new members;
2. approve the amended TSG governance and agree that representatives and advisors should be sought, as outlined; and
3. approve the development and revision of the monitoring and evaluation framework in line with SEUPB and PEACE IV Programme requirements.

**PEACE IV CYP**

1. note the issues affecting Peace IV Projects; and

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2. ratify the revised implementation approach for CYP1 Tech Connects.

**PEACE IV SSS**

1. note the delays in planning permission; and
2. agree the Resource Allocation criteria and process.

**PEACE IV BPR**

1. note the issues affecting PEACE IV projects;
2. ratify the 3 month extension, revised deliverable timeframe and flexible delivery approach for BPR1 Cross Community Area Networks – Partner Delivery with NIHE;
3. approve the EU Study Visit criteria and process for BPR4 to enable final submission and formal approval by SEUPB;
4. agree to progress BPR5 Traveller and Roma elements, as outlined;
5. agree that a partner approach and/or collaborative partnership should be introduced for BPR5 Traveller and Roma elements, subject to options appraisal and legal opinion;
6. delegate authority to the PEACE IV programme board and Strategic Director of City to approve the identified delivery approach and project proposal for Traveller and Roma elements, ensuring compliance with PEACE IV programme regulations and timescales.

**PEACE IV Underspend**

1. Utilise the PEACE IV underspend and progress the proposals for final approval – summarised as
  - extending CYP4 Young Advocates to include a placeshaping element for young people in East Belfast;
  - providing additional connections, landscaping and engineering across the brownfield DfC site from Springfield Road to West Circular Road;
  - approving the addition £26,539 of funding to the Traveller and Roma elements of BPR5; and
  - extending BPR2 Creative Communities project to include an element comprises of a creative project based at St. Comgall's comprising of research, design and interpretation of a community exhibition.

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2. agree to commence the development of mini application for submission to SEUPB.

**Revised Good Relations Strategy**

1. agree the revised Good Relations Strategy, following the public consultation and engagement exercise;
2. agree to include a foreword to the document, which would be signed by Party Group Leaders prior to the launch; and
3. agree that the new Strategy would be launched during Community Relations Week in September, 2019.

**Update on the Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme**

1. note the contents of the report, including the recommendation that Mr. J. Byrne be invited to attend the September meeting of the Shared City Partnership to provide an update on his evaluation report of the 2019 Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme; and
2. agree to retain the previous independent assessor for 2019 as a way to ensure consistency. Officers will then explore a process to appoint an independent assessor and bring this back to the Partnership prior to the commencement of any programme in 2020.

**Other Recommendations**

1. agree that £3,000 be allocated to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Consortium towards events during Human rights Week in December 2019 promoting good relations as identified by the TEO and the Council's draft Good Relations Strategy, as well as supporting the provision of a venue through the City Hall for particular events, pending availability and suitability;
2. agree that an amount of up to £1500 towards the costs of speakers, AV and lunches be awarded to the Restorative Practices Forum (NI) for the Restorative Practices Forum (NI) International Conference being held on 14th-15th November 2019;
3. agree that the Council would support the research proposal into Adolescent Group Interactions, Attitudes and Behaviour, and that the letter would include a reference to the work of the Community and Voluntary sector' as outlined.
4. agree that up to £2,000 be awarded to the Department of Justice for the delivery of a community-led cross-interface festival on 21st September, 2019 at Townsend Street, subject to confirmation of similar match-funding from other agencies working with the Forum; and

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5. note the contents of the report providing an update on District Council Good Relations Programme 2019/20.

**Equality and Diversity: Quarter 1 Equality Screening and Rural Needs Outcome Report**

The Committee was advised that one of the main requirements of the Council's Equality Scheme was to carry out the screening of new and revised policies. That allowed any impacts related to equality of opportunity and/or good relations to be identified and addressed.

In addition, the Council had a statutory duty under the Rural Needs (Northern Ireland) Act 2016 to consider rural needs in the development of new policies, plans or strategies or in any service design/delivery decisions and was required to ensure that the annual reporting returns were submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Accordingly, the Committee noted the summary of equality screening and rural needs impact assessments which had been undertaken from April till June, 2019.

**Opportunities Rock Event**

The Committee was informed that the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, in partnership with the Council and the Education Authority, was proposing to host a one-day "Opportunities Rock" event in the City Hall on 14th May, 2020 to promote pathways for people with learning disabilities.

The event, which would be held in the Great Hall, would focus upon the themes of citizenship, equality and inclusiveness and would provide an opportunity to inform people with learning disabilities, their parents/carers and others of the opportunities which were available across the City and how they could be accessed. Representatives from further education, training, employment, recreation, social, leisure, sports and transport would be in attendance. It was proposed that the Lord Mayor and the Chief Executive Officers of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Education Authority would participate in the event to demonstrate their organisation's joint commitment to promoting inclusion and upholding the rights of people with learning disabilities to be treated as equal citizens in the City.

The Committee approved the hosting of the "Opportunities Rock" event and noted that the cost would be met by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

**Local Council Equality and Diversity Group Corporate Response to Draft Strategy and Action Plan 2019-21**

The City Solicitor informed the Committee that the Local Council Equality and Diversity Group was comprised of stakeholder bodies from across the Local Government sector and included Chief Executives, diversity champions, equality and human resource officers, Trades Union officials, Staff Commission members and representatives from external stakeholder groups. The Group, which sought to prioritise and influence equality and diversity initiatives across Local Government, had been constituted in 2011 and re-constituted in 2015, following the reform of Local Government.

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He reported that the Group had undertaken a consultation exercise on its draft Strategy and Action Plan for 2019-21, which had been developed to guide its work in the longer term.

He drew the Committee's attention to the following comments which had been drafted by officers from the Equality and Diversity Unit and Corporate HR and recommended that it be forwarded to the Local Council Equality and Diversity Group as the Council's response to the consultation to the Draft Strategy and Action Plan 2019-21:

**“Equality and Diversity Group**

**Draft Strategy and Action Plan**

**2019 - 2021**

**July, 2019**

**1. Background**

**The purpose of the Equality and Diversity Group is to prioritise and influence equality and diversity initiatives across local government. The Group attempts to bring together the equality and diversity practices across the sector and in so doing, seeks to integrate the priorities of the Group with the ongoing work of individual councils.**

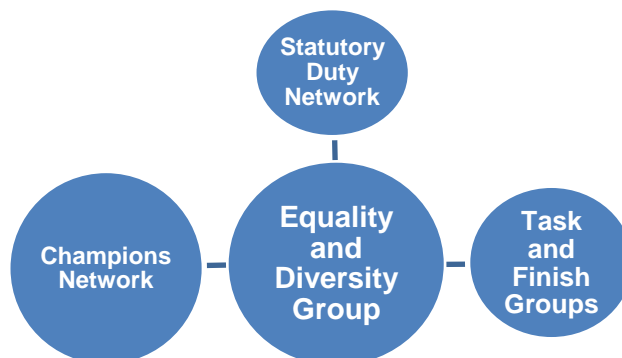
**The Group has responsibility for:**

- the development of the overall strategic direction for equality and diversity initiatives in local government**
- determining priorities and setting objectives**
- monitoring progress and reporting to the Local Government Staff Commission on a regular basis**

**The Group was first constituted in 2011 and was re-constituted in 2015 in the light of the reform of local government. A new Chair, who is the Chief Executive of one of the 11 councils, was appointed by Solace in 2019.**

**A key feature of the work of the Equality and Diversity Group is the Diversity Champions' Network which is made up of the elected member(s) and officer(s) Champions in each council. The role of the Diversity Champion is to champion equality and diversity in individual councils and to act as first point of contact for enquiries and provide advice, guidance and support on equality and diversity issues within the organisation. The Network provides a forum of support and networking for the Diversity Champions and meets quarterly to provide training and development opportunities for the Champions.**

Sub groups such as the Statutory Duty Network continue to meet, together with specific task and finish groups which will be established as required.



## 2. Membership

The membership of the Equality and Diversity Working Group is drawn from stakeholder bodies across the local government sector and includes Chief Executives, Diversity Champions, Equality Officers and HR Officers in councils, trade union officers and Staff Commission members, as well as representatives from external stakeholder groups.

The current membership comprises:

Chair (Solace)	Anne Donaghy, Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim BC
LGSC	Lindsay Boal, Commission Member Monica Burns, Commission Member Willie Francey, Commission Member Bernie Kelly, Commission Member Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Services
Disability Action	TBC
Diversity Champions	Cllr. Michael Goodman, Antrim and Newtownabbey BC Cllr. Cáthal Mallaghan, Mid Ulster DC
Community Relations Council	Jacqueline Irwin, Chief Executive
Equality Commission for NI	Patrice Hardy, Equality Manager Kevin Oakes, Equality Officer
NIPSA	Geraldine Alexander, Assistant Secretary
PPMA NI	Paula Donnelly, Head of HR, Derry City and Strabane DC
Statutory Duty Network	Mary Hanna, Policy & Diversity Officer, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon BC
DemocraShe	Bronagh Hinds
Equality Coalition	Robyn Scott

## 3. Purpose of the Strategy and Action Plan

This document has been developed to guide the work of the Equality and Diversity Group in the longer term, and to focus on the action plan for 2019 - 2021. It was developed following



consultation with members of the Equality and Diversity Group, the groups which the members represent, and other stakeholders.

In focussing on these activities, continuing to work with our stakeholders and responding to their needs, the Equality and Diversity Group aims to support and assist councils to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations as an Employer, a Service Provider and a Civic Leader.

This will be done by working in partnership with councils:

- to address equality and diversity issues
- to ensure continuity of the ongoing equality and diversity activities
- to support cross-sectoral initiatives
- to involve and inform external stakeholders
- to pilot new equality and diversity initiatives
- to provide training and development initiatives
- to showcase best practice

#### **4. Reporting Mechanisms**

Progress on meeting the activities detailed in the action plan will be:

- reported to members of the Equality and Diversity Group at their meetings
- a copy of the minutes of the Equality and Diversity Group meetings will be included on the Staff Commission meeting agendas for information
- a copy of the minutes of the Equality and Diversity Group meetings will be included on the Solace meeting agendas for information
- periodic reports will be sent to councils through the Local Government Staff Commission E-zine, including updates from external stakeholders
- members will report back to the stakeholder group they represent:
  - Solace
  - LGSC
  - PPMA NI
  - Statutory Duty Network
  - Diversity Champions' Network
  - Disability Action
  - Community Relations Council
  - ECNI
  - NIPSA
  - Equality Coalition

**5. Equality and Diversity Framework**

This strategy and action plan supports the Equality and Diversity Framework which details each Council's

- statement of intent
- approach to meeting their equality and diversity obligations
- demonstrates their compliance with them.

The Framework covers everyone who uses council services, facilities and accesses information.

**6. Outcomes/Outputs**

Our priorities include actions to help achieve some of the Draft Programme for Government 2016 – 2021 targets:

Outcome 3: We have a more equal society

Outcome 8: We care for others and help those in need

Outcome 9: We are a shared society that respects diversity

Outcome 10: We are a confident, welcoming, outward looking society

The Strategy and Action Plan will result in the following benefits for the local government sector:

- officers and members will be well informed on equality and diversity issues
- councils will be representative of the communities which they serve
- local government will be recognised for best practice in equality and diversity
- officers and members will be supported and developed through a coaching and mentoring network
- external stakeholders will have a mechanism to share their views and information with councils
- councils will benefit from cross-sectoral working and initiatives
- councils will be able to demonstrate to their citizens that they are committed to equality and diversity in the development of policy and the delivery of services to the whole community which they serve

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**Strategy and Action Plan**  
**2019 – 2021**

<b>Key Strategic Objective: By working with our stakeholders and responding to their needs, we aim to support and assist councils to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations as an Employer, a Service Provider and a Civic Leader</b>	
<b><i>Equality and Diversity Group</i></b>	
Develop partnerships with other equality groups and networks	Ongoing
Review the membership of the Group to include other equality groups and networks	August 19 and ongoing
Revise the Equality and Diversity Framework and relaunch it at an event for Councils	September 2019
Establish sub-groups:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to develop a strategy on data including council statistics, NISRA, community planning and ECNI</li> </ul>	October 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to identify training required to mainstream equality, good relations and DAPs</li> </ul>	January 2020
<b><i>Diversity Champions</i></b>	
Review the role of Diversity Champion and provide guidance on how the role should be carried out and how it should link with senior leaders in the council	August 2019
Provide regular training events, for example on the role of Diversity Champions, ethics, dealing with uncomfortable issues/contentious areas	Ongoing – 2 per year
<b><i>Leadership</i></b>	
Work in partnership with the ECNI to implement the ECNI S75 Demonstrating Effective Leadership Guidance in councils.	September 2019
Provide a seminar on civic leadership for Diversity Champions and Equality Officers	February 2020
<b><i>Disability</i></b>	
Build links with the Solace Disability Champion and develop ways to work in partnership	September 2019
Work with the ECNI to implement the Mental Health Charter across local government	Ongoing

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<b><i>Good Practice Examples</i></b> Develop a mechanism to share best practice examples between councils and the wider public sector.  Hold an annual seminar to showcase best practice examples  Hold an awards event for diversity and inclusion initiatives in councils	Ongoing  24 September 2019 and annually  Launch in September 2019 for event in 2020
<b><i>Consultation</i></b> Develop a mechanism to facilitate consultation events across councils.	February 2020

Equality and Diversity Group  
Draft Strategy and Action Plan 2019 – 2021  
Consultation Questionnaire

***Do you have any comments on the Background (page1)?***

The circulation of the draft Strategy and Action Plan is useful in providing clarity on the background of the group.

***Do you have any comments on the Membership (page 2)? Is there anyone else you think we should invite to join the Group?***

The terms of reference and the connections to the Statutory Duty Network, including the terms of appointment and nomination process and their application should, in order to demonstrate transparency and efficient use of the public purse be included. In addition, some thought should be given to wider representation of other section 75 groups ie race, LGBT+ etc

***Do you have any comments on the Purpose (page2)?***

The purpose of the Group should include the identification of inequalities which, in particular, could assist Council's in the community planning process.

***Do you have any comments on the Reporting Mechanisms (page3)?***

Should representatives of other section 75 groups be added to the membership of the Equality and Diversity Group as mentioned above, the reporting mechanisms should reflect this.

*Do you have any comments on the Framework (page 3)?*

The definition of the overall aim of the Equality and Diversity Group “to support and assist Council’s to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations as an employer, a service provider and civic leader” is welcome. In addition, it is vital that meaningful outputs and outcomes in each of these areas are achieved.

*Do you have any comments on the Outcomes/Outputs (page 4)?*

The Council is of the view that alignment to the draft Programme for Government is appropriate. Links to the conditions of wellbeing within the community plans should be considered also.

In relation to the second bullet point contained within the strategy on page 4 which reads “Council’s will be representative of the communities which they serve”, this should be amended to:

“Diverse communities will benefit from the best practice/activities undertaken by councils” or “Councils will attract a more diverse applicant pool for job opportunities”.

It would also be beneficial if local authorities could have access to better data to assist with more informed decision-making.

*Do you agree with the actions which have been identified (page 5-6)?  
Yes/No/Any comments?*

- It is not clear from the table included whether the headings in “bold” are themes. If they are themes, other headings related to section 75 groups should be added along with disability.
- Ownership and responsibility for tasks should be included as well as timeframes.
- The inclusion of data strategy action is welcome and will assist with the identification of inequalities going forward as there are significant gaps for S75 groups. Given the importance of this area and the focus on evidence based decision making consideration of a sub-group should be discussed.
- A renewed focus on equality outcomes is welcome, particularly as many councils will now be undertaking reviews of their Equality Schemes and given the time which has elapsed since the review of Local Government.
- The provision of guidance to Councils should consider the work ongoing across key stakeholders in this area, including NILGA and individual local authorities.

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- **Clarification should also be provided on whether partnership working is being undertaken with NISRA and the Equality Commission**

*Do you have any other comments you wish to make?*

**Clarification should be provided on whether Disability has been included as a specific theme due to statutory duties. In addition, the strategy in general could be more reflective of section 75 groups.”**

**Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace**

The Committee was reminded that domestic abuse was a serious issue which had the potential to affect any employee of the Council, whether as a victim, survivor or perpetrator. As part of the Council’s Gender Action Plan, a specific domestic violence and abuse policy had been developed and implemented in 2012.

The Director of Organisational Strategy submitted for the Committee’s approval a revised Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace, which applied to all Council employees, including casual and temporary staff, and which had been agreed by both management and Trades Unions. The Policy, which had taken account of best practice in other organisations, sought to support and assist an employee experiencing domestic violence and abuse, as well as providing guidance on managing situations where an employee were deemed to be the perpetrators. Upon being approved, it would be communicated to staff through a comprehensive training and awareness programme, in conjunction with the Trades Unions.

The Committee approved the revised Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace, as set out hereunder:

**“1. DEFINITION:**

**1.1. For the purposes of this policy domestic violence and abuse is defined as any “threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation) by a current or former intimate partner or family member”. (Definition taken from the DOJ and DHSSPS Strategy document: “Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence” March 2016.)**

**2. INTRODUCTION**

**2.1. Domestic and sexual violence and abuse occurs right across our society and it has devastating consequences for the victims and their families. It has no boundaries as regards to age or gender, gender identity, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, wealth, disability or geography.**

- 2.2. Domestic violence and abuse is a pattern of behaviour that is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another within an intimate or family relationship, including same sex relationships. It is usually frequent and persistent. While domestic violence and abuse most commonly refers to that perpetrated against a partner, it includes violence and abuse against ex-partners, and violence and abuse by any other person who has a close or family relationship with the victim, including parents, children, and siblings. It also includes honour based violence and abuse.
- 2.3. Domestic violence and abuse does not just refer to physical violence but also to sexual, emotional and psychological, online, financial abuse and coercive control. Coercive control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse used to harm, punish or frighten their victim. This controlling behaviour is designed to make a person dependent by isolating them from support, exploiting them, depriving them of independence and regulating their everyday behaviour. Domestic violence and abuse is, in many cases, made up of a combination of different forms of abuse. Domestic violence and abuse affects not only adults but may be inflicted on, or witnessed by children. The potential adverse effects on children living with domestic violence and abuse includes poor educational achievement, social exclusion and juvenile crime, substance and alcohol misuse, mental health problems and homelessness.
- 2.4. Belfast City Council strives to create a working environment that promotes the view that violence against people is unacceptable and that such violence will not be condoned and that everyone has a right to live free from fear and abuse.
- 2.5. The Council is committed to raising awareness of domestic violence and abuse in the community through the work of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP), the Belfast area Domestic and Sexual Violence Partnership and with other local organisations in the Belfast area, including PSNI, Women's Aid and Onus, through its Safe Place initiative.
- 2.6. The Council also recognises that our employees and colleagues (and potentially their family members) may be experiencing domestic violence and abuse, that home and work issues cannot always be separated and that domestic and sexual violence and abuse can impact greatly on the working life of employees and can result in:
- A deterioration in employee performance
  - Increased and unexplained absenteeism
  - Poor timekeeping etc.

These could potentially threaten job security and prospects where the cause of these behaviours is unknown to the employer. The Council is therefore committed to providing appropriate advice and support to affected employees, while they are in work, and in addressing their circumstances outside the workplace. The Council also recognises that employees may be indirectly adversely impacted by a close family member experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

- 2.7. Domestic violence and abuse has a damaging effect on people and can have an adverse impact on their employment, e.g. increased absence levels as a result of physical injuries and/or mental health issues, victims not being allowed out of the house to attend work and performance issues when in work. However, the cause of these effects is often not talked about because victims are frightened of further attack and/or of perceived repercussions on their ability to carry out their job.
- 2.8. This policy demonstrates the Council's commitment to providing guidance for employees and managers to address the occurrence of domestic violence and abuse and its effects on the workplace.

### 3. PURPOSE

- 3.1. The purpose of this policy is to support employees who are affected by domestic violence and abuse and to establish a framework to assist the Council in providing that support.

### 4. SCOPE

- 4.1. Belfast City Council acknowledges that while it is mainly women who experience domestic violence and abuse, this policy applies equally to every employee of Belfast City Council, regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. In support of this, it is the Council's policy that anyone who is experiencing or has been affected by domestic violence and abuse can raise the issue, in the knowledge that we will treat the matter effectively, sympathetically and in line with our statutory obligations.
- 4.2. The Council recognises that domestic violence and abuse is not confined to the home and that it is likely that it will impact upon the employee in the workplace. The Council recognises its duty to keep an employee safe within the workplace and would encourage employees to disclose to a line manager or "Trusted Colleague" (see paragraph 8.6) if they have any concerns about their safety in the workplace, or travelling to and from the workplace. Belfast City Council will take all reasonable steps to address these concerns.



4.3. The Workplace Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse applies to all Council employees (including casual workers and temporary staff). The Council will also take all reasonable steps to support all agency assignees who are placed in Belfast City Council.

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

5.1. The aim of the policy is to make the workplace a safe and supportive environment for all employees of the Council who are affected by domestic violence and abuse.

5.2. The objectives of the policy are to set out how the Council will:

- offer support to our employees in addressing problems arising from domestic violence and abuse sympathetically and in confidence (as far as possible);
- maximise the safety of our employees in the workplace;
- signpost employees to external support agencies who can carry on support beyond the workplace;
- deal effectively with perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse among our workforce, as appropriate and to challenge behaviours and attitudes through our awareness raising campaigns.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1. Whilst employees experiencing domestic violence and abuse normally have the right to complete confidentiality, in circumstances of child protection or the protection of adults at risk of abuse, there may be a legal obligation on the Council to notify appropriate protection services. It is likely that complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in these situations. For example, where a risk to children or to vulnerable adults is identified, then the Council may have a duty to inform social services. Where this arises the employee will be informed.

7. RIGHT TO PRIVACY

7.1. The Council respects an employee's right to keep private the fact that they have experienced domestic violence and abuse within the statutory limitations outlined in paragraph 6.1 above.

**8. PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES**

**8.1. The Council will make every effort to assist an employee experiencing domestic violence and abuse and will consider the following actions where applicable and where the work of the Council and services to citizens will not be compromised by their implementation:**

- **If an employee needs to take leave from work due to domestic violence and abuse, the length of the leave will be determined by the individual's situation through collaboration with the employee and their line manager subject to balancing both service needs and the needs of the individual.**
- **In this context managers and supervisors are encouraged to provide a sympathetic response to requests for special paid or unpaid leave; flexible working and other work-life balance arrangements as a result of domestic violence and abuse, for example flexibility in working hours or time off when required to enable the employee to seek protection, go to court, look for new housing, enter counselling, arrange childcare etc.**
- **The Council will consider the requirement for a change of working arrangements on a short-term or long-term basis, as necessary. (For example, moving the employee away from the reception area or from working in a ground-floor office which is visible from the street if required; redeployment or relocation, changing shift patterns, changing hours).**
- **Changes to arrangements for the payment of salary, if requested (including a salary advance, if needed, e.g. to acquire alternative accommodation).**

**8.2. Belfast City Council recognises that people experiencing domestic and sexual violence and abuse are at increasing risk when they attempt to leave an abusive partner. They may become vulnerable going to and coming from work, or while they are at work as the perpetrator knows where they can be located. This can give rise to health and safety issues including the risk of violence occurring in the workplace.**

**8.3. Employers have a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 1992 also requires employers to assess the risks of violence to employees and make arrangements for**

their health and safety by effective planning, organisation and control.

- 8.4. The Council will make support available to employees involved in domestic violence and abuse through line managers, Human Resources, Occupational Health, the Council's confidential employee counselling service and the network of "trusted colleagues".
- 8.5. The Council has set in place a procedure for designating certain staff members to be "trusted colleagues". These employees will be available as the first point of contact for employees experiencing domestic violence and abuse. They will receive training in responding to disclosures of domestic violence and abuse, information about relevant agencies that offer support and information on current legislation, reports, publications and events to do with domestic violence and abuse. The trusted colleagues will be drawn from a range of areas/locations within the Council but will include staff from Human Resources and trade union representatives. The names and contact numbers for all trusted colleagues will be displayed on all location noticeboards.
- 8.6. The role of the "trusted colleague" is to:
- Be available and approachable to employees experiencing domestic violence and abuse;
  - Listen, reassure and support individuals;
  - Keep information confidential (subject to the requirements of child and adult protection);
  - Respond in a sensitive and non-judgmental manner;
  - Discuss the specific steps that can be taken to help the employee stay safe in the workplace;
  - Ensure the employee is aware of the options available to them;
  - Encourage the employee to seek the advice of other relevant agencies - see appendices for contact details of support services available.
- 8.7. The Council is aware that victims of domestic violence and abuse may have performance issues such as absenteeism or lower productivity. When addressing performance and safety issues the Council will make reasonable efforts to consider all aspects of the employee's situation and/or safety problems

and aim to assist the employee in seeking professional help. The Council will address health and safety concerns in the workplace and will signpost to external agencies to carry on support beyond the remit of the workplace. The Council will commit to collaborative working with external agencies (if desired by employee) to provide a joined-up approach to supporting the employee, inside and outside the workplace.

8.8. While this policy applies to all employees of the Council, it is line managers, in consultation with “trusted colleagues” and when necessary, Human Resources, who will play a key role in implementing it in practice.

8.9. The role of the line manager can be summarised as follows:

- Be aware that employees who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse may demonstrate poor punctuality, attendance, work performance and productivity and should take steps to try to establish this prior to instigating any formal council procedures. Details of possible signs that someone is experiencing domestic violence and abuse are contained in Appendix 1, which can be accessed on [mod.gov](http://mod.gov)
- Do not directly confront an employee. It is for the employee to raise the matter. If you have concerns or suspect signs of domestic violence and abuse please contact a Trusted Colleague, your departmental HR team or Corporate HR - Employee Relations unit.
- Where domestic violence and abuse is known, managers should contact Corporate HR (Employee Relations Unit) for advice before any discussion with the staff member takes place, if it is possible to do so.
- If approached managers need to be prepared to listen and should ensure they are approachable and available.
- Where it is alleged that a member of staff is perpetrating abuse during work time or using work resources, the manager will discuss this as a matter of urgency with Human Resources.
- Managers will review the security of personal information held on members of staff and ensure that it is retained in a lockable filing cabinet or cupboard and disposed of securely when it is no longer required.

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- **Managers will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out that will provide a plan to address any security concerns in the workplace.**
  - **Managers will keep a confidential record of any discussions and of any action taken. This will be kept with the knowledge and consent of the staff member concerned, who will be able to access it.**
  - **Managers will use discretion to facilitate time off for appointments, counselling, re-housing, court attendances etc.**
  - **Managers will ensure rehabilitative return and support under the Council's Attendance Policy where appropriate.**
  - **Managers will consider redeployment if necessary in regard to location of work, in liaison with departmental management, business support and Corporate HR.**
  - **Managers will consider changes to working hours, shift patterns or flexible working arrangements.**
  - **Managers will offer support through Occupational Health or Employee Counselling or assist with referrals to specialist agencies for on-going help or support.**
  - **Managers will take advice from Human Resources staff in regard to issues of employment.**
  - **Managers will consider the provision of any relevant training that might provide additional support to employees, e.g. assertiveness training for confidence building.**
- 9. TRAINING MANAGERS AND TRUSTED COLLEAGUES TO IDENTIFY AND RESPOND APPROPRIATELY**
- 9.1. The Council will develop a programme of training for line managers and trusted colleagues to raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse and to ensure a common understanding of this policy and guidance.**
- 9.2. The training will include:**
- **Signs that an employee may be experiencing difficulties;**
  - **How to provide initial support;**

- Referrals to other agencies;
- Ways to help the person stay safe in the workplace;
- The importance of understanding that they are not counsellors (counselling is to be left to trained professionals and no one should attempt to act in place of a domestic violence and abuse expert or counsellor).

## **10. GENERAL EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **10.1. All employees of the Council have a responsibility to:**

- Accept primary responsibility for their personal safety and that of their colleagues;
- Familiarise themselves with and follow this policy and bring to the attention of their managers any concerns which they have relating to personal safety;
- Participate in training that has been made available to them on domestic violence and abuse;
- Ensure that no personal information relating to colleagues is passed on to callers.

## **11. VISIBLE RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE SUPPORT**

**11.1. The Council will provide contact details for “trusted colleagues” and a range of organisations which can offer support to employees living with domestic violence and abuse. These will be found in highly visible locations as well as in private locations, so that they can be picked up discreetly by employees. Safe Place cards will be left in discrete but accessible locations.**

## **12. PERPETRATORS WHO ARE EMPLOYEES**

### **12.1. With regard to perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse, the Council will undertake to do the following:**

- Reserve the right to invoke the disciplinary procedure against any employee who perpetrates violence, including domestic violence and abuse and/or who uses the Council’s time, property or other resources to abuse a partner or family member or to aid another to do so. The Council will establish the facts of the case, in line with the requirements of the disciplinary procedure, before considering if disciplinary action is justified.

- Refer to the Council's Criminal Misconduct Guidelines. It may be the case that such an issue is dealt with in the criminal legal system either as an alternative to, or concurrent to, the disciplinary procedure.
  - Take action, as appropriate, to minimise the potential for a perpetrator to use his/her position or resources to find out the whereabouts, or other details, of his/her partner or ex-partner.
  - Consider requests for time off to attend appropriate interventions, when perpetrators are seeking help to address their abusive behaviour.
- 12.2. In cases where both the perpetrator of domestic violence and abuse and the victim are employed by the Council, action may need to be taken to ensure that both the victim and the perpetrator do not come into contact in the workplace.
13. **COMMUNICATING THE POLICY**
- 13.1. The Council will raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse through a variety of methods, including:
- Preparation and distribution of information to publicise the Council's policy and to raise awareness of the issues of domestic violence and abuse.
  - The provision of information about agencies that can offer advice, information and support.
  - Whilst it is acknowledged that these steps will be effective in the short term in raising awareness, the Council is committed to continue to communicate and raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse in the longer term using methods deemed to be the most effective and appropriate.
14. **REVIEW**
- 14.1. This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Council and, if necessary, revised in consultation with recognised Trade Unions in light of changing legislation and current good practice. Details of the next scheduled review are contained on the front cover of this policy."

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**Diversity Action Plans**

The Committee was informed that the Council’s Equality and Diversity framework, which ran from April, 2017 till March, 2021, set out the means by which the organisation would tackle inequalities and promote diversity in the City. The framework had been built around four key priorities and associated actions, namely, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment, understanding our communities through data and consultation, delivering services accessible to all and developing a skilled and diverse workforce. In terms of the leadership, partnership and organisational commitment key priority, the Council had committed to developing and delivering a Gender Action Plan, an LGBT+ Action Plan and a Race Action Plan.

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy reported that the Women’s Steering Group had, in May, 2018, agreed a three-year Gender Action Plan for delivery between April, 2018 and March, 2021. The Year 2 Action Plan, covering 2019/20, was being presented to the Committee for approval, as was an LGBT+ Action Plan for the same period, which had been formulated in collaboration with the LGBT staff network. A Race Relations Plan had still to be developed. The cost of delivering Year 2 of the Gender Action Plan was approximately £40,500, which included £16,000 of approved activity carried over from 2018/19, whilst the delivery of the LGBT+ Action Plan would cost £9,300. Those costs would be met from the existing Organisational Development budget.

The Committee approved Year 2 of the Gender Action Plan (2019/20) and the LGBT+ Action Plan 2019/20, as set out hereunder, together with the associated costs.

**GENDER ACTION PLAN 2018 – 2021  
(Year 2019-20)**

<b>WOMEN IN THE COUNCIL</b>			
-to ensure that BCC organisational culture, policies and practices empower talent development at all levels, for elected members and officers and remove any form of discrimination			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Year</b>
Hold annual IWD event for staff	HR IWD working group WNG	£6000	2
Deliver 2nd mentoring programme (men and women)	HR	£3000	2
Deliver Women Leaders Programme (members and officers)	WSG HR External facilitator	£12000	2 (postponed from 18/19)
Deliver 2nd work shadowing initiative with CX ( linked to mentoring programme)	HR CX office	Staff resources	2
Deliver short modular personal development sessions for WNG members	HR	£3000	2 (c/f from Year 1)
Provide Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor work shadowing	Lord Mayors Unit Youth Forum	Staff resources	2 (c/f from Year 1.



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opportunities to youth forum members			
Participate in NI Gender Diversity Charter assessment against annual targets and activities	CX HR	£2500	2
Commission and start delivery of unconscious bias training - to start with CMT	HR	£1000	2
Continue to facilitate WNG, including Belfast Women in Tec Group	Digital Services/ WNG	Staff Resources	2
Develop/ agree transgender guidance document for staff	HR LGB&T Network	Staff resources	2
Ensure effective promotion of BCC as an employer that values and supports equality and diversity (external website, job info to potential applicants, press releases etc. )	HR MarComms Staff network	Staff Resources	2
Hold event/ workshop for both male and female staff to jointly explore/ discuss gender issues and identify any issues to be addressed	HR Staff networks	£1000	2
<b>WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY</b> -with the purpose of increasing the representation of women in leadership positions throughout communities across Belfast by ensuring that processes are in place to increase women's involvement in decision making in communities			
Fund annual external IWD event.	Equality Unit	£6000	2
Finalise baseline assessment of current engagement and activity in relation to gender	WNG Departments	Staff resources	2 (c/f from Year 1)
Hold Transgender remembrance event	Head of HR LGB&T network	LBGT+ budget	2
Consider use of new exhibition space to further promote/ tell stories of female role models Explore the potential for City Hall tours based around women in the city	Director of Legal Services WSG WNG	Staff Resources TBC	2

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<b>WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY</b>			
<b>-to ensure all council policies and strategies influence and facilitate the active and fair participation of both women and men in the economy</b>			
Hold a gender capacity building event for community planning partners	WSG HR Policy Unit	£1000	2 (c/f from Year 1)
Develop 'gender lens' ('equality lens') to build into future policy development – in conjunction with wider equality and diversity work to develop a diversity lens as part of Belfast Agenda Action Plan	EEDO HR Policy Unit	£3000	2
Identify employability partners to deliver employability/ outreach initiatives for women.  ( Link to City Deal proposals )	HR/OD Economic Initiatives	Staff resources	Ongoing as opportunities arise
Identify opportunities for pre-recruitment programmes targeted at females furthest removed from the labour market	HR	Staff resources	Ongoing as opportunities arise
The Northern Ireland Female Enterprise Challenge - A collaborative programme between the 11 Local Councils, Invest NI, and Women in Business NI (WIB) to promote and support female enterprise. . This programme also includes sponsorship for the WIB conference.	Economic Development	£6,200	2
Enterprise and Employability support for underrepresented groups – Belfast City Council programme of support to enable underrepresented groups (including females) to overcome the barriers to starting a business or accessing employment opportunities.	Economic Development	£90,000	2

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<b>WOMEN IN THE CITY</b>			
-to ensure that the needs of women across the city are identified and used to influence and impact upon the regeneration of the city including social infrastructure design and community facilities provision			
As part of the ongoing baseline audit of all Council assets determine if Council assets are 'fit for purpose' in terms of the needs of all genders and that gender needs are looked at as part of the development of any new council asset	Property and Projects Department C&NS Place & Economy Dept	Staff resources  Potential cost if additional works required	2
As part of the ongoing area working /place shaping work and the Physical Investment Programme look at opportunities of how the needs of women can be better met across the city	Property & Projects Department Place and Economy C&NS A Strategic Hub External stakeholders	Staff resources Potential associated costs for GAP 19/20 & 21/22	2
Work with City Partners on achievement of Safe City status and retain ' platinum level' status	BCC ONUS External partners	£2000	2

**TOTAL APPROXIMATE COSTS - £ 40,500k for year 2 (excluding ED funded initiatives)**

**LGBT+ Action Plan 2019-2020**

<b>Theme - Training and Development</b>				
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions required</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Indicative costs</b>
Increased awareness of LGBT+ bias	Source and deliver awareness training	2019-20	HR/ Network Chair	£700 total for 2 sessions
LGBT employees feel comfortable to be their whole selves	Review diversity training to ensure LGBT+ issues covered	2019-20	HR	Staff Resource

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Line managers understand key issues and their responsibilities				
Better mental health	Source and deliver the Mental Health First Aider course for up to 10 network members	2019-20	HR	£1000

<b>Theme – Promoting positive attitudes</b>				
Outcomes	Actions required	Timing	Lead	Indicative costs
All relevant policies are inclusive and use gender neutral language where possible  Clear processes in place for staff to raise issues around discrimination/bullying/harassment based on gender and sexual orientation	Review staff policies.	2019-20	HR	Staff Resource
Guidance available for trans employees and their managers and for staff delivering services to the trans community	Develop Transgender policy / guidance	2019-20	HR	Staff Resource

<b>Theme – Promotion and ensure visibility of Network including senior champions</b>				
Outcomes	Actions required	Timing	Lead	Indicative costs
Increased awareness of and participation in network	Promote via Interlink/ Email	2019-20	Network Chair	Staff Resource/ Comms
Increased awareness about staff network and senior support	Articles profiling senior champion and allies	2019-20	Chair / Network	Staff Resource/ Comms
	Source promotional material	2019-20	Network	£1000 Staff Resource/ Comms

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Confirmed network identity	Agree name for network and promote as appropriate	2019-20	Network	
Potential applicants aware BCC is an employer that values and supports equality and diversity	Ensure relevant info on external website, job info to potential applicants, press releases etc.)	2019-20	HR MarComms Staff network	

<b>Theme – Community Engagement</b>				
Outcomes	Actions required	Timing	Lead	Indicative costs
Bigger and better participation in Pride and more visibility of BCC support for LGBT+ community  Visible support for LGBT Community	Participate in Pride	2019-20	Network	£2500
	Build participation with network members and staff	2019-20	Network	Staff Resource
Increased awareness of issues faced by Trans community and awareness of need for remembrance	Hold annual Transgender Day of Remembrance event	2019-20	Network/ HR	£800
<b>Theme – Social Networking</b>				
Outcomes	Actions required	Timing	Lead	Indicative costs
Improved visibility, learning and positive outcomes	Facilitate an event between NI Stonewall organisations	2019-20	Network	£800

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<b>Theme – Employee Lifecycle / Organisational Analysis</b>				
Outcomes	Actions required	Timing	Lead	Indicative costs
Feedback from staff re LGBT issues	Circulate Stonewall survey online for at least 4 weeks	2019-20	HR /Marketing and Comms	Staff Resource/ Comms
Position in national benchmarking exercise	Membership of Diversity Champions Programme and participation in Stonewall Equality Index	2019-20	HR and Staff network	£2500
Areas for improvement identified	Consider diversity survey results to identify improvements that are need going forward	2019-20	HR	Staff Resource/ Comms
Ensuring comprehensive info on staff is available and up to date.	Carry out voluntary staff monitoring exercise	2019-20	HR	Staff Resource
	Update application monitoring forms	2019-20	HR	Staff resource

<b>Theme – Inclusive Workplace</b>				
Outcomes	Actions required	Timing	Lead	Indicative costs
Gender neutral facilities for staff	Consider feasibility of gender neutral toilet in City Hall and city centre offices.	2019/20	HR/ Facilities Mgt	Corporate Maintenance Budget approval if work necessary
			<b>Total</b>	<b>£9300</b>

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**Operational Issues**

**Requests for the use of the City Hall  
and the Provision of Hospitality**

The Committee approved the recommendations made in respect of applications received up to 6th August, 2019, as set out hereunder:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
<b>2019 EVENTS</b>						
Equality Commission	25 September 2019	<b>Launch of Programme for people with disabilities</b> Showcasing the support on offer to assist them to participate in public life.  Numbers attending – 30	C	Yes - £115	No hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i>  Approve Charge £115 No Hospitality
World Mycotoxin Forum (WMF)	13 October 2019	<b>Welcome Reception</b> Welcome reception as part of 3 day conference taking place at ICC Belfast and Titanic Belfast.  Numbers attending – 250	A & B	No  £300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast	Yes, Wine Reception  <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
BDO	7 November 2019 or 6 December 2019	<b>30th Anniversary Celebration</b> Drinks reception to celebrate the 30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of BDO's work in Belfast.  Numbers attending – 250 – 500	C	Yes - £825 (commercial)	Yes, Wine reception as 30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary	Approve Charge £825 Wine Reception

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2020 EVENTS						
Ciste Infheistiochta Gaeilge	14 March 2020	<b>10th Anniversary Celebration</b> Drinks reception and dinner to celebrate 10 years of work across Northern Ireland, including partnerships with Belfast City Council.  Numbers attending – 350-400	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine reception as <i>10th anniversary</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
The National Deaf Children's Society	24 March 2020	<b>Young Authors and Artists Prize Day 2020</b> Prize-giving ceremony to celebrate artistic achievements of deaf children and young people across Northern Ireland.  Numbers attending – 160	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea Coffee and Biscuits	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	27 March 2020	<b>2020 Year of the Nurse and Midwife - Celebration Event</b> Celebration event to recognise achievements of nurses and midwives working in Belfast and showcase their skills.  Numbers attending – 250 - 500	C	Yes, £300	No, government organisation	Approve Charge £300 No hospitality



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Young Enterprise NI	2 April 2020	<b>YEA NI Awards 2020</b> Drinks reception, dinner and Awards Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of people across NI who completed YE Programmes.  Numbers attending – 350	Yes A & B	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine Reception	Approve No charge Wine Reception
Leonard Cheshire	22 April 2020	<b>ARBI Launch Celebration</b> of a new services offering specialist support to people in NI with alcohol related brain injury.  Numbers attending –100	C& D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea, Coffee & Biscuits	Approve No charge Tea and coffee reception
Queen's University, Belfast	29 April 2020	<b>Global Agent Fam Trip –</b> Dinner with drinks reception to promote Belfast as an International study choice.  Numbers attending - 100	A & B	No (Charity)	No – government body	Approve No Charge No Hospitality
Odyssey International	8 May 2020	<b>Welcome to Ireland Dinner for R+V Versicherung.</b> Destination showcase event for German Insurance Company Dinner and entertainment for incentive showcase of Northern Ireland.	A&B	Yes, £825 (commercial)	No	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
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		Numbers attending – 250				
SCONUL	11 June 2020	<b>Conference Dinner</b> – Welcome reception and dinner as part of 3 day conference taking place in Belfast.  Numbers attending – 150	A & B	No  <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	Yes, Wine Reception  <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
British Association of Forensic Medicine	26 June 2020	<b>Summer meeting of BAFM</b> – Conference dinner as part of 3 day conference taking place in Titanic Belfast.  Numbers attending – 100	A & B	No  <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	Yes, Wine Reception  <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception

**Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum of 15th August, 2019.

**Minutes of Active Belfast Limited Board**

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Active Belfast Ltd. Board of 5th August, 2019.

**Minutes of Working Group on the Climate Crisis**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group on the Climate Crisis of 12th August, 2019.

**Request for the Use of the City Hall – Chinese Cultural Event**

The Committee was informed that a request had been received for the use of the City Hall grounds on the afternoon of Friday, 27th September to host a Chinese Cultural event. The event, which would form part of the China in Northern Ireland Programme 2019/20, would attract between 300 and 500 people and would be in keeping with the Council’s obligations in terms of good relations. The organisers had requested also the use of some rooms within the City Hall to provide a reception for VIP guests, however, only the Committee Rooms were available. It was pointed out that there would be only minimal costs to the Council and that those would be met by the International/European Unit.

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The Committee granted the use of the City Hall grounds and the Committee Rooms for the aforementioned event.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Abortion Imagery**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Groogan proposed the following:

"This Council notes the ambition set out in the Belfast Agenda that Belfast will be a city that is welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all. The Council agrees that the public display of graphic abortion imagery in our City centre conflicts with this ambition due to the distress that it can cause to people who have suffered miscarriage and undertakes to investigate whether the display of such signs can be regulated lawfully, either by the Council or by another body, to ensure that those who have suffered miscarriages can continue to use and enjoy our City centre without fear of being re-traumatised."

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting addressing the issues raised within the motion.

Chairperson

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## People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 6th August, 2019

### MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Collins (Chairperson);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds;  
Alderman McCoubrey; and  
Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain,  
Corr, de Faoite, Donnelly, Kelly, Magee,  
Mulholland, McLaughlin, McMullan,  
Newton, Smyth and Verner.

Also Attended: Councillors Heading, Ferguson and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services; and  
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors Baker and Kyle.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th June were taken as read and signed as correct.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were reported.

### **Item Withdrawn from Agenda**

#### **Request for the use of Cathedral Gardens for "Rally for Choice"**

The Committee noted that the above item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

### **Matters Referred Back from Council/Motions**

#### **Glyphosate-Based Weed Killer**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 1st July, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Ferguson and seconded by Councillor Collins, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

*"This Council recognises the dangers associated with the use of glyphosate-based weed killers, including the World Health Organisation's*

**People and Communities Committee,  
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*warning about carcinogenic side effects and the damaging impact on the environment and biodiversity.*

*The Council notes that other councils and government agencies have introduced bans across the world and agrees to immediately investigate and implement the use of safer weed killing methods in order to protect Council staff, the general public, and local flora and fauna.”*

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor Ferguson addressed the Committee and outlined her concern regarding the use of glyphosate-based weed killers and the potential problems associated with its use.

It was agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

### **Air Quality in Belfast**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 1st July, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor O'Hara and seconded by Councillor Kyle, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

*“This Council notes that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) monitoring of Air Quality in Belfast has identified breaches of the Air Quality legal limits, alongside the Council’s own monitoring of and the data collected by Greens across the City.*

*Poor Air Quality reduces life expectancy, increases incidents of respiratory conditions, rates of lung cancers, strokes and asthma. These are more prevalent amongst older people, younger people and vulnerable groups. In addition, this disproportionately impacts inner city and working class communities.*

*In view of these issues and in support of all 5 objectives of the Belfast Agenda, particularly outcome 5 to make ‘Belfast a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable City’, the Council agrees to engage formally with DAERA and the Department for Infrastructure on the areas of concern and to produce reports on:*

- 1. Enhancing monitoring and reporting of air pollution, including recommended limits in line with the more stringent World Health Organisation Standards; and*
- 2. Introducing a Clean Air Zone in Belfast, in line with UK Government Guidance.”*

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor O'Hara addressed the Committee and stressed the urgent need to tackle air pollution in an attempt to improve air quality standards across the City of Belfast.

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A Member concurred and highlighted the rise in respiratory problems in young people and stated that he would welcome increased air quality monitoring, particularly in the vicinity of local schools.

A further Member referred to the need to consider commuter travelling and car parking and its impact on Belfast's air quality and it was further suggested that any research should take into consideration good practice models that had been implemented in other Cities.

It was agreed:

- that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee which would address the proposals contained within the motion; and
- that the Committee would write to the Department for Infrastructure in support of Eco Belfast's Campaign to designate Belfast a car free City from 20th – 22nd September, 2019.

**Committee/Strategic Issues**

**Update in Relation to a Permanent Memorial  
to mark Baby Haven in the City Cemetery**

The Director of City Services provided the Committee with an update in respect of the process to design, produce and install a permanent memorial at Plot Z1 in the City Cemetery in which many babies had been buried.

The Director reminded the Committee that a Focus Group had been established, which had been made up of representatives of families that had relatives buried in the plot. The Focus Group had met regularly with Council officers and it had imputed greatly into both the design and installation of the memorial, to ensure that it was undertaken in a sensitive manner and also met the Council's protocol and policies.

The Committee was advised that the Bereavement Administrative team had undertaken a comprehensive count of burial records for Plot Z1, which had been validated against the original burial orders. The final verified number of babies buried in the Plot was 7,160 and this number had been inscribed onto the memorial.

The Director advised that it was anticipated that the works to erect the memorial would begin in early August and permission was sought to hold a commemorative and dedication event on Thursday, 12th September to unveil it, to which the Lord Mayor, Elected Members and other dignitaries would be invited to attend.

The Focus Group had requested that part of the proposed ceremony would have a religious aspect, as many of the families had been unable to hold funeral ceremonies. The Director advised that the Council would be taking advice from the Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum to ensure that an inclusive spiritual element would be included within the ceremony that would recognize the faiths of all those buried within the plot.

**People and Communities Committee,  
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The Committee agreed to hold a commemorative and dedication event on Thursday, 12th September to unveil the permanent memorial at Plot Z1 in the City Cemetery, known as the Baby Haven.

**Waste Framework Update, Household Recycling  
Performance and Response to Notice of Motion**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 To provide Committee with progress on implementing the Waste Framework, an update on household recycling performance over the recent past and to respond to the Notice of Motion raised at 1st November 2018 Council meeting which states that:**

*‘This Council is committed to increasing household recycling across the city of Belfast; notes the colossal impact waste is having on our oceans, cities and countrysides; welcomes the recent waste consultation; and will commit to introducing glass recycling in households across the city of Belfast as soon as possible.’*

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- 1. Agree that the wheelie-box scheme outlined in this report is the strategic direction of travel for the Council, subject to a successful assessment of the project within the Council’s Capital Programme.**
- 2. Agree the wheelie-box pilot as outlined to:**
  - **approximately 5,000 households in North Belfast commencing September 2019;**
  - **change collection day for operational reasons and to mitigate against ‘bin blight.’ If considered necessary, these will be communicated in advance to the residents affected;**
  - **in order to improve recycling further, as per the January 2014 policy, the trial will implement one bin per household with the usual exceptions (i.e. larger families of 6 or more, and those households with a resident who has a medical condition which generates additional waste,) following the successful application to DAERA to fund an in-house trial.**



3. Agree implementation of Phase 2 of the food waste campaign, as set out in the Council's Improvement Plan for 2019-20.
4. Agree extending the existing WRAP Collaboration Agreement for the 2019/20 financial year.
5. Agree to a Members' study visit to Welsh councils (as per November report) to see first-hand a kerbside sort approach, in operation.
6. Agree to a study visit to businesses and organisations in NI which use the secondary materials collected from the Council's recycling operations and learn how they contribute to the local Circular Economy.
7. Note the response to the November Notice of Motion.

3.0 **Main report**

**Key Issues**

**Background**

- 3.1 There are several drivers influencing management of the city's waste including:
- legislative compliance;
  - fit-for-purpose and value-for-money services;
  - the Belfast Agenda – an additional 66,000 residents will generate additional waste; and
  - the Circular Economy Package (CEP) focusing on higher recycling targets (65% municipal waste by 2035), improving quality of materials and contributing to jobs within the economy.
- 3.2 To address these challenges the Council, and its regional waste management group (arc21), have developed waste plans, the most recent of which was the Waste Framework approved in June 2017. These plans make recommendations in terms of infrastructural and policy requirements with the primary aim of reducing reliance on landfill and increasing recycling.
- 3.3 Over the last 15 years, the Council has achieved increases in the recycling of household waste from 5% in 2003/04 to 44% in 2017/18 (the most recent NIEA validated year). This has been achieved by developing an adequate recycling

infrastructure (Recycling Centres, bring banks, kerbside collection schemes) and associated contracts to treat the materials arising. In addition, the Council has invested consistently in communications and outreach activities to engage with residents and other partners such as schools, community groups and businesses to ensure that the 'Reduce, Reuse Recycle' message is continuously promoted.

- 3.4 In terms of performance, the city's recycling rate increased steadily in 2014/15, when it peaked at 44%. This trend was halted following Local Government Reform as many of the 22,000 households which transferred to Belfast were relied heavily upon residual waste collections. In recent years, there have also been plant closures – reducing local capacity to treat wastes, changes in the legal definition of recycling and fluctuations in the national and international markets (sometimes erratic) which have impacted upon both commodity prices and destinations for recycled materials.

Current Performance

- 3.5 With the introduction of the Food Waste Campaign in Summer 2017 and the focused targeting of this waste within the residual (black) bin, the recycling rate rebounded to 44% in 2017/18. In the same year, the household recycling rate across the whole of NI rose by 3.7% to 48.1%, bringing the 2020 national 50% target within reach.
- 3.6 In 2017/18, the Council was ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in Northern Ireland for its household recycling rate. Given its different demographics and other characteristics (deprivation, housing type, etc) which impact on recycling rates, it should be noted that it is unrealistic to benchmark Belfast against the other councils in NI.
- 3.7 As a result, Belfast benchmarks its performance against similar cities in England such as Newcastle, Sunderland and Sheffield. Examining those cities latest performance reveals that Belfast continues to outperform, although they have additional statutory duties to discharge and austerity and associated budget cuts have deeply affected these councils.
- 3.8 In 2017/18, the total amount of household waste collected by the Council was 144,727 tonnes. Amongst the NI councils, Belfast produced the smallest amount of household waste per person, at 425kg and the smallest amount of waste per household, at 0.98 tonnes.

- 3.9** With the inclusion of non-household waste (commercial, fly-tipped/entry clearances) collected by the Council, the total amount of municipal waste collected rose to 169,368 tonnes. The treatment split for this waste was 40% recycled, 39% landfilled, 19% energy recovery and 2% other.
- 3.10** In total, around 68,000 tonnes of the municipal waste stream (household, commercial, street sweeps, fly tipped) was recycled. This supports the Belfast Agenda not only by producing a cleaner, greener city for residents, workers and visitors but also makes a significant contribution to the local economy and, in this regard, it is estimated that up to 680 jobs<sup>1</sup> are directly supported by the recycling of these materials. In addition, in terms of carbon dioxide and contributing to mitigating the Councils impact upon the climate, diverting this material from landfill is the annual equivalent of taking 16,500 cars (approx.) off the road.
- 3.11** Provisional figures suggest that the household recycling rate in 2018/19 will remain around 44%. Any uplift is likely to be due to a reduction in the amount of waste generated (down by 1,600 tonnes approx.) rather than an increase in recycling/composting, which has remained static<sup>2</sup>.

**Waste Framework – Actions**

- 3.12** The Waste Framework, approved by Council in June 2017, highlighted four themes to improve recycling, reducing landfill and ultimately delivering a more sustainable city. These are (i) Collection Systems (ii) Infrastructural Requirements (iii) Behavioural Change and (iv) Information Technology. The Framework outlines initiatives to improve not only the tonnage collected but the quality to supply local re-processing companies and contribute positively to the Circular Economy<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.13** In 2017, an Options Appraisal of future kerbside collection arrangements was completed by WRAP/Resource Futures to consider factor affecting recycling (contribution to recycling rate, financial impact, legislative compliance, user

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<sup>1</sup> Green Alliance report (2014) – ‘More jobs, less carbon’

<sup>2</sup> These figures will be validated by the NIEA, anticipated in Nov 2019 when the NIEA Annual Waste Statistics Report will be published.

<sup>3</sup> The circular economy offers an alternative to the linear ‘take-make-waste’ economy that is harming people and the environment. It seeks to extract maximum value from resources in use and keeps materials in circulation for as long as possible. The circular economy is strongly embedded in local economies and transition to this requires the innovative entrepreneurship and strong network connections that cities typically incubate - THE ROLE OF MUNICIPAL POLICY IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY.

acceptability) and a preferred approach, outlined in Figure 1 below was identified.

*Figure 1 : Proposed Kerbside Collection Approach*

## Collections - Potential Approach



- 3.14 The Options Appraisal recommended collecting recyclables and food waste weekly in a wheelie-box. It is worth noting this includes collecting glass. In common with the materials collected, with the exception of cans and plastic pots, tubs & trays, glass would be placed in a separate stillage container within the vehicle to preserve its quality (and market value). This system is complemented by a 180 litre bin for non-recyclable/residual waste.
- 3.15 In 2017, this proposed collection methodology was adopted by the Council as part of the Waste Framework and has been consulted on twice with the public through pre- and full-engagement exercises which used the Council's Citizen Space portal, supported by roadshows. To counteract bias, a statistically relevant, representative household survey was done in parallel with the full consultation.
- 3.16 The summary, findings showed broad support for the wheelie-box and a preference for a 180 litre black bin rather than a three weekly collections for residual waste.

### Market Developments

- 3.17 Waste and resources are an increasingly traded commodity on the international market with materials flowing across the world for treatment and disposal. In January 2018 however the Chinese Government's *Operation National Sword* introduced limits to reduce low-quality (i.e. contaminated) imported waste. These limits were brought into effect to protect China's environment and support Chinese jobs and the most relevant restrictions, affecting councils globally were (i) banning post-consumer plastics and mixed/unsorted paper

- (ii) setting a 0.5% tolerance level for sorted paper and
- (iii) restricting the number of import waste licences.

- 3.18** Historically, the UK has exported some paper and plastics to China. With changes in this market, alternatives were considered, but in the process, the income for low quality paper fell. At the time, the media highlighted that some councils' costs rose by up to £500k for their (lower grade) plastics and that, with several countries reaching capacity<sup>4</sup>, concerns increased that some materials were simply being dumped.<sup>5</sup>
- 3.19** In January, the party groups were presented with the proposed collection arrangements proposed within the Waste Framework and the results from the consultation exercises. Many of Belfast's materials are finding markets locally but the focus on improving recyclable quality is gaining importance rapidly. Top grade paper, collected at the kerbside, commands good prices from local re-processors such as Huhtamaki. Conversely, mixed materials from the co-mingled (blue bin) collections have fallen in value resulting in higher gate fees and a loss of demand from international markets.
- 3.20** Taking a strategic view, the Council needs to shift from simply delivering ever-increasing weight-based goals to producing high-quality recyclables to be used locally. This approach, which supports the Belfast Agenda, will mitigate the risk of market volatility, optimise income from recyclables and support local jobs. To add weight to this, a new Collaborative Network funded by Invest NI (there was an earlier iteration, called the Collaborative Circular Economy Network (CCEN) which produced a scoping study<sup>6</sup>), is looking at how to increase the amount of materials used locally – the Council is part of this project. It is worth noting that external organisations are also approaching the Council to explore opportunities to support this, or similar methodologies to maximise the recovery of quality materials and support local jobs. To show case this, approval was granted to the Committee in November 2018 recommending that Members

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<sup>4</sup> Exports of low quality materials increased to Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan, Turkey, &c. Some reached capacity quickly and ceased accepting these items, while others are now considering following China. This was picked up earlier this year when BBC broadcast 'War on Plastic with Hugh and Anita' and highlighted several councils' waste being dumped in Malaysia

<sup>5</sup> Letsrecycle.com article 'LGA warns of risk to Councils from China ban 22/10/18' see <https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/latest-news/lga-warns-risk-councils-china-ban/>

<sup>6</sup> The CCEN study identified that greater value could be got from household recyclables by meeting local re-processors' quality requirements. Based on local data, there was a potential £50M GVA which could be added to the NI economy.

undertake a study visit(s) to businesses and organisations in NI which are already contributing to the circular economy. After this report, these visits will now be progressed.

- 3.21 As also approved in November 2018, an application for DAERA funding was submitted which secured sufficient capital funding for the Council to introduce a pilot wheelie box scheme for around 5,500 households currently on the blue bin scheme, with a go live date next month. This pilot will act as a familiarisation exercise for the Council, as previously this type of collection system has been outsourced, but in order to secure this learning it is imperative that the scheme starts in September as any delay will prevent this progressing in 2019 and could compromise the funding.
- 3.22 The households within the pilot area will receive the following collections:
- Weekly collection of dry recyclables by 165 x litre wheelie-box
  - Weekly collection of food waste by 23 x litre food waste caddy
  - Fortnightly collection of residual waste by 180 x litre black bin
  - Fortnightly collection of garden waste by 240 x litre brown bin
- 3.23 To drive recycling, the Service also intends to enforce the one bin policy introduced in January 2014 (collect only 1 x 180 litre black bin per household, except those households that have an approved second residual waste bin)<sup>7</sup>.
- 3.24 In the course of planning, it became clear that collection days for at least one stream of waste will need to change in the pilot area to avoid all containers being presented and all collection vehicles operating in the same area on the same day (bin blight).
- 3.25 In selecting the pilot area a number of criteria were assessed:
- *Public acceptability of the scheme* – Responses to the consultation exercise were used to identify areas which were receptive to the new scheme;
  - *Public attitude to recycling (in the form of current recycling performance)* – Performance data were used

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<https://minutes3.belfastcity.gov.uk/documents/s20755/15.1.14%20HES%20waste%20and%20recycling%20collection%20op%20policy.pdf>

to identify areas achieving reasonable recycling performance but with room to improve;

- *Operational feasibility/ impact* – Routes/ areas where the trial would be implemented with least operational impact; an area was selected where its impact on route optimisation was minimal;
- *Cost* – Any pilot would be introduced with minimal cost implications. It is recognised that efficiencies could be achieved by selecting an area currently on the glass trial and diverting these resources to the pilot.

- 3.26 The pilot involves weekly household collections and a lower daily pass rate compared with the co-mingled scheme. Consequently, it will incur a net increase to operational costs. These costs are mitigated, however, as the proposed area is on the pilot purple box glass collection scheme with resources transferred from this activity to the wheelie-box scheme. In addition, income from the improved quality of the materials and increased landfill diversion will offset additional operating costs. It is expected therefore that the pilot will be net cost neutral.
- 3.27 As per funding in Section 3.21 and considering the risk, cost, public acceptability and industrial relations, Members are requested to approve the pilot being rolled out in the Castle DEA (North Belfast) with immediate effect.
- 3.28 To ensure that the wheelie box scheme is included within the programme of works, a submission has been made to the Council's Capital Works programme and is currently Stage 2 – Uncommitted. The next stage, an Outline Business Case (OBC) is being developed and will be informed by the DAERA-funded kerbside pilot. Subject to results, Members are asked to approve adopting this collection methodology and it is envisaged that to roll-out a scheme of this size city-wide will require a detailed, phased, implementation plan over 3-4 years.
- 3.29 It is noteworthy that neighbouring arc21 councils (Antrim & Newtownabbey, Lisburn & Castlereagh, and Mid-East Antrim) are also adopting this approach, which mirrors that promoted by both WRAP and the Welsh Government. Wales now has one of the highest performing recycling levels in the world (61% household recycling rate in 2017/18).
- 3.30 To further inform the kerbside collection scheme OBC, Members are recommended to approve extending the Council's Collaboration Agreement with WRAP which will ensure the Council can draw down expertise from this

organisation regarding waste matters, and access additional networking and funding streams. Additionally, as per the November 2018 report, Members are recommended to undertake a study trip to Wales before considering the final OBC to see best practice and the kerbside scheme infrastructure in operation, most likely in Q4. It is envisaged that WRAP could assist with the arrangements surrounding this proposed visit.

- 3.31 As part of the English Waste Strategy published in December 2018, DEFRA has issued a consultation document '*Consistency in Household & Business Recycling Collections in England*'. This consultation sought views of English householders on collections options and the need to shift towards better quality, specifically outlining the potential for multi-material (wheelie-box type) collection schemes. The consultation was interested in stakeholders' views on additional performance indicators beyond weight-based targets (e.g. carbon intensity). While this consultation only applied in England, it will be important to reflect on the results which are likely to determine the direction of travel for the UK, as England makes up 85% of the national waste arisings. The results of this consultation are anticipated later this year and may generate further papers.

#### *Kerbside Glass*

- 3.32 The possibility of the Council providing a kerbside glass collection is frequently raised by Members and residents. The wheelie-box pilot is aimed at demonstrating how this scheme would deliver both an enhanced collection service both for residents (in terms of collecting greater array of materials from the kerbside) and for the emergent local circular economy as represented by the Collaborative Network, covered in Section 3.20.
- 3.33 Currently, around 80K households (54%) in Belfast have access to a kerbside collection of glass. Bryson Recycling provides a kerbside sort (box) collection service for 58K households and a further 22K households receive a fortnightly collection through an in-house pilot purple box. The amount of glass captured through both schemes is 3,800 tonnes per annum (approx.) which contributes around 2.5% to the City's recycling rate.
- 3.34 The '*WRAP Kerbside Waste Composition Report 2017*' noted that glass accounted for 9.4% by weight of the residual (black) bin (approx.). This is an easily identifiable material to recycle,



and important in terms of the circular economy, it contributes less than the recycling of food (25%) and paper/card (18%)

- 3.35 The glass collected goes mainly to Encirc, a glass manufacturer in Fermanagh, where it is recycled and made into new glass containers, an example of recycling supporting local jobs. The market price for recycled glass is low but stable in comparison with other material streams. The following table (see Table 1) is indicative of the prices being achieved earlier this year. In summary, there is an estimated 6,100 tonnes of glass still in residual bins with a potential value of up to £122K, compared with an estimated 11,400 tonnes of paper with a potential value up to £1.4M.

*Table 1 Market Prices*

£/tonne	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Mixed Glass	10-20	9-19	10-20	9-19
Paper (News)	90-100	90-100	80-90	77-85

Source: *letsrecycle.com*

- 3.36 Given the volumes of recycling materials available and the increasing limitations in international trade, re-processors increasingly want quality materials. Kerbside sort schemes produce higher quality materials compared to co-mingled schemes. An examination of the Council's co-mingled (blue) bin scheme which excludes glass has a contamination of around 15% per annum (2017/18); by contrast, the inner city kerbside sort scheme records negligible contamination as wrong items are left in the container for residents to put in their residual waste (black) bin. A fully co-mingled scheme (which includes glass) can exacerbate this as shards of glass embed themselves in materials, such as paper, which considerably reduces the quality and value of this material.
- 3.37 The Resource Association, which represents re-processors and their supply chain, advocates high-quality recycling in order to maximise the contribution recyclables can make by feeding into the circular economy. Its members handle more than 7M tonnes every year, contributing over £3.3B to UK GDP and employ over 12,500 people. In its Manifesto for Resources, it proposes a ban on co-mingled collections which include glass:

*'Collection systems that mix glass with other materials are unable to separate glass efficiently without contaminating other material streams. Poor loading and unloading of vehicles, breakages of glass containers and aging Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) are unable to separate glass*

*efficiently and consistently. Glass shards in the fibre stream (paper and card) cause real problems for paper manufacturers that are costly to resolve and reduce the value of materials that can be realised by local authorities.'*

3.38 As noted above in Section 3.20 above, building on the CCEN report the Council is a partner in an Invest NI funded Collaborative Network. The earlier study showed that improving recyclable quality could add considerable value to the NI economy; in particular, on glass the report noted:

- There were strong drivers within Encirc (glass manufacturer) to increase/maximise the level of recycle glass used in the manufacturing process. Contamination levels however must be less than 1%;
- Local re-processors consider that co-mingled collected glass is too highly contaminated and this gets used for lower value applications and exported;
- If more local glass was available from separated collection systems, Encirc would use this to grow its business and increase the recycle within its products.

3.39 Closely associated with quality is the value derived from the recyclable materials. An examination of market prices (see Table 2), shows that the income from separate collections of mixed glass V MRF co-mingled glass favours the former by around £35 per tonne.

*Table 2 – Market Prices (Glass)*

£/tonne	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Mixed Glass (separate collection)	10-20	9-19	10-20	9-19
MRF Glass	-25-5	-25-5	-25-5	-25-4

Source: *letsrecycle.com*

3.40 The revised Waste Framework Directive (2008 – rWFD) emphasises quality alongside tonnage as performance measures. In NI, the Waste Regulations (NI) 2011<sup>8</sup> highlight separate collection is expected for four materials (paper, metal, plastic, glass), unless it is technically, economically or environmentally impractical (TEEP) to do so. The Department for the Environment (DOE) sent a letter to councils outlining their legislative obligations surrounding separate collection

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<sup>8</sup> This legislation transposes the rWFD into Northern Ireland

obligations, particularly when councils were considering new collection arrangements. In this regard, the proposed wheelie-box collection scheme delivers this obligation and reduces the potential for legal challenge.

- 3.41 In light of the facts above, the Notice of Motion to commit the Council *'to increasing household recycling across the city of Belfast...(and)... to introducing glass recycling in households across the city of Belfast as soon as possible'* is to be welcomed. What is increasingly apparent is the need to emphasis collection of quality materials, which the wheelie-box scheme as outlined in the Waste Framework delivers upon and approving this approach as outlined in Section 3.28 following consideration of the pilot will progress this and set an example of best practice for NI and the UK. In terms introducing these measures as soon as possible, given that transition from a blue bin to a wheelie box scheme will take time and resources, an OBC and programme of work has been developed which will require capital support. Based on a successful pilot, it is expected that a further submission will be made to the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) for support that could alleviate some of these costs. The schedule for these steps mean however that any roll-out is likely to take between 3-4 years as outlined in the Section above. In light of this information, Members are asked to note the actions being taken which support the November Notice of Motion.

#### Behavioural Change

- 3.42 This section of the Waste Framework concerned motivating residents to positively respond to deliver the paradigm shift needed to achieve 65% recycling rate for 2035. Members may care to note that in March 2017, the People & Communities Committee agreed that in line with the Food Waste (NI) Regulations 2015, a city-wide food waste service would be introduced using new food waste caddies and liners along with a supporting promotions campaign to remove this waste stream from the residual (black) bin. The campaign saw stickers put on all black bins and letters issued to all Belfast households; there was also a social media campaign. In 2017/18, this campaign and resident response boosted the Council's recycling rate by 4%. The uplift from the food waste campaign has plateaued however and, given that food waste makes up around 25% of the residual (black) bin, it is important to move to the Phase 2 of the Food Waste Campaign as approved in March 2017. This approach means direct engagement with residents who have yet to embrace the *'No Food Waste'* message.

- 3.43 The engagement protocol adopted in 2017 notifies householders of the contamination/food waste in the residual (black) bin, the steps required to resolve this and a graduated response where there is repeated contamination

The exact steps are that:

- (i) When contamination is first noticed (i.e. food waste identified in the bin), the crew would empty the black bin but a notification sticker on it informing the resident of the requirement to separate out food waste (Stage 1);
- (ii) Next time, the bin would be emptied and again a sticker would be put on the black bin. A letter would be sent to the resident informing them of the need to put the food into the food waste container/bin and the ramifications should they choose not to do so (Stage 2);
- (iii) Finally, the bin would not be lifted and a sticker informing the resident would be put on the bin informing them that until the food item(s) are removed, the bin would not be lifted. When the resident removes the food item(s), collection will be on the next regular scheduled collection day (Stage 3).

- 3.44 To ensure that the Council does not inadvertently commence enforcement steps against residents, when contamination is recorded at Stage 1, the household will be visited to ensure that it has appropriate receptacles for food waste. The aim would be only to take action against residents who are actively choosing not to use their food waste bin properly. If a resident contacts the Council as a result of their bin not being emptied, staff would work with them to ensure future compliance with the policy.

- 3.45 Members may care to note that by diverting food from the residual (black) bin could save the Council a further £800K per annum. Therefore, diverting food could not only make a positive contribution to the Belfast's recycling rate and minimise its carbon footprint by reducing methane production in landfill sites, but it also could generate efficiency savings to be re-invested in other initiatives supporting the Belfast Agenda. Consequently, Members are requested to approve implementation of Phase 2 of the food waste campaign.

- 3.46 Finally, recent data concerning the Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) shows that the amount of residual waste received at these facilities has started to overtake recyclable materials. In 2018, WRAP examined Belfast's HRC

performance and reported issues with (i) potential trade waste abuse (ii) users presenting residual black bags containing recyclable materials (iii) users coming from outside the City and (iv) the need for clearer communications.

- 3.47 Following the report, a WRAP led working group of officers from Councils was formed to address these issues. Arising from meetings, a Waste Acceptance Policy is being developed to tackle the unlawful disposal of commercial waste and ensure that residents continue to receive a valued and efficient service from the HRCs. The Service will bring a report outlining this approach to a future Committee meeting in due course.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.48 The costs associated with this report are planned for within the revenue estimates for 2019/20 and extension of the WRAP Collaboration Agreement is £30,000 for 2019/20.

(includes cost of proposed Members study visit).

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

- 3.49 There are no equality, good relations or rural needs issues associated with this report.”

The Director of City Services addressed a number of queries raised by the Members in relation to the proposed rollout of the scheme.

The Committee adopted the recommendations, as outlined in 2.1 of the report, points 1-6, in relation to progressing the implementation of the Waste Framework.

In respect of the Motion to introduce glass recycling (November 2018), it was agreed that a detailed options paper be submitted to a future meeting which would consider the feasibility of an earlier introduction of glass recycling in households across the City of Belfast.

**External Consultations on Packaging  
and Packaging Waste**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 As agreed at the April 2019 People and Communities Committee, this update is to provide Committee with a copy

of the relevant responses from the Council and arc21 to recent consultations relating to Packaging and Packaging Waste.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked:**

- To retrospectively adopt the consultation responses to the Reforming the UK Packaging Producer Responsibility Scheme, Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales & NI and Plastic Packaging Tax as submitted by the Council and arc21 earlier this summer.

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 Members may be aware of a recent series of consultations from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) relating to packaging and packaging waste. These are likely to have a considerable impact upon the waste and resources sector in the UK in general and serve to provide further justification for the Council in its approach to target improving the collection of quality materials from householders.**

**3.2 The three consultations are as follows:**

1. Reforming the UK Packaging Producer Responsibility Scheme (PPRS);
2. Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales & NI (DRS); and
3. Plastic Packaging Tax (PPT).

**3.3 Members may care to note that DEFRA also produced a fourth consultation entitled '*Consistency in Household and Business Collections in England*' which is not applicable to Northern Ireland.**

**Key Issues**

**3.4 Considerable change in public attitudes to the natural environment and our impact upon it is underway, highlighted by TV programmes such as '*Blue Planet*' and '*The War on Plastic with Hugh and Anita*' which expose the pollution caused poor waste and resource management. Against this background, there is increasing recognition that waste and resources management provides a considerable opportunity to address production and consumption and manage materials better. Increasingly, this is being labelled as the**

circular economy which, as a concept, seeks to rebuild economic and natural capital. As an approach, it is worth emphasising that the circular economy is not just about recycling more stuff – dealing with materials and products once they become waste – but is about a complete recasting of how materials and resources are treated throughout their production and post-production life – managing the supply chain.

- 3.5 In May 2018, the EU approved a package of legislation setting binding targets on waste and recycling to move to a more Circular Economy. There are several headline targets under the new Directive which will require Member States to recycle 65% of their municipal refuse by 2035, to separately collect hazardous waste by January 2025, to halve food waste by 2030. The EU also proposed phasing out landfilling, and promoting economic instruments '*such as extended producer responsibility schemes*' (EPR).
- 3.6 A separate directive was also approved on Packaging Waste to ensure that 70% of packaging is recycled by 2030 (this is different for individual packaging materials, for example 30% for wood, 55% for plastic, 75% for glass and 85% for paper). Member States had two years to incorporate the Circular Economy Package into national legislation, followed by another two to three years to implement changes.
- 3.7 When published, the UK Government committed to backing the packages.
- 3.8 In the UK, in 2017 the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) produced the Clean Growth Strategy and highlighted that (a long overdue) Waste & Resources Strategy for England was due imminently which, combined with the Government's Industrial Strategy would have '*strong commitments on resources productivity as a critical contribution to a successful economy*'.
- 3.9 In December 2018, DEFRA published the Waste & Resources Strategy which included commitments on revising the extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes for a variety of materials (packaging included) and the introduction of a deposit return scheme. On initial review, the proposals around packaging could see retailers and producers expected to pay considerably greater sums under EPR (as much as £1Bn) and, in order to inform the finalisation of this approach, DEFRA undertook a series of comprehensive consultation exercises. The responses from these consultations will be

used to inform Government thinking and are likely to generate further consultations later this year or later in 2020.

- 3.10 Responses to the three consultation papers relevant to Northern Ireland have been developed by arc21 and a further review has been undertaken by Council officers to the consultations to add a city perspective to these (see Appendices 2 and 3). They are the subject of this Committee paper and a summary of each is provided below:

**Reforming the UK Packaging Producer  
Responsibility Scheme (PPRS)**

- 3.11 Recognising that the EU impact of packaging is locked in at the design stage, this consultation seeks views on measures to reduce the amount of unnecessary and difficult to recycle packaging and increase the amount of packaging that can and is recycled, through reforms to the packaging producer responsibility regulations.
- 3.12 It also proposes that the full net costs of managing packaging waste are placed on those retailers, producers and others within the supply chain who use packaging and who are best placed to influence its design. This is consistent with the polluter pays principle, EPR and promoting a shift towards the Circular Economy.
- 3.13 In the UK, a system of producer responsibility for packaging has been in place since 1997. Starting 20 years ago, this has helped to drive recycling of packaging waste from 25% to 64.7% in 2016. Over this period, the UK has met all of its national and EU packaging waste recycling targets, and the cost of compliance to business has been kept low when compared to other EU Member States.
- 3.14 Like any system that is over 20 years old however it is in need of reform. Stakeholders have expressed concerns over the transparency of the system including how income from the sale of evidence has supported packaging waste recycling; that councils receive limited direct financial support for managing packaging waste; and that there is not a level playing field for domestic reprocessing.
- 3.15 Government's ambitions have increased too and in recent months there has also been a rise in public consciousness when it comes to the need to tackle packaging waste. DEFRA has indicated the need to: reduce substantially unnecessary and difficult to recycle packaging; make more packaging designed to be recyclable; have more packaging waste be



recycled; and to have more packaging to be made from recycled material.

- 3.16 DEFRA also wants fewer packaging items to be littered and for it to be easier for people and businesses to recycle their packaging waste. Reforming the packaging waste system addresses these ambitions and the commitments made by all UK devolved administrations.
- 3.17 For Belfast, the response submitted proposed placing greater responsibility onto those within the packaging chain and, should this approach be adopted, under current proposals the Council would receive additional financial support of around £4M per annum to assist in paying for the collection and recycling of packaging, as well as contribute towards some of the costs associated with littering.

Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme  
in England, Wales and NI (DRS)

- 3.18 While waste policy is a devolved responsibility, and the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland administrations can decide policy separately, DEFRA wants to ensure that, as far as possible, their approach to DRS forms part of a coherent UK-wide system. The Government and devolved administrations are therefore working closely together on this policy area. This consultation was undertaken jointly by the UK and Welsh Governments and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in NI (DAERA).
- 3.19 As the Assembly is not sitting, the UK Government, in discussion with DAERA, consulted on their behalf. DAERA officials have informed DEFRA that they have no evidence that NI stakeholders or Ministers would not wish to participate in a consultation on options for a DRS.
- 3.20 The consultation sets out details on how a DRS could be managed, financed and operated. and proposes that the materials to be included in a DRS are PET and HDPE plastic bottles, steel and aluminium cans, and glass bottles. It includes a broad range of drinks, including water, soft drinks, juices, alcohol, and milk-containing drinks, when sold in containers made of these materials.
- 3.21 The consultation sets out two options for a DRS, both of which cover the same materials and drinks outlined above, but differ in terms of the size of the drinks containers in-scope. The options are:

- the '*all-in*' model, which would not place any restrictions on the size of drinks containers in-scope of a DRS; and
- the '*on-the-go*' model, which would restrict the drinks containers in-scope to those less than 750ml in size and sold in single format containers. This model would target drinks beverages most often sold for consumption outside of the home (while '*on-the-go*').

3.22 Responses to this consultation will help DEFRA consider the merits of introducing a DRS. The aim of the UK and Welsh Government and DAERA is to ensure that, should a DRS be introduced, it will be easy for consumers to return drinks containers, leading to increased recycling rates and a reduction in littering. Following the passage of DRS-related legislation, there will be a short period of further formal consultation on specific regulatory measures in early 2020.

3.23 For Belfast, as highlighted by arc21, the position of NI is different from GB in that there are different considerations (e.g. market conditions, base costs, land border with the RoI, council functions &c.) The key consideration however concerns the timing; introducing a DRS in advance of, or in tandem with Packaging Responsibility Reform is likely to cause great confusion and complexity in the market. From an operational impact perspective, a DRS should only be considered following the introduction of the Packaging Responsibility Reform to compensate for any apparent shortfalls within the EPR scheme.

#### Plastic Packaging Tax (PPT)

3.24 At Budget 2018, government announced that from April 2022 it would introduce a world-leading new tax on the production and import of plastic packaging with less than 30% recycled content, subject to consultation. Plastic packaging accounts for 44% of plastic used in the UK, but 67% of plastic waste, and over 2 million tonnes of plastic packaging is used each year. The majority of this is made from new, rather than recycled plastic.

3.25 The Government's call for evidence last year, which received a record 162,000 responses, highlighted that recycled plastic using is often more expensive than using new plastic, despite its lower environmental impacts. The Government wants to shift the economic incentives involved in the production of more sustainable plastic packaging, encouraging greater use of recycled plastic and helping to reduce plastic waste.

This complements the government's proposals for reformed Packaging Producer Responsibility regulations.

- 3.26 The consultation outlines the Treasurer' proposal for how the tax will work and contains a number of questions relating to this. For example, which packaging should be in scope of the tax, how to assess recycled content, and which businesses will be liable for the tax? Government is seeking views on the best design options.
- 3.27 Ultimately, this proposed tax will act as the '*pull mechanism*' with the Reform of the Packaging Producer Responsibility being the '*push*' to change how plastic packaging is managed. If the proposed measures are introduced it will be important to ensure the balance between the '*pull*' and '*push*' mechanisms are appropriate and can be rebalanced if required. If Government proceeds with this tax, the Council would clearly support arc21 recommendations that the funds received are used in a manner consistent with the measures of the Packaging Producer Responsibility Reform in each of the devolved administrations, particularly regarding supporting councils' endeavours.
- 3.28 In concluding this report, Members may care to note that DEFRA have stated that the responses to these consultations will help inform a new proposals and a further series of consultation exercises. These will be run alongside additional consultations on introducing the Circular Economy into the UK (and NI) and will also call for a review of supplementary legislation, policies and plans. It is anticipated that this batch of consultations will get underway later this year or early in 2020.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.29 While there may be considerable financial implications from introducing these consultations, there are no financial or resource implications associated in responding to them.

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

- 3.30 There are no Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs Implications in responding to the consultations."

The Committee retrospectively approved the following three consultation responses to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), as submitted by the Council and arc21 in relation to Packaging and Packaging Waste:

**People and Communities Committee,  
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- Reforming the UK Packaging Producer Responsibility Scheme (PPRS);
- Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales and NI (DRS);  
and
- Plastic Packaging Tax (PPT).

**Pre Consultation to Seek Views on the Successor Strategy  
to the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services referred to the significant levels of concern in recent years around alcohol and drug misuse in Belfast and the wider region. He explained that, more recently, the inter-dependency between alcohol/drugs and mental health/suicide had been recognised, as had the need for those issues to be considered more effectively together.

In recognition of this, the Department of Health had initiated a pre consultation on the successor strategy to the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2. The full consultation report and was available for download <http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/nsd-pre-consultation>

Several Members of the Committee welcomed the draft Council response that had been prepared by Council officers and made a number of comments and addendums that they requested be incorporated into the draft document in advance of it being submitted. Given the number of addendums requested, it was agreed that officers would liaise with the various Members to ensure that their comments were accurately reflected in the consultation.

As the deadline for the submission of the draft consultation response to the Department of Health (DoH) was 9th August, the Committee agreed to defer submission of the draft consultation response and requested that officers seek an extension from the Department for Health (DoH) to enable the Members' comments to be incorporated into the consultation and further agreed that the amended consultation response would be tabled at the September Committee for its endorsement prior to submission to the DoH.

**Northern Ireland Housing Executive – Chronic  
Homelessness Action Plan 2019 Consultation**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services referred to the significant levels of concern in recent years around the levels of homelessness in both Belfast and the wider region of Northern Ireland. He explained that, as a result of this, the NIHE was introducing its first Chronic Homelessness Action Plan which set out what the NIHE planned to do with the support of its partners in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors over the next three years to tackle homelessness.

A representative outlined his concern in relation to the growing homelessness problem in the City and requested that the Council investigate any Council sites that were surplus to Council requirements that might be suitable for social housing. He stated that he felt that this approach would help assist with providing a long term solution to the growing problem.

**People and Communities Committee,  
Tuesday, 6th August, 2019**

The Committee noted that the full consultation report and associated screening documents could be downloaded at <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/Working-With-Us/Partners/Consultations> and that the Council's draft response was available [here](#)

The Committee:

- endorsed the draft response to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), relating to the NIHE Chronic Homelessness Action Plan 2019; and
- agreed that that the Council should consider any Council sites, surplus to Council requirements, that might be suitable for social housing.

**Physical Programme/Asset Management**

**Waterworks Pitches (Westland)**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 Members are reminded that a new changing pavilion was built at the Westland pitch adjacent to the Waterworks in North Belfast as part of the Pitches Strategy investment. This development made the site more attractive to teams playing in the Northern Amateur Football League (NAFL).**

**1.2 The annual process of pitch allocations facilitated by League Secretaries subsequently saw a significant increase in interest for use of the site from clubs in the area. The issue of pitch allocation was not resolved for the Westland site and was raised with Council by the League Secretaries.**

**1.3 The purpose of this report is to update members of the progress to date in regards to pitch allocation at Westland and to agree the arrangements to bring this pitch into use for the 2019 and subsequent football seasons.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- (i) Agree to enter into a ground share agreement with both Westland Young Men's and St Patrick's Football Club for the Waterwork pitches (Westland).**
- (ii) Agree that this arrangement will be in place for up to five years and will be reviewed annually as part of the pitch allocation process.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1** Members are advised that over the past number of years officers have been working with football clubs, who had initially expressed an interest to League Secretaries and then confirmed this through a formal expression of interest process, for the use of the Westland pitch for Saturday fixtures, with a view to reaching a suitable agreement that would bring the pitch into use
- 3.2** Of the six teams from four clubs who had originally expressed an interest in utilising the pitch over the course of the discussion, three teams (two clubs) have formally withdrawn their interest leaving only Westland Young Men's (1st and 2nd teams) and St Patrick's Football Club (2nd team) with a formal interest.
- 3.3** Since that time officers have also been advised that the Westland Young Men's Club have further redeveloped to now only include one team and a new Westland Football Club has now formed.
- 3.4** By way of context, Members are also asked to note that Council does not directly provide 'home grounds' for sports clubs, however, there are two ways in which clubs have been able to meet the requirements of the Northern Amateur League to enter into the higher leagues.
- 3.5** Firstly, in the past, the Council entered into Facilities Management Agreements and more recently through Partner Agreements with sports clubs and organisations. These agreements were secured through publicly advertised expressions of interest. Successful applicants have used this process to provide preferential use of pitches for clubs and have, through the erection of signage, displayed the impression that these facilities are the home of specific clubs. This ability to manage the allocation process has led to a number of clubs being able to demonstrate control of the site in order to satisfy the requirements of the IFA for entry into the higher levels of the Northern Amateur League.
- 3.6** Secondly, the way in which clubs have secured use of facilities is by bringing investment to the asset, such as the Ulster Council of the GAA, Clarendon Development Association, Suffolk FC etc. Depending on the source of the funding, it is usual for terms and conditions to be attached to the funding / investment. Normally one of the requirements

will be to have security of tenure, i.e. the funding body will seek to ensure that the funding will be used for the purpose for which it was intended and will seek to ensure that the applicant (recipient of the funding) will secure the benefit of the funding. Therefore sports clubs have sought to secure funding from a variety of sources and have used this to upgrade Council facilities and in return they have sought security of tenure which effectively enables them to secure use of the pitch for their own use and meet the requirements of the IFA for entry to higher levels of the Northern Amateur League.

- 3.7 In an attempt to bring the Waterworks (Westland) discussion to a resolution, officers have hosted a collective meeting with all 3 teams in an attempt to reach an agreement around a potential ground share arrangement.
- 3.8 At this meeting a suggestion for a three way ground share arrangement was discussed and it was agreed that the viability of this would be further explored with league secretaries, who are responsible for the development of the fixtures which includes pitch allocation.
- 3.9 A meeting with a representative from the league secretaries and the N.I Amateur League was facilitated on 13th May 2019 and it was confirmed that a three way ground share arrangement was not a workable solution in terms of the requirement for 'home & away' matches on alternative weeks, however they did confirm that a two way ground share arrangement was a workable solution, which already existed across other Council pitches.
- 3.10 As discussed and agreed at the North Area Working Group in February 2019, if no agreement could be reached then a recommendation should come forward that would enable the pitch to be brought into use for the 2019 football season.
- 3.11 In an attempt to bring this matter to a conclusion officers have referred back to the original expression of interest process and the two remaining clubs that had formally expressed an interest at that stage (i.e. Westland Young Men's and St Patrick's Football Club). Given that the Westland Football Club is essentially a new club, their interest has not been formally registered as part of the initial expression of interest process and therefore was not being further considered as part of this process.
- 3.12 As a result of the above it is recommended that the Council proceed to enter into a ground share arrangement for the

**Westland Young Men's and St Patrick's Football Club to utilise the Waterworks (Westland) pitch beginning with the 2019 football season for a period of up to five years, to be reviewed annually as part of the pitch allocation process.**

**3.13 Financial and Resource Implications**

None.

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

**A formal expression of interest process was carried out which was open to all football clubs in the area. Over time a number of clubs/teams have withdrawn leaving Westland YM and St Patrick's FC as the only clubs remaining from the original list."**

A Member raised concern at the lack of community consultation and engagement in respect of the proposal and stated that, as a result, he would be unable to support the recommendation.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Magee,  
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations as set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report in relation to the proposed ground share agreement with Westland Young Men's and St Patrick's Football Club for the Waterworks Pitches (Westland).

On a vote by show of hands, ten Members voted for the proposal and five against and it was declared carried.

The Committee noted that any decision would be subject to equality screening.

**Facilities Management Agreement –  
Suffolk Football Club**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 To advise elected Members of the approaching termination date of the Facilities Management Agreement with Suffolk Football Club and to seek approval as to the future relationship with this club.**



**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to recommend that:**

- **The Facilities Management Agreement dated 9th August 2012 be terminated in line with its maximum term of 7 years. It is further recommended that Suffolk Football Club are offered preferential use of facilities at this location for a period of 10 years in recognition of their initial capital investment in development of the pitch and the ongoing management and maintenance of the site entirely at the expense of the club.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1 Up until May 2017, Suffolk Football Club had two Facilities Management Agreements (FMA) in place on a number of pitches at the playing fields at Carnamore Park. The FMA from 2008 terminated in May 2017 and control of the three pitches it related to reverted to Belfast City Council.**
- 3.2 A second agreement, in place since August 2012, related to a single pitch at the same site. This pitch had been disused for many years. Suffolk Football Club applied for Alpha funding to carry out the necessary drainage works to bring the pitch back into use. The work was carried out at no cost to Belfast City Council and the reinstated pitch was given into the control of Suffolk Football Club under the seven year FMA dated August 2012. No financial support accompanied the FMA and the club maintained the pitch entirely at their own expense.**
- 3.3 In 2014, as part of the capital programme, the Council improved the facilities associated with the Suffolk Football Club pitch, installing new changing and meeting facilities in the form of modular buildings. These facilities have to date also been managed and maintained by the club at their expense. The club have been playing at IFA intermediate league standard at this site.**
- 3.4 Members will recall that Facilities Management Agreements across sports sites are to be phased out. A report submitted to the People and Communities Committee in August 2016, authorised officers to engage with Suffolk Football Club and other clubs in similar circumstances to regularise arrangements for the management of sites after FMAs terminate.**

- 3.5 Council officers engaged with Suffolk Football Club over several months and are recommending that the club be offered preferential use of this single pitch at Suffolk Playing fields, in recognition of their considerable financial investment over the last seven years in the management and maintenance of this pitch and its facilities. The offer of preferential use would align the club's position to that agreed by the People and Communities Committee in May 2017 for the facility at Clarendon Playing fields.
- 3.6 The financial investment of the club into this site in the last seven years, over and above the initial £30,700 grant for pitch improvement works, has amounted to £105,000 made up of annual maintenance and management expenditure of £15,000 on the buildings and pitch.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.7 All income achieved from bookings for this pitch will now revert to the Belfast City Council and will be used to offset the annual maintenance costs, which had previously been the responsibility of Suffolk Football Club.
- 3.8 The £10,000 transition payment made available to some other FMA holders on termination of their agreement will not apply in this case as the FMA with Suffolk Football Club was not supported by any financial contribution by the Council and the club will not be at a financial detriment by the new arrangement.

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

- 3.9 There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications associated with this report."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Request for Review of Greater Village Regeneration  
Trust (GVRT) – Blythfield Lease**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 To bring to the attention of Members a request from Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT) in relation to the terms of their lease for Blythfield 3G pitch and pavilion and to request authorisation to review the terms of the lease.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee authorise officers from Estates and City and Neighbourhood Services to engage with GVRT to review the terms of the current lease.
- Should relevant officers find cause to support any or all of the requested changes in respect to the issues raised by GVRT as at 3.7 below that these are directly passed to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1** Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT) is an urban regeneration charity based in the Village area of South Belfast. It delivers a range of inter-related programmes that seek to improve the quality of life for local residents. Its primary remit is to address housing unfitness, while dealing with educational under-achievement, worklessness, lack of community space, health and well-being concerns and improving community cohesion.
- 3.2** At its meeting on 19th August 2016 the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at the recommendation of the People and Communities Committee, approved the granting of a ten year lease to Greater village Regeneration Trust for Blythefield Open Space. This site is located in an area bordered by Sandy Row and Donegall Road. In 2009 a polymeric MUGA and changing pavilion was provided as part of a regeneration project funded by BRO but on completion and under council management the facility was significantly underused.
- 3.3** In 2016 GVRT made a successful application to Sport NI for £100,000 funding to convert the polymeric surface to artificial grass (3G) to increase the appeal of the facility to the local community and maximise on its potential to address the promotion of health and wellbeing in the area.
- 3.4** In order to meet the requirements of Sport NI, GVRT required security of tenure to enable the facility to function for a period of 10 years and to satisfy this requirement it was agreed a lease would be provided from the date of completion

transferring control of the pitch and small changing room pavillion to GVRT. Works were carried out by a contractor appointed by GVRT and council officers had no part in the project management of the works.

- 3.5 A practical completion certificate was issued by the contractor on 23rd February 2018 and the lease is dated 22nd May 2018. There were, however, a significant number of defects to the pitch which rendered it unplayable until early 2019. A defects correction certificate was finally issued on 30th May 2019.
- 3.6 GVRT pay an annual rent of £1,400 for the pitch and the two room pavilion and the current lease requires the leasee to be responsible for taking out buildings and contents insurance, the current premium being £9,754. The leasee is also responsible for all maintenance.
- 3.7 The trust have approached officers of CNS to request that the lease is reviewed to align the terms to match those of other community focused assets within the department. Specifically:
- The responsibility for premises insurance reverts to the council in order that the current premium can be reduced to divert funds back into programming activity;
  - The council take on the responsibility for maintenance of the small changing pavilion as the trust believe this is outside their expertise; and
  - That the boundary of the lands held under the lease is reviewed.
- 3.8 The trust propose they remain responsible for maintenance of the pitch and with appropriate training will carry out the standard occupier's Health and Safety duties associated with the pavilion building and which largely consist of regular legionella flushing and fire checks.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.9 There will be an increase in insurance costs of £500pa associated with the council taking on responsibility for the premises insurance for the pavilion building.
- 3.10 There will be a requirement for the Property Maintenance unit and their contractor's team to undertake compliance and inspection duties for this building and potentially to carry out maintenance. Should both of these responsibilities transfer back to the council on review of the lease there will be a small

impact on budgets. This impact would be quantified for inclusion in a report to Strategic Policy and Resources.

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

3.11 None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Review of Management Arrangements  
for the Pitch at Sally Gardens**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the Management Arrangements at Sally Gardens.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- i. agree to extend the current management agreement in respect of the 3G pitch and changing pavilion to 31st March 2020 in line with other BCC revenue contracts with the group;
- ii. agree that a review of arrangements is carried out in advance of this period ending to determine the effectiveness of the arrangements and recommend future requirements.

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

3.1 The Committee is reminded that at its meeting on 9th February 2016 it received a report which set out the arrangements agreed under Local Government Reform in respect of land and facilities at Sally Gardens, which had previously come under the Lisburn City Council boundary.

3.2 In subsequent meetings the Committee approved a pilot management arrangement in respect of the newly constructed 3G artificial turf pitch. It was agreed at meetings in April 2016, September 2016 and in February 2017 to pilot a management process. This was initially piloted and reviewed and

subsequently extended to allow adequate time to consider the arrangement.

- 3.3 The Committee is reminded that a changing pavilion was completed in August 2017. Jointly funded by the Council and the Department for Communities, this enables matches to be played on the facility thus making it more attractive to users, existing and potential. The opening and closing of the new changing pavilion is undertaken by the Association who also clean the facility. Maintenance is a Council responsibility.
- 3.4 While satisfied with the arrangement, the Association stated that the short term nature of the agreement creates an element of uncertainty and as such it is unable to fully plan ahead. In response to this, Committee reviewed the existing agreement in August 2017 and agreed to extend the period to 3 years, with a review carried out by officers and a report provided to Members in advance of this period ending.
- 3.5 Feedback from the Park Manager and the Council's Booking Office have confirmed that the arrangement with the Association continues to work well and that they have fulfilled the duties required of them. It has also been noted that the Association deals with issues around unauthorised use and reports any damage to the facility, normally the fencing. To address this particular issue the Association has put in place an intervention programme with local young people and while still in its early stages appears to be working.
- 3.6 Committee should note that the Association also manage the Community Centre and is able to provide a joined up offering of services to the community and integrate the pitch with wider community activities. To support the management of the centre and the delivery of the community programme, the Association receive a revenue support grant of £55,183 which is reviewed and agreed annually within council's Community Development support programme.
- 3.7 In order to align the time-frame of this funding agreement with Poleglass Community Association with other BCC funding arrangements with the group, committee are asked to extend the current contract period to the end of this financial year, 31st March 2020. This will permit sufficient time for officers to engage with the Association in order to complete a review of all the existing arrangements with the group to determine their effectiveness, consider alignment with other council arrangements of this type and inform future requirements.

- 3.8 The monthly management fee of £3,666 includes match bookings. Bookings and income are processed through the Council's Pitch Booking line. An agreed method is in place to deal with last minute bookings on site.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.9 The monthly management fee has been incorporated within the area budget and includes management of the new pavilion.

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

- 3.10 There are no known Equality or Good Relations/Rural Needs Assessment issues associated with this report."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**Financial Reporting - Quarter 4 2018/19**

The Committee was updated in respect of the financial position of the People and Communities Committee for Quarter 4, which confirmed an over spend of £256k for that period. This represented 0.3% of the budget which was well within the acceptable variance limit of 3%.

The Committee noted that, in financial terms, it had been a difficult year for the Council. The Primark fire and changes to the rules on holiday pay had led to an additional funding requirement of £3.7m. In order to try and protect general reserves, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed not to re-allocate any in-year underspends and to use any year end balances to support the £3.7m funding requirement. The year-end position was that £2.2m of balances were available, arising from overall departmental underspend of £1.1m, capital financing underspend of £1m and specified reserve allocation of £0.15m less rates clawback of £0.05m. This had resulted in £1.5m of general reserves being used to finance the remaining balance. Given this position, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 21st June, had agreed that no further reallocations or cash flow payments would be considered until the Quarter 1 2019/20 position had been presented to the Committee at its August meeting.

The Committee noted the year-end financial position.

**Operational Issues**

**Proposal for Naming New Streets and the  
Continuation of an Existing Street**

The Committee approved:

**People and Communities Committee,  
Tuesday, 6th August, 2019**

- the naming in respect of Carolan Park, Off Carolan Road, BT7, Rosepark Gardens, Off Upper Newtownards Road, BT4, Diamond Gate, Off Diamond Gardens, BT10; and
- the continuation of an existing street, namely Ormonde Gardens, Off Castlereagh Road, BT5.

**Proposal for Dual Language Street Signs**

The Committee approved the application to erect a second nameplate in Irish at Dunmisk Park and Dunmisk Terrace.

**Request for the Hire of Botanic Gardens  
for a Series of Music Events**

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the use of the Boucher Road Playing Fields and the Great Lawn at Botanic Gardens for a number of music events between 2020 and 2023.

During discussion, several Members highlighted their concern in regard to the number of underage youths who often attended these events and found themselves in vulnerable or dangerous situations. Concern was expressed in regard to the lack of safeguards and precautions that existed to protect both the young people and the Council. A further Member suggested that officers should ensure that the Council would be able to revoke use of the venues if necessary.

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the hire of the Great Lawn at Botanic Gardens for a series of music events in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 until September to enable a more detailed report to be submitted to the Committee which would give consideration as to what contractual precautions/safeguards existed in regards to welfare support and to enable the Council to revoke use of venues if necessary.

**Chartered Institute of Waste Management (CIWM) (NI)  
Conference 2019: Life Beyond Plastics?**

The Committee agreed that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson (or their nominees) be authorised to attend the CIWM (NI) conference in the Titanic Belfast entitled 'Life Beyond Plastics?' and also, should they wish to attend, the speakers' dinner in the Titanic Hotel on the preceding evening.

**Update on Green Flag and Green Flag Heritage Award**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the Committee of the successful achievement of the twenty Green Flag awards across the City of Belfast in 2019 for the City and Neighbourhood Services Department's parks and open spaces.

The Director then detailed that the cost for submitting the proposed Green Flag applications and assessment was approximately £500 per park and confirmed that this had had been included in the department's budget.



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The Committee noted the achievement of the twenty Green Flag Awards across the City of Belfast in 2019.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Cavity Wall Insulation Research report –  
Councillor Heading to raise**

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor Heading addressed the Committee and outlined his concern regarding the widespread problems associated with cold homes in Belfast. He specifically referred to the recent Cavity Wall Insulation Report that had been published by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and stated that it would be useful if the NIHE could attend a future meeting to provide an overview of the report.

The Director of City Services reminded the Committee that, following the Committee's request for an official to address the Committee in respect of the Affordable Warmth Scheme, the Department for Community (DfC) had responded and she suggested that representatives be invited to attend a special meeting.

The Democratic Services Officer advised that a special meeting of the People and Communities Committee (Quarterly Housing meeting) was scheduled to be held on Monday, 16th September. Representatives from the NIHE would be attending this meeting to present the annual Housing Progress Report and she suggested that consideration of the NIHE Cavity Wall Insulation Report and an update in respect of the Affordable Warmth Scheme be added as agenda items.

The Committee agreed that:

- consideration of the NIHE Cavity Wall Insulation Report and an update in respect of the Affordable Warmth Scheme would be added as agenda items to the Special People and Communities Quarterly Housing meeting scheduled to take place on Monday, 16th September; and
- given the recent response from the Permanent Secretary, following the Committee's request for an official to address the Committee in respect of the Affordable Warmth Scheme, an invitation would be extended to the Department for Community (DfC) to attend the aforementioned meeting.

**Future Fossil Fuel Development –  
Councillor Smyth to raise**

Following advice from the Director of City Services, Councillors McMullan and O'Hara left the meeting in that there could potentially be a conflict of interest in the future given that they were Members of the Council's Planning Committee.

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Councillor Smyth outlined to the Committee a number of reasons why he felt that the Council should adopt a policy in relation to the rejection of all future fossil fuel extraction planning applications within the Council boundary. He advised that he had been advised by the City Solicitor that the Council could not adopt such a position legally, due to the pre determination of planning applications and he sought a report which would provide some clarity regarding the matter.

It was agreed:

- that advice would be sought from the City Solicitor as to what position, if any, the Council could adopt in relation to the Council agreeing to reject all future fossil fuel extraction planning applications within the Council boundary and that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the appropriate Committee; and
- that the report would consider the position adopted by other Local Authorities in Northern Ireland.

**High Hedge Complaints – Councillor McMullan to raise**

In response to a request from the Councillor McMullan in respect of the cost to ratepayers in making complaints about high hedges, the Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting:

- that would consider the current charge to submit a high hedge complaint and consider the feasibility of reducing this fee, taking into consideration the fee charged by other Local Authorities; and
- that would provide greater clarity around the current assistance provided by the Council to its ratepayers in respect of mediation and advice and how this could be extended.

**Cloth Nappies – Councillor Mulholland to raise**

In response to a request from the Councillor Mulholland the Committee agreed that officers would submit a report to a future meeting which would consider the feasibility of the Council providing an additional cloth nappy kit for use by Belfast City Council ratepayers.

Chairperson

## City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 7th August, 2019

### MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairperson);  
Alderman Kingston; and  
Councillors S. Baker, Beattie, Brooks, Ferguson,  
Flynn, Graham, Hanvey, Heading, Howard,  
T. Kelly, Lyons, McLaughlin, O'Hara and Whyte.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;  
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and  
Development; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Alderman Spence and Councillors Garrett, Murphy and Nicholl.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 5th June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to item 7(b) – Future Arrangements for Committee – Strategic Workshops, in that he was on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, which had sought approval to present the Belfast Harbour Strategy at a future meeting, and left the meeting whilst the matter was under consideration.

### **Restricted Items**

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

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

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,  
Wednesday, 7th August, 2019**

**Update on City of Music Programme**

The Director of Development informed the Members that the ten-year Cultural Strategy, which was being developed currently, set out a number of strategic projects, including, as had been approved by the Committee on 7th March, 2018, a commitment to bid for UNESCO City of Music status.

He reviewed the rationale behind the decision to apply for such status and confirmed that work would focus primarily upon delivering a more joined-up and visible music offer, whilst increasing opportunities for production and civic engagement in music across the City on a permanent basis. Significant music-related activity had taken place or was due to take place throughout 2019/20, including the provision of ongoing support for home-grown activity and of funding for one-off events, which had helped to strengthen the profile of Belfast as a culturally vibrant destination, in line with the objectives of the Belfast Agenda. Further music development activity would also be supported throughout the year, as part of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Action Plan for 2019/20 and the ongoing City Centre Revitalisation Programme.

The Director reported that, in addition to the funding of one-off events and to build upon the success of the Amplifier Programme of 2018/19, an open call had been undertaken to invite project proposals from organisations producing music-related events between October 2019 and March 2020, in order to complement the wider cultural activity taking place in the City. Twelve proposals had been received, all of which had met the eligibility criteria. Of those, four had met the quality threshold of 65% and, accordingly, he recommended that funding totalling £52,555 be allocated as follows:

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Event/Activity</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Moving On Music	Brilliant Corners Jazz Festival 2020	£8,105
Arts Ekta	Connections 2020	£15,000
Duncairn Centre for Culture and Arts	Joining the Dots Creative Collective and 100 Club Events	£14,450
Oh Yeah Music Centre	NI Music Prize 2019	£15,000

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Presentations**

**Draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan/Draft Open Spaces Strategy**

(Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control, attended in connection with this item.)

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,  
Wednesday, 7th August, 2019**

The Director of Planning and Building Control reminded the Committee that it had granted approval to formulate a Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan for the City, alongside the development of a new Open Spaces Strategy.

He provided an overview of the draft Plan and confirmed that it would respond to national and regional policy approach and priorities and guide more detailed strategies and action plans over time. The Plan acknowledged the benefits and multi-functionality of green and blue infrastructure assets across the City, with green assets including parks, playing fields, amenity open space, trees, garden and countryside and blue assets comprising rivers, water bodies and sustainable drainage systems. The overall network of assets would, he pointed out, result in wide-ranging benefits in terms of, for example, health and wellbeing and biodiversity and environmental resilience and would meet many of the objectives set out within the Belfast Agenda.

He reminded the Committee further that it had granted approval to undertake a consultation exercise on the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan and on the draft Open Spaces Strategy. In view of the synergies between the documents, it had been agreed that the consultations should run concurrently. A twelve-week consultation had commenced on 17th June (available [here](#)) and a series of public engagement sessions were being held across the City in order to promote the draft documents and encourage the submission of responses prior to the closing date of 6th September. Responses would be incorporated into further draft documents and would be submitted to the Committee for approval in due course.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the Department for Infrastructure be invited to provide at the Special meeting on Infrastructure issues taking place on 28th August an update on the current status of the Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland, in the context of the Belfast Cycle Network.

**Growing Businesses and the Economy**

**Update on Growing the Economy**

The Director of Economic Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

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

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on progress against a series of commitments set out under the Growing the Economy pillar of the Belfast Agenda and to secure approval to proceed with a number of initiatives within this work programme. The update is in line with the activity approved by the Committee on 6th March, 2019.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i. note the Council's performance and contribution to delivering against Belfast Agenda ambitions to grow the Belfast economy, focusing on the current support for Business Start-up, Growth and Investment;**
- ii. approve the allocation of £55,000 from the existing 2019/2020 Economic Development budget to support the delivery of the Scale Up initiative, in partnership with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI, which will commence in October 2019. This funding was approved as part of the 'Growing the Economy' delivery plan that was agreed by this Committee at the meeting on 6 March 2019;**
- iii. approve the allocation of £50,000 from the existing 2019/2020 Economic Development budget to support the delivery of the social enterprise action plan. This funding was approved as part of the 'Growing the Economy' delivery plan that was agreed by this Committee at the meeting on 6 March 2019; and**
- iv. note the application submitted to join the NESTA Upstream Collaborative network, to develop new and innovative approaches to tackle educational attainment challenges.**

### **3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the Council and its partners made a series of commitments as part of the Belfast Agenda to support inclusive economic growth in the city. This work focuses on creating jobs by encouraging more new businesses to start up, driving additional investment to support growth in indigenous companies and attracting more Foreign Direct Investment.**
- 3.2 The Council has a key role in ensuring that these ambitions are met. It has statutory responsibility for business start-up and also supports small local companies that have the ambition to grow. Through its assets and influence, the Council also encourages other developments to come forward which will support the creation of new jobs by enhancing skills, providing appropriate workspace and accommodation and encouraging new investment in digital infrastructure.**
- 3.3 At its meeting on 6th March 2019, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the delivery of the Growing the Economy work plan for the 2019/20 financial year. Since April, officers have been working on a range of activities to address the challenges around low levels of start-up,**

innovation, business competitiveness and productivity. Whilst work is ongoing to deliver the 2019/20 work plan, the key achievements to date include;

- **Enterprise Awareness:** 72 females have been engaged through our female enterprise support, and we are currently in the process of working with the Department for Communities (DfC) to launch a new self-employment initiative in the Autumn, focusing on those who are unemployed or economically inactive;
- **Start a Business:** 180 individuals have been engaged in the 'Go for It' programme which has supported the development of 62 new jobs to date. We have also launched a new initiative to extend the range of support available to new starts by providing additional mentoring and access to financial and other incentives;
- **Social Enterprise and Cooperatives:** we have provided support for 10 social enterprises and cooperatives, supporting the creation of 20 jobs to date. This month we will launch a new more enhanced programme of support to grow and develop the social enterprise and cooperative sector in Belfast;
- **Innovation Factory:** we continue to deliver services through the Innovation Factory which has supported the creation of 115 jobs and houses 41 small businesses;
- **Business growth mentoring:** 50 existing businesses have accessed mentoring to support their strategic growth and development this year to date; and
- **Investment:** the Council's 'City Investment Service' was established as an 18 month pilot in mid-2018. Since then, the team has worked with 69 businesses and the cumulative investment from these businesses has been more than £90million.

- 3.4 **Recognising the importance of a partnership approach to achieve the growth ambitions in the field of enterprise support, officers have recently developed an enterprise framework that was agreed at the December 2018 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. This sets a vision for the city as a great place to start and grow a business. It outlines recommended steps to be taken for Belfast to be 'recognised for its diverse community of entrepreneurs, who benefit from a comprehensive, planned**

and coherent system of enterprise support, which fulfils their needs at all stages of the business growth life-cycle'. Aligned to these thematic priorities, officers have been working to further develop the range of support offered by the council to achieve the ambitions of the framework. Details of these activities are set out below.

#### **Support for new Start-Ups**

- 3.5 Currently, the main vehicle for providing support to new business starts in the Go for It programme. This programme is delivered on a regional basis and provides individuals with access to one to one mentoring advice to develop a business plan. While we recognise that the current programme has many benefits, there are issues with the nature of support provided and its ability to meet the needs of the new businesses that are engaging with the service – as well as the ambitions set out in the enterprise framework.
- 3.6 The Go for It programme will run until 2021 and all councils are currently considering the merits of moving forward with a similar programme or reviewing the current provision and taking a much more radical approach – that may or may involve a NI-wide programme. At a Belfast level, officers are undertaking research work to inform the approach that would most closely meet the needs of the businesses that we are engaging with – helping them to start up and providing them with the appropriate support to meet their growth ambitions. The outworking of this research will help inform our future investment approach. It is proposed that more detail on this work will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee for information and endorsement. The work will also be used to inform our future estimates process.

#### **Support for Social Enterprises and Co-operatives**

- 3.7 Over a three-year period, our tailored support to encourage the development of the social enterprise and cooperative sector has supported 93 participants creating 44 new social enterprises and cooperatives, generating 82 new jobs and securing over £820,000 in funding.
- 3.8 As part of our ongoing engagement with the social enterprise sector, we have identified ongoing challenges around access to finance to overcome barriers to starting and growing the business. Officers have been considering a range of options to address this issue. An increasingly significant funding options is the concept of crowdfunding. Working with CrowdFunder.co.uk, we have developed a pilot Belfast-specific crowdfunding proposition for the social enterprise



and cooperative sector. This pilot will provide support for developing and running a crowdfunding campaign for up to 10 social enterprises or cooperatives in the city.

- 3.9 It is proposed that the Council supports this initiative by offering match funding of up to £5,000 for each of the organisations who deliver a successful campaign. This option encourages organisations to develop and test the market, secure public buy-in and successfully attract £2,500, which will then be uplifted with funding from Belfast City Council. To access this funding, social enterprises and cooperatives will be in the early stages of developing the enterprise and will be required to go through a competitive process to access the Council funding. This approach ultimately supports the long-term sustainability of the enterprise. The total cost of the pilot will be £50,000 all of which will directly support the growth and development of the sector.
- 3.10 Members should be aware that, at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 12th April 2019, approval was given for the delivery of two pilot projects in partnership with NOW Group and USEL (Ulster Supported Employment and Learning). These pilot projects are aimed at supporting people with disabilities or health related conditions into work as well as helping new businesses including social enterprises to start up and grow. At the initial stage of development, the focus was on the hospitality sector; however as we have worked with both organisations, it is clear that there is scope to re-shape these activities to look at other sectors – and also incorporating retail outlets. This change of focus will not have any negative effect on the outputs associated with this project. Across the two pilots, up to 60 Belfast residents and up to 40 new start-ups will be supported.

#### Support to Scale and Grow

- 3.11 One of the key challenges identified through the enterprise framework is the need to encourage more businesses to scale and grow to turnover of more than £3million. Following the success of the Way to Scale Initiative in partnership with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI, officers have been working to develop the offering for businesses with growth ambitions and potential. Through last year's programme, 10 businesses accessed support which included a series of workshops, access to the entrepreneurship development programme at MIT in Boston, and a one week residential in Boston to develop market strategies and build networks support to realise the growth ambitions of their businesses . Early feedback from the Way to Scale Initiative has

demonstrated transformational results for the participating businesses. To date, participating businesses have reported generating equity funding offers up to £2m while others have seen significant increases in revenue forecasts and sales pipelines. A full evaluation of the programme is currently underway and the feedback will be used to inform future investments from the Council in this area of work.

3.12 Building on the learning from last year, the new programme of support has been enhanced to enable up to 60 businesses in the city to access support to encourage CEO transformation, business modelling and sales strategy. 10 of these businesses will then be further supported through a core programme of activity. The programme will encompass four core elements, namely:

- Belfast bootcamp for up to 60 businesses with Bill Aulet from Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Entrepreneurship Development Programme, designed to change CEO behaviour and develop high growth strategy;
- 1 week Boston Residential at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Entrepreneurship Development Programme;
- Peer-to-peer workshop series with Catalyst Inc designed to maximise peer learning and address real-time business challenges; and
- Go to Market 1 week Boston residential which focuses on go to market strategies and tactics.

3.13 The programme will be delivered in partnership with Catalyst Inc. and Invest Northern Ireland. The overall cost of the programme will be £184,750. Given the alignment with the ambitions set out in the enterprise framework, it is recommended that this is supported with Council funding of £55,000 to maximise the take-up by Belfast-based businesses. This equates to 29% of the overall programme cost. Invest NI, Catalyst Inc and the participating companies will cover the remainder of the costs.

Involvement in good practice network on addressing educational underachievement

3.14 Members may be aware of the work of NESTA, an innovation foundation that focuses on supporting the creation of collaborative networks to promote innovation and share good practice. Officers have recently responded to a call for participation in NESTA's Upstream Collaborative network, the purpose of which will be to experiment with new models that work 'upstream' of social problems, to address the underlying

**causes of need and create the conditions from which good outcomes can emerge.**

**3.15 The suggested area of focus for Belfast is educational underachievement, recognising that educational performance is one of the key determinants of young people's economic destiny and impacts hugely on their ability to secure positive employment outcomes. If successful, participation in this network will provide the Council with access to learning and resources as well as NESTA consultancy support. There may also be an opportunity to access up to £20k through to test new approaches.**

**3.16 Financial and Resource Implications**

**All new activity included in the report will be resourced from the 2019/20 Economic Development budget agreed by this Committee on 6th March 2019.**

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

**Each of the proposed projects referenced in this report is informed by statistical research, stakeholder engagement and complementary policies and strategies. The unit is currently undertaking a process of equality screening on the overall work programme, this will ensure consideration is given to equality and good relation impacts throughout the delivery of each project."**

After discussion, the Committee adopted recommendations (i), (ii) and (iv), as set out within the report.

The Committee agreed to defer until its monthly meeting in September consideration of recommendation (iii), that is, the allocation of funding of £50,000 to support the delivery of the social enterprise action plan, to allow for information to be provided on:

- how the number of co-operatives in the City might be increased, taking into account the motion on Support for Small and Medium Enterprises which in 2016 had been passed by the Council and the success of the Preston Co-operative Initiative; and
- the mechanisms in place to ensure the integrity of the Crowdfunding process, together with the cost to the Council of using that platform.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,  
Wednesday, 7th August, 2019**

The Committee agreed also that:

- future reports should, given their distinct differences, differentiate between social enterprises and co-operatives; and
- the report to be submitted to the monthly meeting in September should provide details of the initial analysis which had been undertaken around last year's Scale-up programme.

**Belfast – Boston Sister City Visit –  
Invitation to Lord Mayor**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 5th June, it had granted approval for the Chairperson and the Director of Economic Development (or their nominees), together with one officer, to participate in a Sister City trade mission to Boston from 22nd till 26th September.

The Director of Economic Development reported that the Lord Mayor had, subsequently, received from his counterpart in Boston, Mayor Martin J. Walsh, an invitation to accompany the delegation. Mayor Walsh had stated that the Belfast – Boston Sister City agreement had been the first to be signed by him since assuming Office in 2014 and had pointed to the significant benefits derived by both cities in the intervening five years.

The Director pointed to the annual Friendship Four ice hockey tournament as being one example of the tangible benefits to Belfast of the City Sister agreement and stressed that the inclusion of the Lord Mayor would demonstrate the City's continued commitment to the agreement. He added that the Council's International Unit was co-ordinating the itinerary for the visit and that the additional cost incurred by the Lord Mayor's participation would be met from the International Relations Unit's current budget.

The Committee approved the Lord Mayor's participation in the Sister City trade mission to Boston.

**Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure**

**Update on Department for Communities' Regeneration  
Guidance for Greater Clarendon and Sailortown**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report until its monthly meeting in September to enable a briefing to be held on the draft Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan and on the work of the York Street Interchange Strategic Advisory Group.

The Committee agreed also that the proposed Gamble Street rail halt alluded to within the Masterplan be raised with the Department for Infrastructure at the Special meeting on Infrastructure issues taking place on 28th August.

**City Centre Regeneration Task Force – Quarterly Update**

The Director of City Regeneration and Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

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

**1.1 To update Members in relation to work around the City Centre Regeneration Task Force.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to note the update on the City Centre Regeneration Task Force including:**

- progress around the co-commissioning of a study on city centre connectivity;
- review of non-domestic rates;
- proposed City Centre Reference Group;
- City centre living; and
- the proposal to invite representatives of Edinburgh City Council to present to the Committee lessons learnt from the ‘Edinburgh City Centre Transformation’ programme.

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 7th November 2018, agreed to establish a City Centre Regeneration Task Force, jointly chaired by BCC's Chief Executive and the Head of the Civil Service. Members were also advised that Committee would receive, on a quarterly basis, an update on the work of the Task Force.**

**3.2 An update on the work of the Task Force was provided to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 13th February. The Task Force has met four times since November 2018 and have meetings scheduled up until December 2019. A broad objective of the Task Force is to maximise the collective potential of our regeneration efforts to transform the city centre aligned to respective and collective priorities and identify an action plan accordingly. It was recognised that there was an immediate need to drive, and resource targeted city centre recovery efforts in response to the Bank Buildings fire but also to consider the longer term revitalisation and regeneration of the city centre from an integrated and sustainable perspective.**

**3.3 In terms of a medium/long term plan for city centre regeneration, there was a consensus that the Belfast City**

Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) was a solid basis upon which to take forward a refreshed action plan and prioritisation in respect of the regeneration of the city centre. BCCRIS was developed and agreed by the Council and sets out the policies, projects and priorities to underpin the regeneration and growth of the city centre and surrounding areas. The Department for Communities (DfC) have also adopted BCCRIS as one of their policies. The delivery of the outcomes within BCCRIS is however dependent upon a range of stakeholders across the public, private and third sectors, anchor institutions and the residential and business communities.

3.4 A stocktake and gap analysis of the various policies, projects and priorities in BCCRIS was undertaken to coincide with the work of the Taskforce. This included a review of what was progressing, highlighted gaps and identified how the priorities aligned with the outcomes set out in the Belfast Agenda, Programme for Government and other strategies. As previously reported this has formed the basis of the City Centre Regeneration Task Force action plan which is focused on the prioritisation of actions and projects or interventions in three thematic priority areas:

- City Resilience – medium to long-term city centre recovery plan; city centre leadership and management and catalyst development opportunities to stimulate wider regeneration;
- Re-imagining and Diversification of City Centre Land Uses – to include focused actions around increasing city centre living; use of public land to deliver on priorities and realisation of growth ambitions; enhanced open spaces and family/leisure based activities; improved tourist and cultural offering; and
- Infrastructure and Connectivity – public realm and connectivity into and around the city centre; transport strategy/car parking etc.

3.5 The Regeneration Task Force agreed various priority actions aligned to the public sector from the thematic areas. Cross-departmental work is progressing through a Joint Regeneration Group made up of BCC and central government officials. Recent priority areas that have been considered included:

**Co-commissioning of a study on reimagining City centre connectivity**

- 3.6 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 5th June, noted that the Council, in collaboration with DfC and Dfl, would commission a study to examine how the city centre should develop in a way that is accessible and welcoming for all. The commission is to be overseen by a Steering Group made up of senior members of staff within BCC, Dfl and DfC and will report directly to the City Centre Regeneration Task Force and the appropriate governance arrangement of the member organisations, i.e. Departmental Permanent Secretaries and CG and R Committee.
- 3.7 The Steering Group has had a number of successful meetings to scope out and agree the extent of the study to create a vision for the future use of the city centre. The objective of this study is to develop a shared vision for the future of the city centre reflecting how people will use the city spaces and places within the changing city landscape. The Steering Group are working to finalise the Terms of Reference and Specification for the study to enable the procurement of consultancy team to carry out the study and to create the vision.
- 3.8 To establish best practice, and to help shape the scope of this work, officers have engaged with a number of authorities and bodies, including the Institute of Place Management and Edinburgh City Council. Edinburgh are currently out to consultation on their City Centre Transformation focusing on connecting the city and transforming places. It is proposed that Committee extend an invitation to Edinburgh City Council to present and discuss the opportunities, benefits and issues experienced during their ongoing 'Edinburgh City Centre Transformation' programme at a date to coincide with the drafting of the Vision document.

**Review of Rates**

- 3.9 Members may be aware that the Department of Finance (DoF) announced a review of non-domestic rates on 9th May 2019. City centre businesses continuously raise the issue of rates in terms of their longer- term sustainability. As part of this review DoF are working in conjunction with Dfl and DfC to consider issues currently affecting high street and town centres (including rates) and facilitated an Innovation Lab on 2nd and 3rd July. This was attended by a range of key stakeholders and considered the challenges affecting city and town centres, and sought to identify recommendations to address these challenges. The Director of City Regeneration

and Development and Head of Finance represented Belfast City Council at the Innovation Lab. As this work progresses a further update will be brought back to Committee.

### City Centre Living

- 3.10 As part of the ongoing objective to increase the city population the Task Force has also considered issues affecting the delivery of housing in the city centre. This has included consideration of the definition of affordable housing and potential additional products within this definition; progression of the city centre waiting list; funding and procurement issues and consideration of how public sector and other lands can be brought forward in a strategic way to deliver on a range of housing tenures across the city. A consultation by DfC is currently underway in respect of the definition of affordable housing and the Council is preparing a response, welcoming the review which suggests a broader range of intermediate housing products be included within the definition. That response will be the subject of a report to Planning Committee on 13th August. Alongside this, NIHE are moving forward with developing the city centre waiting list and further details will be provided to members as this progresses. Members will also recall that a report was brought to Committee in June on the Strategic Sites Assessments of city centre lands in public ownership. This report identified key strategic sites in the Inner North West, Greater Clarendon and Linen Quarter with the potential to provide mixed use development including housing across a range of tenures. A workshop on the potential of these locations is to be held with Members on Wednesday 4th September at 5pm and further details will be circulated in advance.

### Establishment of a City Centre Reference Group

- 3.11 The City Centre Regeneration Task Force Action Plan included an action on creating a City Centre Reference Group to inform the ongoing work of city centre revitalisation, the work of the Task Force and wider long-term regeneration and development activities in the city centre. At its meeting on 14th June 2019, the Task Force agreed to the establishment of a City Centre Reference Group. This will enable two existing groups, the City Recovery Lead Group, established to mitigate the effects of the Bank Buildings fire, and a recently formed City Strategic Forum (Belfast City Centre Management led), to be stood down in the near future. It is recognised that there remains a requirement to continue with the City Recovery Lead Group in the short term given the issues that remain as a result of the Bank Buildings fire. However, it is intended



these will evolve into a wider and more strategic reference group consisting of a range of stakeholders across all sectors that can contribute to the range of issues and work-streams emerging from the Task Force Action Plan and wider city development issues. It is proposed this Reference Group will be chaired by the Council's Strategic Director of Place and Economy, with Belfast City Centre Management acting in a secretariat role. The remit and work of the group will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure alignment with the work of the Task Force, and in line with the emerging governance boards emerging from the Belfast Agenda.

**Presentation from the Institute of Place Management**

- 3.12 *Belfast City Council has recently obtained partner membership with the Institute of Place Management (IPM). The IPM is an international professional body that supports people committed to developing, managing and making places better. IPM work with policy makers, practitioners and providers to identify the core aspects involved in the effective management, development and marketing of places. They have recently been appointed by Government to lead the High Streets Task Force in England and deliver support to local authorities and communities who want to transform their high streets. The Co-Chair of the IPM, Professor Cathy Parker visited Belfast in mid-June. Professor Parker is regarded as an expert in place management and is one of the co-authors of the recent UK Government-commissioned report 'High Street 2030: Achieving Change'. Professor Parker attended the City Centre Regeneration Task Force and shared research and findings on city centre and high street trends and the future focus for high streets in managing the retail offering. Specifically Professor Parker made reference to the criticality of city centres for the wider economy and surrounding areas; the need for investment for successful city centres, and the importance of city leadership.*
- 3.13 Referring to the High Street Report, Professor Parker highlighted key factors that had been identified in transforming places in other towns and cities. These included strong leadership; blending expert and local knowledge; communication; involvement of young people and co-ordination of efforts. She also referenced empirical research which identified the top 25 factors for successful town and city centres. These included vision/strategy, appearance, activity hours, liveability, experience, entertainment/leisure, recreational space, a balance of independent /chain retailers and the offer and diversity within city centres.

**3.14 Officers are currently working with the IPM to review the emerging action plans for the city centre to ensure alignment with best practice and to maximise the potential of priority projects to deliver the ambitions of the city centre.**

**3.15 Financial and Resource Implications**

**None directly associated with this report.**

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

**None associated with this report. The Council's Equality and Diversity Officers will be consulted on any future changes to strategies or plans that are currently in place."**

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

- i. endorsed the proposal to invite representatives of Edinburgh City Council to a future meeting to outline the lessons learned from the Edinburgh City Centre Transformation Programme;
- ii. agreed that the Terms of Reference for the proposed study on re-imagining City centre connectivity be circulated to the Members;
- iii. agreed that the stakeholders for the proposed City Centre Reference Group should include representatives of the culture and arts and the community sectors; and
- iv. agreed that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive be invited to brief the Committee on issues associated with City centre living, including the development of a City centre housing waiting list.

**Briefing – Infrastructure Presentation**

The Director of City Regeneration and Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief Members on key city infrastructure issues in advance of presentations from Northern Ireland Water (NI Water), Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads and Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHC) at the special City Growth and Regeneration Committee being held on 28th August.

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to note this report and identify any strategic city infrastructure questions in advance of the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28th August 2019.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Background**

- 3.1 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 5th June, agreed to receive presentations from NI Water and NITHC. Representatives of DfI Roads will also attend to present the 2019/2020 Annual Report.
- 3.2 The Belfast Agenda recognises that infrastructure is key to the delivery of sustainable development and identifies that infrastructure planning for Belfast needs to be taken forward in a strategic and integrated way. A core goal of the Agenda is to work in partnership to plan for sustainable urban infrastructure.

**Belfast Infrastructure Study**

- 3.3 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 13th September 2017, agreed to commission the Belfast Infrastructure Study. The study is intended to present a realistic phased approach to infrastructure delivery to support the growth outlined in the Belfast Agenda. Arup were appointed to develop the Infrastructure Study in July 2018 and are currently working to finalise a draft report by end of summer 2019. City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 13th February 2019, agreed to hold a Members Briefing at which the initial out-workings of the Infrastructure Study will be presented. This will be scheduled during autumn 2019.

**Infrastructure Initiatives**

- 3.4 Below is a brief overview of strategic infrastructure initiatives relevant to NI Water, NITHC and DfI Roads and a summary of each organisation's responsibilities. The brief descriptions below are intended to assist Members when considering strategic city infrastructure questions in advance of the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28th August.

**NI Water**

- 3.5 NI Water is a Government Owned Company and non-departmental public body within DfI. NI Water was set up in April 2007 as the sole provider of water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland.  
Living with Water Programme (LWWP)

- 3.6 The LWWP is led by DfI's Water and Drainage Policy Division. LWWP is developing a Strategic Drainage Infrastructure Plan for Belfast (Belfast SDIP) to manage the flooding risk in Belfast, address the risk of infraction proceedings under the Water Framework and Urban Waste Water Treatment Directives in respect of Belfast Lough, and support economic growth.
- 3.7 The sewerage networks and wastewater treatment works serving Belfast require significant upgrades to facilitate future growth and development. One of the key aims of LWWP is to support economic growth. In addition, the Executive's North Eastern Flood Risk Management Plan identifies the LWWP as the primary measure for managing future flood risk in Belfast. There have been a number of flooding events across Belfast on several occasions in recent years and Belfast is the largest of the 20 significant flood risk areas (SFRAs) identified by the EU Floods Directive Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments. This is a very significant issue for Belfast in that the finances have not yet being secured to deliver the upgrade requirements. If these finances are not secured development in the city may be restricted.
- 3.8 At the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28th August, NIW will present an overview of the LWWP, outline the work undertaken to date, and set out the proposed next steps and associated costs and timeframes.

#### Belfast Tidal Flood Alleviation Scheme

- 3.9 The Belfast Tidal project is an £18 million scheme of works led by DfI Rivers to provide a long-term approach to flooding from the sea in Belfast. The proposed scheme extends from Belfast Harbour to Stranmillis Weir and will comprise a number of different forms of both permanent and temporary flood defences. It is anticipated construction will commence in winter 2019/20 with completion the following winter 2020/21.

#### NITHC

- 3.10 NITHC is the public corporation providing public transport services in Belfast via subsidiary companies, operating under the brand name Translink. They include Metro (serves Belfast area), Ulsterbus (serves regional network), Glider and Northern Ireland Railways (NIR). Last year there were 84.5 million passenger journeys across Translink's network; the highest in over 20 years and the third year successive year of growth.

Belfast Transport Hub

- 3.11 DfI granted planning permission for the new integrated Transport Hub in March 2019. The hub forms part of the wider proposed 20 acre Weavers Cross regeneration project and is a flagship project prioritised by the NI Executive. The scheme supports the Belfast Agenda growth aspirations and is identified in the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) as one of the key transformative interventions for the city centre within the Linen Quarter Special Action Area.
- 3.12 Translink is liaising with Council on Buy Social clauses and a draft Memorandum of Understanding has been prepared and will be implemented upon appointment of the contractor. This Memorandum of Understanding agrees partnership working arrangements for Council and Translink to deliver employability and skills interventions. This will optimise the ability of those long-term unemployed and economically inactive within Belfast to access employment opportunities arising from the Buy Social requirements within the Belfast Transport Hub. This will initially focus on embedding the Construction Employment Academy model within the enabling works and construction phases of this redevelopment as a demonstrator project for the wider partnership to optimise the employment opportunities resulting from the wider redevelopment of the surrounding area.

Weavers Cross

- 3.13 Weavers Cross is the wider 20 acre proposed mixed use regeneration project that the Transport Hub will be situated within. NITHC will be engaging with a range of stakeholders including Members in the near future regarding this project.

Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) / Glider Phase One

- 3.14 BRT Phase 1 went live in September 2018 with Glider services G1 (East-West) and G2 (Titanic Quarter). The Colin Connect Transport Hub opened March 2019. Translink reported in May 2019 that the Glider has led to over 45,000 additional passenger journeys every week.

Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) / Glider Phase Two

- 3.15 BRT Phase 2 (North-South) has been included as a key project within the proposed Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD). An outline business case for BRT 2 is being prepared for the BRCD process and further details on BRT 2 will be presented to a future meeting of City Growth and Regeneration committee.

DfI Roads

- 3.16 DfI Roads is the sole Roads Authority in Northern Ireland responsible for transport policies and initiatives. DfI Roads previously presented their annual report to City Growth and Regeneration Committee in November 2018.

Park and Ride Facilities

- 3.17 Proposals for Park and Ride sites are developed under the Park and Ride Programme Board which includes representatives from DfI and Translink. An expanded Park and Ride at Blacks Road opened in November 2018 and DfI are currently developing proposals to expand Park and Ride capacity at Ballymartin, Cairnshill, Moira, Mossley, Newtownards and Sprucefield and create new facilities at Comber, Tillysburn and Trooperslane. To support the Park and Ride facilities new hard shoulder bus lanes on the M1 and M2 motorways began operation in March 2019.

York Street Interchange (YSI)

- 3.18 The YSI scheme is intended to address a major bottleneck on the strategic road network, replacing the existing signalised junctions at York Street with direct links between Westlink, M2 and M3, the three busiest roads in Northern Ireland. It will also separate strategic traffic from local traffic movements via underpasses below the existing road and rail bridges and underneath a new bridge at York Street.
- 3.19 Recognising the need for careful design to reduce the visual impact of the interchange and enhance connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, DfI Roads established a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) in January 2015. The SAG comprises statutory and community representatives. Significant engagement has been undertaken to inform design changes that will reduce the impact of the YSI on local communities and enhance connectivity.
- 3.20 The tender process to appoint a contractor to bring the scheme to a construction ready stage was undertaken in 2016. However, the tender was not awarded due to a legal challenge. The hearing to consider the legal challenge took place in the High Court between February and March 2018. The court ruled that the contract award should be set aside and the matter will have to be reconsidered by DfI. The decision was appealed by DfI in November, 2018. DfI will provide an update at the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28th August, 2019.

Belfast Bicycle Network

3.21 A key Government priority for growing a sustainable economy involves promoting a modal shift from private car usage to cycling and walking. DfI have responsibility for coordinating relevant cycling and walking policy. DfI established a Cycling Unit in 2013, published a Bicycle Strategy for NI in August, 2015 and published the draft Belfast Bicycle Network Plan for public consultation in January 2017. The consultation report was published in February 2018 however the final Network Plan has yet to be published. Members may recall that a representative from DfI's Safe and Sustainable Travel Division attended a special City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to present and update on the Belfast Bicycle Network Plan.

Residents' Parking Zones

3.22 DfI Roads has completed one Residents' Parking Zone in the Rugby Road area, which began operation in April 2018. DfI intend to carry out a project evaluation in due course taking into account the lessons learnt and subsequently a review of the Resident's Parking Zone Policy will be completed to address how schemes are delivered going forward. DfI are also designing options to progress a Residents' Parking Zone in the Iveagh Drive area that will be subject to consultation in due course. DfI will provide an update on Residents Parking Zones at the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019. Members may also recall that there was a DfI / Members meeting in May 2018 to discuss problem parking. As a follow up to this and in light of various concerns that Members have raised on the issue of problem parking, including a Notice of Motion from February 2018, DfI has advised that it will facilitate a further meeting on this issue and Members will be notified when DfI confirms a date.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.23 There are no additional resource implications associated with this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Needs Assessment

3.24 There are no Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs implications at this stage."

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed that the following issues be raised also at the meeting:

- the proposed Gamble Street rail halt alluded to within the draft Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan;

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- the current status of the Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland, in the context of the Belfast Cycle Network;
- overgrown entries and laneways;
- electric vehicle infrastructure; and
- the upgrading of existing drainage and water infrastructure.

**Update on City Centre Revitalisation Programme**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

**1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on the ongoing delivery of the City Centre Revitalisation Programme.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i. note the update on the building cordon and the anticipated timescale for the Council to receive a planning application for the next phase of rebuild;**
- ii. note the work underway to develop concept proposals for additional pop-up parks at locations in the city centre;**
- iii. note the work underway with DfI and DfC to commission a study to explore options and create a vision for the future development of the city centre enabling both pedestrian enjoyment and public transport access;**
- iv. note the emerging concept designs for lighting pilots to be brought forward for Castle Street and Castle Arcade;**
- v. approve funding up to £45,000 towards an enhanced ‘Cultural Night/Day Programme’;**
- vi. approve funding up to £5,000 to support enhanced Taste the Island activity as part of a programme of activity by the Linen Quarter BID;**



- vii. approve funding up to £4,500 to support a second Belfast Restaurant Week and weekend food market;
- viii. approve funding up to £3,000 to support the inaugural Belfast Oyster Festival to take place in the city in October 2019; and
- ix. grant a Market Licence for the Tesco 'Taste of Northern Ireland' event scheduled for 20th – 22nd September in Custom House Square.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Background**

- 3.1 Since the detailed update provided to the Committee on 5th June, officers continue to engage with key stakeholders to further develop the specific proposals being brought forward as part of the City Revitalisation Programme to enhance the vitality and sustainability of the city centre, in the context of the budget envelopes previously agreed by the SP and R Committee on 22nd February 2019. The work being progressed as part of the City Revitalisation Programme is closely aligned with the existing strategies to enhance and develop the city centre including the Belfast Agenda and Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy.

**Update on the Cordon**

- 3.2 As Members will be aware, the building façade retention schemes on Bank Buildings are now in place and the cordon has been reduced which has increased access, albeit that the road width is still significantly reduced at this location. Traders continue to raise concerns about the impact this cordon is having on their businesses, particularly those on Royal Avenue. DfI has recently introduced additional railings at Castle Junction and Royal Avenue to improve pedestrian flow and safety. A number of retailers in Royal Avenue have expressed concern over the size of the cordon, the duration of the cordon and its effect on vehicular and pedestrian access to Royal Avenue. Belfast City Council officers continue to echo these concerns from retailers to the DfI, Translink and Primark's contractor. City Council officers have received assurances from Primark that the cordon in place is as small as it can be given the nature of the work taking place, and that the current cordon is necessary to ensure the safety of those working on the site. Work is continuing to remove debris from site and it is anticipated that the planning application for the next phase of rebuild will be submitted to Council in late August / early September 2019.

**Footfall figures**

- 3.3 There continues to be ongoing challenges around footfall in the City centre. In June, footfall continued to decline in the city centre as a whole, down by 11.6% on the previous year to date. Royal Avenue continues to be impacted greatest by reduced footfall compared to the same month in the previous year (-31.0% on June 2018), with Corn Market (-11.3% on June 2019), Donegall Place (-7.3% on June 2018), Fountain Street (-3.4% on June 2019) and Anne Street (-1.8% on June 2019). Across NI, footfall is down by 1.8% on the year to date, and down across the UK as a whole by 1.4%. The wayleave permission is now in place with Gordons Chemist (55 Castle Street) to place the footfall counter on 3<sup>rd</sup> party premises for the new Castle Street footfall counter. The counter is expected to be in position in the coming weeks.
- 3.4 An update on the activity within the strands of work for the City Revitalisation Programme as previously agreed by Members is set out below.

**Physical and Environmental Improvements**

**i. Pop- Up Park and Pedestrianisation**

- 3.5 Following the removal of the temporary 'Pop-Up' Park from Castle Place on 10th May, work has been ongoing to explore a number of options for the possible provision of further temporary pop-up parks. Members should note that Buoys Park has been identified as one potential location and proposals are currently being drafted up and will be brought back to Committee in the near future for consideration. A National Day of Play event will be held at Buoys Park on 7th August to introduce the concepts of the Pop Up Park and to engage with the public to establish the preferred uses for the space on a temporary basis. Work is also underway to address the operational and safety issues associated with the space and how a temporary intervention could mitigate against these issues. A second potential location in the vicinity of the Lagan Lookout are also being investigated and further information will be provided as the concept develops. The funding to create a 'Pop-Up' Park in a new location is contained within the existing City Revitalisation Programme budget.
- 3.6 As discussed with Members at 5th June Committee meeting, following the removal of the Pop-Up Park on Castle Place and the reopening of Castle Junction enabling traffic flow, there was a significant public lobby and petition calling for greater

pedestrianisation of the city centre. As agreed by Committee on 5th June, Council officers are working with DfI and DfC to examine the models of pedestrianisation and other initiatives which facilitates the development of the city centre enabling both pedestrian enjoyment and public transport access. This recommendation was ratified at full council on 1st July, with an amendment proposed by Cllr Lyons and ratified by council to also '*consider fully pedestrianised streets, where access is not shared between vehicles and pedestrians on a 24-hour basis but where vehicular access to businesses for deliveries etc. was allowed for short designated periods*'. Additional details on the recommendations are included within the committee report 'City Centre Regeneration Taskforce Update' for this committee meeting.

ii. Belfast in Bloom

- 3.7 The enhanced Belfast in Bloom project is currently being rolled-out with additional greenery and colour being introduced across the city centre including the installation of enhanced planters, hanging baskets and flower towers across the city centre. A procurement competition was undertaken and a supplier selected to create a new and creative display garden feature in City Hall. Unfortunately, the supplier did not fulfil the requirements of the contract and officers are currently working towards re-commissioning the work with a feature to be brought forward in early Autumn.

iii. Deep Clean and Graffiti Removal

- 3.8 Whilst initial work commenced on underfoot deep clean (pavements/ granite/ gable walls) and the removal of graffiti from hard services in priority city centre areas affected by the fire, progress has been stalled as a result of technical staffing and HR issues. A new dedicated cleansing squad have now been recruited and are currently undergoing training with an expected commencement date of the 4th of August. Officers are continuing to explore options to address the graffiti on shutters, although there are some issues around liability which need to be considered prior to commencement. Options being explored include the potential for anti-graffiti artistic shutter wrapping in specific streets/ areas as a trial (subject to agreement with property owners).

iv. Bank Square Canopy

- 3.9 Members may be aware that a key project for the City Revitalisation Programme was the exploring of the creation of an outdoor covered space for retailer-led themed events and other animation activity in Bank Square. In order to test the

viability of a permanent covered space, two one-month long pilots are being implemented over the Summer (July/August 19) and Autumn (September/October 19) using a temporary canopy to encourage visitors and shoppers to spend time in the area.

- 3.10 Officers are working with local retailers to develop a comprehensive programme of events during the pilot periods with an initial concentration of activity in July/August showcasing a mixture of musical events and family activities. Further details on the programme of events scheduled for Bank Square during this period have been circulated, with engagement ongoing with local traders and artists to further develop and enhance the programme. BCC cleansing team and Safer Neighbourhood Officers (SNOs) as well as the PSNI are present in the area and aware of installation to address any potential issues that may arise.
- 3.11 A market research company (CARD) has been appointed to carry out a comprehensive consultation and evaluation of the two pilots, engaging the general public and local traders on experience and recommendations for the longer-term potential of a covered canopy in Bank Square. If the temporary pilot programme is successful, it is intended to bring formalised proposals for a longer term more permanent solution that involves the Council, DfC and traders.

v. City Dressing and Lighting Strategy

- 3.12 Members will be aware that work is underway to develop a City Dressing and Lighting Strategy which will inform how new city dressing and lighting schemes may be brought forward in a coherent way. It is envisaged that the draft Strategy will be complete in early Autumn and will be brought into Committee in September for consideration of Members.
- 3.13 As previously discussed with Members, a number of initial pilot lighting projects are being developed for Castle Street and Castle Arcade. The Castle Street proposals involve a series of streamlined projectors being positioned in specific locations enabling lighting schemes to be transferred onto buildings and shutters addressing anti-graffiti and safety issues. Initial engagement with local traders has been positive and it is proposed that a pilot display will be erected on 83-87 Castle Street with a further role out of additional displays pending wayleave agreement with landowners. The lighting schemes will be commissioned and themed by council in conjunction with local traders and arts organistaions, and will also have the capacity to be programmed to promote local events and activities. The

Castle Arcade proposal will involve the positioning of a large lighting rig which will facilitate the rigging of lighting equipment for programmable lighting displays, and enable the area to be themed and dressed to promote local events and activities. Due to the permanent nature of the structure in Castle Arcade this piece will be designed and installed as a part of the Entries project which also forms an element of this programme.

- 3.14 Discussions are also underway with city partners in relation to potential enhanced Christmas lighting including proposals for the Council to fund creative lighting feature(s) at specific locations as part of the City Revitalisation Programme. Bid One have committed additional funding to address cross street lighting features within their boundary, and Council currently have a procurement competition ongoing to engage a large feature lighting display within the Royal Avenue/Castle Place area of the city. A further report will be brought back to Committee in September for consideration of Members on completion of the procurement competition.

vi. Entries and Lanes Strategy

- 3.15 One of the key issues identified in the pre-Christmas Recovery Programme was the connectivity and permeability of the city centre and its impact on wayfinding around the city centre following the fire. To address this, and following research in other cities, there is an opportunity to support and enhance permeability via an Entries and Lanes Strategy to improve the connectivity, resilience, tourism, city character, marketing and alternative uses for the existing entries.
- 3.16 Stage one procurement competition (PQQ) for design consultants has been completed and the second stage (ITT) is underway. It is anticipated that a consultant will be appointed during August 2019 to carry out design works on Phase 1 of the Entries Project which will include Castle Arcade, Crown Entry, Joys Entry, Pottinger's Entry, Coles Alley, Wellington St and Winecellar Street. Following a period of engagement, it is intended that some capital work could commence before Christmas 2019 with completion of all Phase 1 works by March 2020. Preparatory work for Phase 2 will be progressed during Autumn 2019 and capital works will be subject to funding becoming available. Phase 2 of the Entries Project also incorporates design works at Church Lane and Callendar Street which will be carried out in conjunction with DfC. Capital works will be subject to available budget and additional information will be brought to committee in subsequent reports.

**Animation/ Events and Programming**

- 3.17 Members will be aware that as part of the Recovery Programme, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on the 22 February, agreed a budget of £200,000 to support animation activity as part of the City Revitalisation Programme.
- 3.18 A key principle for Council investment was to augment and amplify planned activity, as opposed to developing new activities. As a result, officers have been working with event organisers to consider how these can deliver on the objectives above, with a focus on the areas of the city most negatively impacted by the fire.
- 3.19 Examples of activities supported to date include:
- **Festival of Fools:** this event takes place on the first May Bank Holiday weekend each year. This year, the organisers programmed a range of activities in Castle Place, focusing on the pop-up park (before it was moved). This attracted a large family audience to this part of the city;
  - **City of Music programme:** this programme will run from July to September. It will deliver a series of musical performances and activities across the city centre, with a focus on the stage at Bank Square which is to be installed for two periods over the summer break;
  - **Big Belfast Tee Off:** this programme of family-friendly activities was focused on the City Hall grounds and involved a NI-themed pitch and putt, a golf simulator and other golf-related activities to appeal to young audiences. The event marked the 148th Open at Royal Portrush, in recognition of the large number of visitors and golf spectators who based themselves in Belfast over the period of the tournament; and
  - **Belfast Music Summer Season:** Over 50 Music events running across 20 different venues and locations in the city centre from 18 July to 28 September. Highlights for the Bank Square activity include the Golf Open Weekend in partnership with Belfast One showcasing some of Belfast's best bands, family friendly global music workshops including Dhol drumming, a showcase of the winners of The Great Belfast Busk Off and a 20-piece brass band covering contemporary pop music over Pride weekend.

3.20 A number of additional events are planned over the coming months including:

i. Enhanced Culture Night/Day programme

3.21 For the first time this year, the traditional Friday-night Culture Night will also feature a Culture Day on Saturday. The dates for this year's event are 20th-21st September. In order to maximise the value and impact of the Culture Day programme, and draw footfall and spend into the city centre area, officers have been working with the Cathedral Quarter Trust to put together a programme to facilitate ease of attendance, benefit retailers and encourage movement across the city centre from City Hall to the Cathedral Quarter.

3.22 Culture Day will include a wide range of family-friendly activity across the city including a global music and dance programme at Writer's Square, a family 'playground' at Buoys Park and a Bazaar and Street Food Market at St Anne's Cathedral. Key elements of the programme, for which additional support is being sought from the Council, include:

- City Hall: a music stage will be located there. Performances and activities will include 'Baby Rave' events; world music stage; dance and street theatre workshops; and
- At other locations (principally Castle Place, Bank Square, Lombard Street and Rosemary Street) additional activities will include Belfast Busk Off event; pop-up musical performances and family cinema activities.

3.23 The Cathedral Quarter Trust estimates that the impact of these Culture Day activities will include:

- Audiences/ Footfall: 40,000+
- Estimated economic impact: £500,000+
- Estimated additional bednights: 4,000 (as programming on Friday evening & Saturday)
- Estimated print and broadcast AVE value of £1,000,000

3.24 The Trust has been successful in leveraging financial support from the Department for Communities (DfC), Destination CQ BID and BID One. The financial request from the Council will be £45,000 towards this additional programme of activity on Saturday 21 September.

ii. Taste the Island Activity

- 3.25** Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI) is leading a new initiative called 'Taste the Island'. The initiative is an eight-week showcase of the fabulous food and drink offer all across the island of Ireland. It will run from mid-September to mid-November 2019.
- 3.26** 2019 will be the first of a three-year commitment, delivered in conjunction with Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland. The timing of the 8 week programme will build on the success of the 2016 Year of Food and Drink and coincides with the celebration of Northern Ireland as the 'Best Food Destination' at the International Travel and Tourism Awards 2018/19.
- 3.27** Tourism Northern Ireland has put in place a small budget to support and profile local events and a number of local organisations have made applications for support from the fund. Other organisations are leveraging financial support from alternative sources and are linking in with Tourism NI in order to profile and showcase their event as part of a marketing initiative associated with the programme.
- 3.28** There are a number of events taking place in Belfast over that period and the Council has been working with partners to consider how these can be developed to support some of the ambitions and objectives of the Revitalisation Programme. Council officers have also encouraged these partners to programme their events over a number of weekends in September and October in order to encourage economies of scale and improve the experience for visitors to the city.
- 3.29** Key activities which the Council has been asked to support include:
- To coincide with Culture Night and Culture Day, partners are planning a series of food-related activities. These include the 'Linen Table'. This event is being delivered by the Linen Quarter BID. It will involve organising an evening dining event delivered by a range of hospitality providers in the Linen Quarter area. The event will take place in the City Hall/Bedford Street area. The Linen Table will be a paid-for event, focusing on food excellence and local produce. In advance of the evening event, the marquee that is to be used for the event will be used by the Culture Day organisers for some of the activities outlined above. In order to support the engagement activities, it is proposed that the Council makes a financial contribution towards this event of £5,000. The remainder of the costs will be met



from ticket income as well as a financial contribution from the Linen Quarter BID;

- **Following on from the weekend activities, BID One and Destination CQ are proposing to organise the second Belfast Restaurant Week as well as a weekend food market. The restaurant week event will run from Monday to Thursday (23-26 September) and will involve £10 lunch and £15 evening meal offers by a range of hospitality venues. The weekend event (27-28 September) will include food demos and a producers' market as well as a Big Belfast Brunch event on the Sunday (28 September). The event organisers are seeking funding from Tourism NI and DfC and both BIDs will also be making a financial contribution. It is proposed that the Council makes a financial contribution of £4,500 towards the costs associated with hosting the event;**
  
- **Also taking place on the same weekend as Culture Night/Day, Tesco will be organising their seventh annual Taste of Northern Ireland event in Custom House Square. Members will be aware that anyone wishing to operate a market or car boot sale within Belfast must apply to Belfast City Council for permission to do so – and applications for markets with more than 20 stalls need to be approved by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. Tesco are seeking a licence to operate this event on 20-22 September 2019. This event is designed to showcase the range of food and drinks available from Tesco produced in Northern Ireland. Some stallholders do have products for sale on the day; however, most will offer free samples and use the event as an opportunity to demonstrate their product range. Numbers are currently being finalised but it is expected that there will be up to 65 stalls at the event. There will be no financial contribution required from the Council for this event – Tesco cover all of the costs. As with all markets, the Council will receive a fee for the licence application (£50) as well as a stallage fee of £5 for each stall at the event. It is proposed that the Committee agrees to grant the markets licence for the organisation of this event, given that it will complement the wider programme of activity;**
  
- **Belfast's inaugural Oyster Festival will take place in Bank Square on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th October. The event will feature a series of cookery demonstrations and a food market with a variety of**

seafood stalls alongside family friendly daytime entertainment with workshops and aquarium touch tanks for children. In the evenings, there will be a music showcase featuring local bands and musicians. The organisers will be working closely with the Council to ensure that the animation supports the wider City Revitalisation objectives. It is proposed that the Council provides a financial allocation up to £3,000 towards the costs associated with event logistics.

### **Marketing and Communications**

3.30 Members may be aware that the ‘Make it Belfast’ advertising and marketing campaign went live on Monday 13 May and will run through until the end of August 2019 to support the City Revitalisation Programme. It targets the local day trip market and seeks to uplift the image and attractiveness of Belfast city centre as a premier retail and day trip destination, promoting its unique experiences, great value and access.

3.31 Visit Belfast are commissioned to oversee implementation of campaign in liaison with city stakeholders and Council; with a range of mediums being used including radio advertising, digital, video, social media, national and local press as well as highly visible outdoor promotion on bus T-sides, adshels and 48 sheets. In addition, a ‘Make it Belfast’ campaign toolkit has been developed and shared with city stakeholders and businesses to further strengthen and add value to the campaign. The Council is also supporting the uplift of the campaign, as appropriate, via existing external communications channels. Visit Belfast have provided initial feedback on implementation and successes of the campaign to date as set out below:

- **Press and PR coverage** – reach 210,000 people and 629,000 opportunity to see (OTS)
- **180,000 leaflets distributed** to targeted households, key transport hubs and bus stations
- **Digital channels** – over 1.5m impacts (social media, email marketing, search and campaign website views)
- **Radio Advertising** – over 5.5m impacts (relates to number of opportunities to hear ad by any one person)
- **Outdoor advertising** – 7,970K impacts

### 3.32 **Financial and Resource Implications**

At the SP and R Committee meeting in October 2018, members were updated on the £5.637m allocated, from a number of sources, to the recovery programme, and the £4.887m

allocated directly to council for the City Centre Revitalisation Programme.

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 22 February 2019, followed by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee at its meeting on 6 March 2019, were updated on the £1.882m spent on Phase 1 of the Revitalisation Programme, and the £500k of funding allocated by council for direct trader support. The respective committees approved a report setting out an overview of the broad proposals for Phase 2 of the City Revitalisation Programme and associated budget allocations across the identified strands of activity totalling £2.505m. The key strands detailed, and for which updates are provided and approvals requested, in this report are funded from within this Phase 2 budget.

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

None associated with this report.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Positioning Belfast to Compete**

**Conference Tourism: Economic Impact and Future Development**

The Director of Economic Development submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the growth of conference tourism over recent years and the potential for future growth as a key element of tourism development in the City. It also includes a request to extend the eligibility period for the current Conference Subvention Scheme to 2030.
- 1.2 Belfast City Council and Tourism NI both provide financial support towards a Conference Subvention Scheme which is administered by Visit Belfast. This provides financial incentives to encourage Conference organisers to choose Belfast as a destination for their event.
- 1.3 The Scheme has been a critical element of Belfast’s ability to attract conferences and boost the City’s growing reputation as a premier conference location. Last year, Visit Belfast reported that Belfast welcomed over 55,000 national and international delegates to the city. This was a 77% increase on the previous year and is estimated to have generated

£52million for the local economy. In 2018, Belfast was also named as the Best Events Destination by Conference and Incentive Travel (C&IT) while the International Conference Centre (ICC) won the accolade of Best Events Venue.

- 1.4 One feature of business and conference tourism is the long lead-in times for attracting new business. As part of the operation of the Conference Subvention Scheme, Visit Belfast have requested that the Council and Tourism NI agrees to a longer timeframe for the scheme. This will allow them to make recommendations for support for events that are planning to come to the city in coming years. It does not involve a request for additional financial support beyond the current commitments.

## 2.0 Recommendations

### 2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. agree to extend the Conference Subvention Scheme end date to 2030, subject to resource availability;
- ii. note the importance and economic value of conference tourism to the city and the projected growth of this sector; and
- iii. note the importance of support mechanisms such as the Conference Subvention Scheme in attracting events.

## 3.0 Main Report

### 3.1 Key Issues

The Conference Support Scheme is administered by Visit Belfast and provides financial support to encourage conference organisers to choose Belfast as a destination for their event. The key objectives of the Conference Support Scheme are:

- to raise the profile of Belfast and Northern Ireland as a leading business and conference destination
- to consolidate existing investment in Belfast and Northern Ireland hotel and conference infrastructure
- to increase the contribution of business and conference tourism to Belfast and Northern Ireland economy
- to change the international perception of Belfast and Northern Ireland

- to encourage investment to Belfast and Northern Ireland
- to grow the number of leisure visitors by encouraging conferences to run partner and extender programmes and
- to increase the value of business tourism and visitor spend through encouraging partner, social and extended programmes.

**3.2** The Scheme has been a crucial element of Belfast's ability to attract conferences to the city, particularly given some of the challenges that the city faces around issues such as transport accessibility. It has helped to enhance Belfast's reputation as a city for conferences and is leading to repeat conferences in the city as well as highlighting the city's leisure tourism offer.

**3.3** The 2015 Integrated Tourism Strategy identified business tourism as a key area of focus and the mid-term review of the strategy undertaken in 2018 emphasised that business tourism in Belfast is growing at an international level which demonstrates the importance of having an effective support scheme in place. Conference and business tourism is a global business so Belfast is competing with cities all across the world and we need to have all the relevant tools at our disposal to make a compelling bid to host relevant events. As part of a 2016 review of the scheme, an assessment of conference support schemes in other cities was undertaken in order to benchmark the Belfast offer and understand what was being presented by competitor cities. This identified that the Belfast budget is still very modest in comparison to other cities. In addition, other locations provide additional incentives on top of the financial offer e.g. access to free public transport for all conference delegates, interest free loans for conference organisers.

**3.4** Since its inception in 2011, the Scheme has helped to secure 88 conferences which have been awarded support funding worth £1.55m, generating £97.2m of economic impact. In 2018-19, conference wins were worth approximately £52.1m to the local economy. Furthermore, Visit Belfast presently has a strong pipeline of over £50 million of active leads.

In recent years, Belfast has also been able to benefit from the development of the ICC and can now attract large international conferences to the city. Visit Belfast has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ICC to encourage new business to the city and they have been working to increase awareness of the enhanced facilities as well as the wider positioning of Belfast as a cost-competitive, business-friendly conference location. However, the ICC is not the only venue available, and

other locations such as local hotels and the universities have also been successful in attracting conference and business events.

**3.5 Conferences taking place later this year that have been secured as part of the Support Scheme include:**

- **CHRO 2019 (Campylobacter, Helicobacter and Related Microorganisms) in September with 2500 bed nights and £965,150 economic impact**
- **European Conference on Mental Health in October with 1590 bed nights and £613,835 economic impact**
- **The Association of Simulated Practice in Healthcare (ASPIH) in November with 1275 bed nights and £623,398 economic impact.**

**3.6 The end date for financial commitments as part of the Support Scheme is currently 2025. However Visit Belfast has recently been approached about hosting a major event in the city in 2027. This event is projected to deliver 5200 bed nights and generate £2,542,488 of economic impact. Visit Belfast considers that their engagement with conference organisers is increasingly likely to relate to events beyond the 2025 time period. As a result, they have asked approval from the key funders (Belfast City Council and Tourism NI) to extend the end date for the scheme to 2030. This does not mean that the Council will be making a commitment to maintaining specific levels of resources until this timeframe but that Visit Belfast can bid for new business development opportunities within a wider timeframe, subject to financial resources being in place at that time. Officers have engaged with Tourism NI who have agreed to the revised timescale.**

**3.7 Financial and Resource Implications**

**At present, Belfast City Council's annual financial contribution to the Conference Support Scheme is £200,000. This funding was approved by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 3rd April 2019, as part of the Tourism Development Action Plan for the 2019/20 period. This is match-funded by resources from Tourism NI.**

**3.8 The Council contribution to the scheme will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, in conjunction with Tourism NI and in line with available resources.**

**3.9 Equality and Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Impact Assessment**

**No specific equality or good relations implications. No rural impact assessment.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Strategic and Operational Issues**

**NILGA Event – Changing Places: Planning,  
Place-Shaping and Place-Making in Northern Ireland**

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy drew the Committee’s attention to a forthcoming conference entitled “Changing Places: Planning, Place-Shaping and Place-Making in Northern Ireland, which had been organised by the Northern Ireland Local Government Association. The event, which would be taking place in Enniskillen on 8th October, would cover a range of topics of particular interest to Committee, such as housing, infrastructure, local job creation, smart cities and sustainable tourism. He pointed out that there would be no conference fee and sought the Committee’s approval for the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson (or their nominees), together with two Council officers, to attend.

The Committee granted the approval sought.

**Future Arrangements for Committee – Strategic Workshops**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

**1.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, on 21st June, agreed to hold a workshop at 5.00 p.m. on 8th August to focus on the priorities for the Council. Following this, there will be a specific workshop for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee to further consider its priorities and the direction of travel for 2019-20 within the corporate context and ongoing commitments, as agreed on 5th June 2019.**

**1.2 In addition, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee also discussed the need for a series of strategic discussions / workshops to allow for more detailed engagement and to support their role in taking informed decisions on issues of strategic importance for the growth and regeneration of the city.**

**1.3 This report identifies the initial topics for focused strategic workshops for the Committee. These will be programmed over the next 6 months, to support the decision making process.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

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**2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i. approve the list of topics that require a focused strategic workshop;
- ii. note that the strategic workshop on City Regeneration and Development, which will include Strategic Site Assessments, will be held on 4th September at 5.00 pm;
- iii. agree, where possible, to use the scheduled dates for the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee meetings for these workshops; and
- iv. agree to receive a presentation on Belfast Harbour's Strategy at the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee meeting on 25th September. The workshop to consider the Committee's priorities will follow immediately after this item on 25th September.

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Key Issues**

The Committee considered a number of detailed reports on key issues for the city at its initial meeting in June 2019, such as City Centre revitalisation and Strategic Site Assessments. Whilst these reports provided an update on ongoing programmes of work, it is important that the new Committee has ownership of these issues and is in a position to make informed decisions about the future direction of travel. As these issues tend to be complex and have long-term impacts for the city and its communities, it was suggested that specific strategic workshops should be held, which would allow the scheduled Committee meetings to continue to deliver its responsibilities while also managing the need for informed discussion.

**3.2 A number of issues were highlighted during the course of the meeting that would benefit from more focused strategic workshops to inform the future direction of work. The issues identified include:**

- City Development and Regeneration, including Strategic Site Assessments – consider the emerging proposals and proposed next steps
- Economic research insights - an overview of the opportunities, strengths and challenges for the city, with a focus on topical issues
- Inclusive growth
- Employability and skills
- City centre recovery/revitalisation



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- Transport and car parking
- Engagement with the city centre communities.

3.3 The Committee will note that additional issues may be identified as the work of the Committee progresses; this will be kept under review and updated as required. As Members have a significant number of commitments, the dates scheduled for the Special Committee meetings will, where possible, be used for the strategic workshops.

**Requests to present to Committee**

3.4 In November 2017, the Committee agreed that, in order to deal with the volume of requests from external groups and organisations to present to the Committee, that a maximum of one presentation would be heard at the main monthly meeting and that the Special Committee meeting would be used where two or more presentations were scheduled for any month. Presentations are scheduled for the main monthly Committee meeting when it relates to an item on the agenda or if the nature of the presentation is time critical.

3.5 There are a number of presentations that have been agreed in the previous Council term that remain to be scheduled:

- Nevin Economic Research Institute, Institute of Public Policy Research and Ulster University Economic Policy Centre – to receive economic briefings
- Tourism NI – to consider collaborative opportunities
- Queen's University of Belfast – to outline the role and issues impacting on Higher Education in the city and region
- Retail NI - to present their policy agenda 'Regeneration NI, Creating 21st Century Town and City Centres'
- NOW Group - to review the work of the social enterprise.

3.6 In addition, the Council received a request on 24th July from Belfast Harbour to present their strategy to this Committee. The Committee will recall that the Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Belfast Harbour Commissioners, as agreed at the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 21st June 2019. This outlines how the Council and Belfast Harbour will work together, through a strategic partnership arrangement, to realise their shared ambitions for the strong growth, regeneration and prosperity of the City.

3.7 In order to manage the requests for presentations, the Committee is asked to note that officers will provide a recommendation based on the following options to inform the Committee's decision on the request to present:

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- to receive the presentation at a main Committee meeting
- to receive the presentation at a Special Committee meeting
- to receive the presentation as part of a strategic workshop
- that the requestor meets with a named Council Officer for further information and a report is brought back to Committee

3.8 It is proposed that the economic briefings are included in one strategic workshop session 'Economic/Research Insights' referenced at paragraph 3.2.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

3.9 There are no direct financial or resource implications attached to this report.

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

3.10 There are no direct implications attached to this report. Equality, good relations and rural needs issues will be considered as part of development and delivery of plans, programmes and policies.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that productivity be added to the list of topics listed within paragraph 3.2 of the report to be considered within the context of focused strategic workshops.

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**Financial Reporting – Quarter 4 2018/19**

The Committee considered a report which set out the financial position of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for the fourth quarter of 2018/2019. The report confirmed that the year-end position for the Committee was an underspend of £11,000 (0.1%), in an annual budget of £17.4m, which was well within the acceptable tolerance of 3%. The underspend could be attributed primarily to reduced expenditure on programme costs and premises costs, which were offset by increased staffing costs, subscriptions and grants and reduced income.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Chairperson

## Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 14th August, 2019

### MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor S. Baker (Chairperson);  
The High Sherriff, Alderman Sandford;  
Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey; and  
Councillors Bunting, Donnelly, Ferguson, Groves,  
Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee,  
Magennis, McAteer, Smyth and Whyte.
- In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control;  
Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;  
Ms N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor  
Mr. J. Cunningham, Regulatory Services Manager; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

No apologies were reported.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 19th June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Delegated Matters

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

#### **Applications Approved under Delegated Authority**

The Committee noted a list of licences and permits which had been issued under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

#### **Application for the Provisional Grant of an Amusement Permit – Oasis Gaming Centre, Wellington Place**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 19th June, it had agreed to defer consideration of the application to allow the Committee to review the additional

**Licensing Committee,  
Wednesday, 14th August, 2019**

information that had been published in Appendix 2 of the report, in relation to the 'Oasis Supporting Statement'.

The Committee was informed that Mr. M. Trimble, Oasis Retail Services Ltd., and Ms. D. Thompson, MBA Planning, were in attendance and they were welcomed by the Chairperson.

Ms. Thompson reminded the Committee that the application sought to extend the established gaming centre at 7 Wellington Place into the rear part of the adjacent unit at 9 Wellington Place. She advised that Oasis had been trading successfully for the last 20 years at this location without any issues in respect to compliance and age control.

She pointed out that the current premises needed to be modernised to improve the customer experience and stay ahead of their competitors. She advised that they wished to create further amenity space for their customers, to provide such facilities as a lounge, relaxation space, kitchen, office, staff room and additional toilet provision. She emphasised that the application had not requested an extension to opening hours or further gaming machines.

She suggested that the Amusement Permit Policy did not deal with these circumstances. She confirmed that there would be no change to the shop frontage and the enlarged use of the unit was compliant with Planning Policy. She advised that the development would bring investment, job security and further rates base to the City.

During points of clarification, Mr. Trimble outlined his experience in managing adult gaming centres. Ms. Thompson confirmed that there would be no change to the streetscape and there were no plans to extend the premises further.

The Director of Planning and Building Control also stated that it would be unlikely that an application to extend the facility to the front of the premises would comply with Planning Policy.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that it was satisfied the applicant was a fit and proper person.

The Committee also agreed in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to the grant the application for the provisional Amusement Permit in respect of Oasis Gaming Centre, Wellington Place subject to:

- (i) the premises are not to be used for an unlawful purpose or as a resort of persons of known bad character;
- (ii) no persons under the age of 18 are admitted to the premises; and
- (iii) at any entrance to, and inside the premises, there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access is prohibited to persons under the age of 18.

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**Competing Stationary Street Trading Licence  
Applications for Fountain Street site**

The Committee was advised that competing applications had been received from three persons wishing to trade from a designated site in Fountain Street. The Building Control Manager reviewed the applications and outlined the process for the Committee to grant one of the following applicants the pitch.

He advised Mr. S. Donnelly, had applied to sell tour tickets and tour memorabilia. The proposed times of trading were Monday to Sunday from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Mr. Donnelly proposed to use a stall on wheels measuring 3m by 1.5m.

He reported that the second applicant, namely, Mr. F. Brown, was seeking to sell bespoke street signs, arts and crafts and bus tour tickets from a trailer measuring 3m by 1m designed to replicate a City Sightseeing tour bus. The proposed times of trading were Monday to Sunday from 9.00 am to 9.00 pm.

He informed the Members that the third application had been submitted by Mr. M. Kerr, who had applied to sell wrapping paper, cards, confectionery, hot and cold beverages, lighters, toys, bus tour tickets, taxi tour and other tour tickets available, souvenirs, jokes, flowers, plants, e-cigarettes and accessories, hats and gloves, novelty and occasion accessories, and seasonal goods from a traditional market stall measuring 3.65m by 2.44m. The proposed times of trading were Monday to Sunday from 8.00 am to 10.00 pm. Mr Kerr's stall would measure 3.65m by 2.44m, which would be larger than a normal City centre pitch of 3m by 1.5m.

The Committee was informed that the three applicants were in attendance in order to outline their proposals for the site.

**Applicant 1**

Mr. Donnelly, Director of Titanic and City Tours, informed the Committee that they were a local company and had been in business for 10 years. He advised that they didn't have another outlet to sell their tour tickets outside of Visit Belfast. He indicated that a stall would decrease the confrontation of ticket sellers in the City Centre. He believed that a stall would benefit their company and assist with fair trading as competitors had multiple stalls around the City Centre. He advised that they intended to sell bus tickets and memorabilia in relation to their Game of Thrones Tour, Giants Causeway Tour and City Tour.

Mr. P. Rogan, Manager of City Tours, stated that the option to manage a stall would benefit their company, staff and the visitors to Belfast as it would be an information source. He advised that, if successful, they planned to be open 362 days per year and would be committed to helping Belfast City Centre visitors.

During points of clarification, Mr. Donnelly confirmed that they would be selling tour tickets, t-shirts, hats and seasonal offerings and felt that as other tour companies had other ticket stalls, it would be likely that they would only sell their own tour tickets unless reciprocal agreements were put in place, however, they would be interested in selling walking tours and bike tours.

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**Applicant 2**

Mr. F. Brown, who was then admitted to the meeting, explained that he had held a Stationary Street Trading Licence since January, 2007, in Lombard Street near the junction with High Street. He advised that he had a 100 per cent attendance record and wished to open another small stall on Fountain Street as an information stall, selling tours. He suggested that, if the application was successful, it would create a full time job for his son.

**Applicant 3**

Mr. M. Kerr, the third applicant, was thereupon welcomed to the meeting.

The Democratic Services Officer read a letter which Mr. Kerr had prepared in relation to the family history of the stall. It stated that his family had previously worked the pitch and it had sentimental value to Mr. Kerr. It was reported that Mr. Kerr was very familiar with the site and would like the opportunity to build up his business again.

Mr. Kerr indicated that he wished to sell all types of tours, souvenirs and seasonal stock. He pointed-out that he was currently unemployed and if his application was successful, it would provide him with an income to support his family.

After discussion, the Committee, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, agreed, in view of the fact that he did not hold a Stationary Street Trading Licence currently and that he proposed to sell a mix of products, that it was minded to grant to Mr. S. Donnelly, a Stationary Street Trading Licence, on a one-year trial basis, permitting him to sell tour tickets and tour memorabilia on a Monday to Sunday between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., in Fountain Street, at a site which had been designated previously for the sale of those commodities, subject to:

- i. the applicant providing all necessary documentation;
- ii. the receipt of the appropriate licensing fees; and

As a consequence of the decision to grant the Licence to Mr. Donnelly and the fact that there was only one designated site available, the Committee agreed that it was minded to refuse the applications which had been submitted by Mr. Brown and Mr. Kerr, on the grounds set out in Sections 9(1) (a) (i) and (iv) of the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, namely, that the location at which they wished to trade was unsuitable and that there were sufficient traders trading at that location in the articles, things or services in which they wished to trade.

The Building Control Manager informed the Members that the unsuccessful applicants would be advised that, in accordance with the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, they would be permitted to make written representation to the Council within twenty-one days from the date of notice.

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**Renewal of a Stationary Street Trading Licence**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 10th April, it had agreed that it was minded to use its discretionary power to refuse to renew Mr. J. Kerr's Stationary Street Trading Licence which allowed him to trade in Fountain Lane (45ft from its junction with Donegall Place).

The Building Control Manager provided an overview of Mr. Kerr's trading history and confirmed that Mr. Kerr had not paid his Licence fees since 4th December, 2018 and was not engaging with the Council to settle his debt despite numerous efforts the Council had made to contact him. He noted that Mr. Kerr currently owed the Council £3,098.34.

He reported that Mr. Kerr had been invited to attend this meeting. However, he had, earlier in the day, confirmed that as he was not in the country until Wednesday, 21st August and suggested that he would pay his bill then, however, would not be present at the meeting.

After discussion, given the history of Mr. Kerr's previous deferrals and that he had neglected to pay fees due to the Council, the Committee agreed to affirm its decision to refuse the renewal of the Stationary Street Trading Licence held by Mr. Joseph Kerr in respect of the designated site at Fountain Lane on the grounds that he had, without reasonable excuse, failed to avail himself to a reasonable extent of his Licence and without reasonable explanation, failed to pay any fees or charges due to the Council.

**Non-Delegated Matters**

**Institute of Licensing National Training Event**

The Committee was reminded that the Institute of Licensing was the professional body for licensing practitioners in local government, the police, private sector, trade and the legal profession. The Institute, which operated throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, had been established to provide education and training and to disseminate knowledge in all matters relating to licensing.

The Committee was reminded further that Belfast was a Corporate Member affiliated to the Northern Ireland Region of the Institute and that Mr. J. Cunningham, the Council's Regulatory Services Manager, was the chairman of the Institute of Licensing (Northern Ireland Region) and a Director and Trustee of the Institute.

The Building Control Manager reported that, this year, the Institute would be holding its National Training Conference in Stratford-Upon-Avon from Wednesday 20th till Friday 22nd November. He referred to a number of topics which would be covered over the course of the event and pointed out that it would provide Elected Members and officers with an opportunity to meet with other licensing professionals and to obtain an update on changes within the licensing sector. Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee approve the attendance at the conference of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, the Director of Planning and Building Control and the Building Control Manager (or their nominees), and approve also Mr. Cunningham's attendance, in recognition of his role as the chairman of the Northern Ireland Region. Mr. Cunningham's residential fee would be paid for by the Institute of Licensing.

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The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting in relation to the changes and developments within the licensing sector.

Chairperson



## Planning Committee

Tuesday, 2nd July, 2019

### SPECIAL MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);  
Alderman Rodgers; and  
Councillors Brooks, Canavan, Collins,  
Garrett, Groogan, Hussey, McKeown,  
McMullan, Murphy, Nicholl,  
O'Hara and Pankhurst.
- In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and  
Building Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;  
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development  
Management); and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

No apologies were reported.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of 11th and 13th June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

#### **Committee Site Visit**

It was noted that the Committee had undertaken a site visit, on 20th June, in respect of the following planning application LA04/2018/1761/RM - Site for new dwelling and garage to the rear of 598 Antrim Road.

#### **Planning Appeals Notified**

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission.

### **Planning Decisions Issued**

The Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Director of Planning and Building Control, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 4th and 24th June, 2019.

### **Listing of Buildings**

(The Planning Manager (Policy) attended in connection with the following two items)

The Committee was advised that, under Article 80 (3) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011, the Historic Environment Division (HED) was required to consult with the Council before placing any building on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. The Planning Manager (Policy) explained that, should the Department for Communities decide to list a property, it placed certain responsibilities on the owner, for example, to maintain it in a way appropriate to its character and that it cannot be altered or demolished without prior approval.

The Members noted that correspondence had been received from HED regarding the proposed listing of:

- 73 University Street, BT7 1HB as a B2 class listing; and
- Euston Street Primary School, BT6 9AG as a B1 class listing.

The Committee agreed to support the listing of the two properties as outlined.

### **Miscellaneous Item**

#### **Draft Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report and Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 To update Members on progress with the new Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (GBIP) and to note its publication in draft form for public consultation.**
- 1.2 The Council agreed the draft GBIP for consultation in June 2018. The GBIP is a high level plan that recognises the many functions, including for health, biodiversity and environmental resilience, of our green areas and water features. It represents an over-arching strategy that will guide more detailed strategies and action plans over time. These include the new Open Spaces Strategy (OSS), which was prepared in tandem with it. A draft OSS was agreed for public consultation by the Council in April 2019.**

1.3 Having regard to the many synergies between the GBIP and the OSS, both draft documents were published together for consultation purposes for a 12 week period from 17 June 2019. A copy of the draft GBIP is attached at Appendix 1.

## 2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- notes the publication of the draft GBIP alongside the draft OSS for public consultation.

## 3.0 Main Report

3.1 Belfast City Council appointed AECOM to help prepare a Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (GBIP) in tandem with the preparation of a new Open Spaces Strategy (OSS) for the city. The concept of a GBIP was included in the Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) Preferred Options Paper (POP) and there was wide support for such an approach. This concept has also been incorporated in to the LDP Draft Plan Strategy, which is intended to be submitted for Independent Examination shortly. The data collected and used to develop the GBIP and OSS forms part of the evidence base for the LDP.

3.2 The GBIP acknowledges the benefits and multi-functionality of green and blue infrastructure assets across the City. Green assets include parks, playing fields, amenity open space, trees, gardens and countryside. Blue assets include rivers, water bodies and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). The overall network of these assets brings a wide range of benefits, including for health & wellbeing, biodiversity and environmental resilience. In this respect, the GBIP will also help to secure many of the objectives in the Belfast Agenda, including through greater permeability, accessibility and the potential for improved community relations

3.3 The draft GBIP was agreed by the Council for public consultation purposes in June 2018. The draft OSS was agreed by the Council in April 2019. In view of the synergies between the GBIP and the OSS, both draft documents are being consulted on together in a joint approach by Planning Service and City and Neighbourhood Services Department. This timeframe also avoids any overlap with the substantial public consultation phase on the LDP Draft Plan Strategy, which lasted from August 2018 to April 2019.

- 3.4 The 12 week public consultation period for both documents commenced on 17 June 2019 and will run until 6 September. There was a public launch by the Lord Mayor in Grove Bowling Pavilion on 18 June, which was also attended by key stakeholders involved in the preparation of the documents. We will be running a series of public consultation engagement sessions at various events in venues across the city throughout July and August to further promote the draft documents and encourage comments and responses. Any comments received during the consultation period will be taken into account in finalising the GBIP and BOSS through the relevant Council committees.

**Finance and Resource Implications**

There are no resource implications associated with this report.

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

The draft GBIP has been screened out for equality impact assessment purposes. A Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the draft GBIP. Both assessments have been published alongside the draft GBIP for consultation purposes.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Planning Applications**

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

**(Reconsidered) LA04/2018/1761/RM – Site for dwelling and garage rear of 598 Antrim Road**

The Case officer reminded the Committee that it had agreed, at its meeting on 11th June, after having considered the case officer’s report on the application, to defer consideration in order to undertake a site visit. She advised the Members that the site visit had taken place on 20th June.

The Committee was apprised of the addendum report which provided information on further objections which had been received in relation to the application.

The case officer highlighted to the Members that, as it was a reserved matters application, the principle of a dwelling on the site had already been established under the outline permission LA04/2017/1208/O in September 2017, and that the current

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application was to deal solely with the conditions attached to that approval. She explained that these included issues relating to building materials used, access and landscaping.

The separation distances were provided to the Members of the Committee.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, whereby further correspondence had been received from an objector. The case officer outlined the response of the Planning Department to the points raised.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

**LA04/2018/0328/F – 14 houses and pumping station  
at Finaghy Park Central**

Before presentation of the application commenced, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposals at first hand.

The Committee noted that, as the application had not been presented, all Members' present at the next meeting, would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.

**LA04/2018/0020/F – Revision of existing planning application  
(Z/2014/1774/F) to include new 510 seat football stand and  
clubhouse with new standing terrace and toilet blocks at  
Blanchflower Playing Fields, Holywood Road**

The Committee was advised that the application sought to revise a previously approved application, Z/2014/1774/F, to include a new 510 seat Football Stand and Clubhouse behind the goals at the west of the site, with a new Standing Terrace proposed along the side of the pitch with two toilet blocks also located within the site. The Members were advised that the proposal included the removal of the existing terrace standing area.

The case officer explained that the extant approval was for a new clubhouse and tiered seating area, a 200 seat stand, alteration to existing standing area, a new 3G surface to existing pitches including floodlights, dugouts, fencing, security tower, turnstiles, toilet blocks and associated ground works.

She advised the Committee that the main issues for assessment in the proposed development included the impact on residential amenity, on access and parking, on open/recreational space and on natural heritage.

The Members were advised that sixteen objections had been received, raising issues around a number of technical matters around the planning fee, the Council's interest in the application, neighbour notification, parking issues, noise/nuisance and whether it should be treated as a "Major application".

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The case officer highlighted to the Members that the site was not zoned or designated in the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) and that it was designated as a local landscape policy area with regard to local amenity importance and are of local nature conservation interest in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP).

She explained that the proposal did not result in the loss of existing open space and therefore did not conflict with Policy OS1 of PPS8. The Committee was also advised that the proposal also complied with the policy test of Policy OS4 of PPS8 in respect of Intensive Sports Facilities in relation to residential amenity, built/natural heritage, archaeology, design, access/mobility and roads issues, including access and parking. She added that there were also no issues with drainage or contamination.

The Committee was advised that the application sought to provide 216 parking spaces on site. She explained that an updated Transport Assessment Form (TAF) had been submitted and the Department for Infrastructure had been consulted further. The case officer advised that DfI Roads had not responded but, if they did submit an objection, the application would be brought back to the Committee.

The case officer explained that the current proposal had a spectator capacity for 509 visitors lower than the existing development, and 703 lower than the extant approval. She explained that Environmental Health had requested a Noise Impact Assessment which had concluded that there would be a low impact at residential premises. The Committee noted that they had no objections subject to conditions relating to the hours of operation.

She explained to the Committee that, in accordance with Section 41 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011, there were no neighbours identified to be notified of the application.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2018/2649/F – Demolition of existing building and construction of 178 apartments, a gym, 3 retail units and associated car parking and landscaping on lands at 3-9 Dalton Street (bordered by Middlepath Street and Bridge End)**

Before presentation of the application commenced, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposals at first hand.

The Committee noted that, as the application had not been presented, all Members' present at the next meeting, would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.

**LA04/2019/0068/F – Demolition of existing building and construction of 54 apartments; Westgate House, 2-4 Queen Street**

The case officer detailed the principal aspects of the Major application to the Members.

The Committee was advised that the key issues in the assessment of the proposal included the principle of the proposal at the location, demolition and impact on the conservation area, layout, scale, form and massing, impact on transport, flooding, drainage and contamination.

The Case officer explained to the Members that internal space standards had been met. He added that communal amenity space would be provided in the development in the form of a roof garden.

He advised the Members that no car parking spaces would be provided but that, as part of a Section 76 Agreement, cycle spaces and travel cards would be made available to residents.

He added that no objections had been received and that the Department for Infrastructure had no objections, subject to conditions.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, where the case officer advised that a consultation response had been received from NI Water with no objections.

In response to a Member's question relating to the height of the replacement building, which would be an increase of three storeys in height, the case officer explained that officers were content with the scale and massing of the proposed development and that other surrounding buildings were taller. During discussion, he also explained that the materials which were proposed were of a high quality and that there was an eclectic mix in the surrounding area.

The Case officer's recommendations were then put to the Committee, namely:

“That planning permission and demolition consent be granted, subject to conditions, and that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions, to enter into a Section 76 planning agreement, to resolve outstanding consultee issues and to the notification of the Department for Infrastructure.”

On a vote by show of hands, eleven Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was declared carried.

**LA04/2018/1170/F – Demolition of dwelling and erection of 3 dwellings and 9 apartments on lands at 15-17 Upper Lisburn Road**

The Committee was apprised of the details of the application for the demolition of an existing pair of semi-detached dwellings and the erection of 3 dwellings and 9 apartments.

The Case officer explained that the site was unzoned whiteland within the development limits of Belfast as designated in the Belfast urban Area Plan (BUAP) and in Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP). She outlined that the proposal would fulfil the main objectives of Draft BMAP and the SPPS through the provision of housing in a sustainable location.

She outlined to the Members that DAERA and NI Water had offered no objections to the proposal. She explained that BCC Environmental health and Tree Officers had requested additional information, which could be dealt with through appropriate conditions. The Committee was advised that, whilst there were outstanding final consultation responses from Transport NI and Rivers Agency, they presented no issues of principle and it was considered that any technical matters could be dealt with through conditions.

The Committee was advised that one letter of objection had been received in relation to the original plans, raising concerns with backland development, the height of the proposed development, loss of privacy, light intrusion and increased traffic activity.

The Case officer advised the Members that amended plans had since been submitted by the developer which sought to address a number of the concerns raised.

She explained that backland development in the area was long established. The Members were advised that each dwelling would be provided with its own private amenity area and were above the minimum space standards as set by Creating Places.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2019/0896/F – Demolition of vacant bank and erection of a mixed use development – 1 retail unit and 1 café/restaurant unit, 8 apartments, landscaping and associated site and access works at 423-427 Ormeau Road**

Before presentation of the application commenced, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposals at first hand.

The Committee noted that, as the application had not been presented, all Members' present at the next meeting, would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.



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**LA04/2018/2639/F & LA04/2019/2642/LBC – Change to previously approved units 2-4 and 6-10 from 6 x 1 bed apartments, 1 x 2 bed apartment and 1 x 2 bed townhouse to 2 x 1 bed apartments, 4 x 2 bed apartments and 1 x 2 bed townhouse, Building 9 (Pavilion 4) at Former Belvoir Park Hospital**

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal details of the development of one of the Pavilions on the former Belvoir Park Hospital site. She explained that the application was before the Committee as the Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Department for Communities (DfC) had advised that the proposed development was contrary to policy and that it was therefore required to be referred to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

She provided the Members with the planning history of the site. The Committee was advised that the pavilions benefitted from two extant planning approvals, one for subdivision into townhouses and apartments (Y/2009/0461/F) and another for subdivision into townhouses (Y/2014/0401/F). She explained that the current applications sought to enact some of the previous townhouse approval at either end of the pavilion, with the creation of a revised apartment layout in the central block.

The Case officer explained that an objection had been received from the HED stating that it believed that the proposals were contrary to PPS6 in its current form. HED had stated that, whilst it acknowledged that the previous approval for townhouses had resulted in the historic entrance being used for one unit only, its view was that the development should be laid out so that the main entrance was used communally by all the apartments, rather than being converted to a single apartment.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack. The Case officer highlighted that two attic windows which were previously intended to be reinstated had been bricked up. She explained that the developer had since submitted plans which illustrated that the windows would remain bricked up and that delegated authority was therefore being sought to review the amendment in consultation with HED.

As noted in the Late Items Pack, HED had reiterated its objection and had also suggested a number of negative conditions on a without prejudice basis, relating to the materials used, windows and joinery.

The Committee noted that DfI Roads had no objections subject to conditions and informatives.

After discussion, the Committee granted approval to the applications, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, including the resolution of issues with HED regarding the materials.

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**LA04/2019/1063/F – Single storey rear infill extension at  
52 Oakland Avenue**

The Case officer explained that the application had been submitted for the Committee's consideration as the applicant was a member of staff in the Planning and Building Control Department.

She explained the principal aspects of the application for a single storey rear infill extension.

The Members were advised that no objections had been received.

The Committee granted approval to the application subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Chairperson

# Planning Committee

Tuesday, 13th August, 2019

## MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);  
Alderman Rodgers; and  
Councillors Brooks, Canavan, Collins,  
Groogan, Hussey, McKeown,  
McMullan, Nicholl and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and  
Building Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;  
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development  
Management); and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Garrett and Murphy.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of 11th and 13th June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor O'Hara declared an interest in Item 6a, LA04/2019/0896/F – Demolition of vacant bank and erection of a mixed use development – 1 retail unit and 1 café/restaurant unit, 8 apartments, landscaping and associated site and access works at 423 – 427 Ormeau Road, in that his partner was related to one of the objectors, so he would leave the room whilst the Committee considered the application.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in Item 6a, LA04/2019/0896/F – Demolition of vacant bank and erection of a mixed use development – 1 retail unit and 1 café/restaurant unit, 8 apartments, landscaping and associated site and access works at 423 – 427 Ormeau Road, in that she would be speaking against the application and would therefore leave the room whilst the Committee considered the application.

Councillor Nicholl declared an interest in Item 6b, LA04/2018/0328/F – 14 houses and pumping station at Finaghy Park Central, in that she would be speaking against the

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application and would therefore leave the room whilst the Committee considered the application.

**Committee Site Visits**

It was noted that the Committee had undertaken site visits on 18th July in respect of two applications, LA04/2019/0896/F – Demolition of vacant bank and erection of a mixed use development – 1 retail unit and 1 café/restaurant unit, 8 apartments, landscaping and associated site and access works at 423-427 Ormeau Road and LA04/2018/2649/F – Demolition of existing building and construction of 178 apartments, a gym, 3 retail units and associated car parking and landscaping on lands at 3-9 Dalton Street (bordered by Middlepath Street and Bridge End).

It was also noted that the Committee had undertaken a site visit on 8th August in respect of application LA04/2018/0328/F – 14 houses and pumping station at Finaghy Park Central.

**Abandonments and Extinguishments**

The Committee was apprised of correspondence which had been received relating to the:

- proposed abandonment of land/footpath at 11 Chichester Street, BT1 4JA; and
- an extinguishment of a Public Right of Way Order No. 1 at lands at Westlink Pathway, starting to the rear of 68 Cullingtree Road and 4 Quadrant Place and extending to the rear of 8 Quadrant Place, along with a portion of pathway to the rear of 11 Quadrant Place.

The Committee noted the correspondence.

**Planning Appeals Notified**

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission.

**Planning Decisions Issued**

The Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Director of Planning and Building Control, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 25th June and 5th August, 2019.

In response to a request from a Member, officers agreed to check the enforcement position of decisions 19/1170/LDE and 19/1299/LDE.

**Planning Applications**

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

**(Reconsidered) LA04/2019/0896/F - Demolition of vacant  
bank and erection of a mixed use development - 1 retail unit  
and 1 café/restaurant unit, 8 apartments, landscaping and  
associated site and access works at 423-427 Ormeau Road**

(Councillor O'Hara declared an interest in the item, in that his partner was related to one of the objectors against the application, and he left the room for the duration of the discussion.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in the item, in that she had assisted residents with an objection to the application and explained that she would be speaking against the application. She left the room while the Committee considered the application.)

The case officer reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 2nd July, it had agreed to defer consideration of the proposal in order to undertake a site visit to allow Members to acquaint themselves with the location and the proposals at first hand. She explained that the site visit had taken place on 18th July.

The case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the proposals, which included the construction of a three storey mixed-use development.

She explained that the site was unzoned whiteland within the development limits of Belfast as designated in the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) and that it fell within a designated shopping and commercial area along the arterial route of the Ormeau Road in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP). The Members were advised that, overall, the proposal would help reinstate the role and function of the arterial route through the restoration of a gap site in accordance with SPPS and draft BMAP.

The Members were advised that the separation distances were considered acceptable in relation to the properties to the rear of the site and that the corners to the rear of the building had been reduced to 2 storeys, in order to minimise impact on the surrounding buildings.

The case officer explained that one objection had been received from a resident of a neighbouring property, citing concerns with access to the site during construction, disruption and noise pollution, the location of waste management and recycling facilities, rodent infestation and seeking assurance that the existing limited parking on the street would be unaffected.

The Members were advised that no objections had been received from statutory consultees, subject to conditions, and drew the Committee's attention to a number of conditions which had been recommended by Environmental Health.

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The Committee was advised that Councillor Groogan wished to speak against the application. She outlined that the application was within the draft Ormeau Area of Townscape Character (ATC) and that she felt that the plans did not enhance the distinctive character of the ATC, particularly in reference to the use of white render in the proposals. She explained that she felt that the designs relied too heavily on the Curzon site and that the proposed building was higher than the existing buildings either side of it. She also raised concerns regarding the separation distances between the proposed development and the properties behind and that she felt it would lead to overlooking and overshadowing.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr T. Stokes, agent, to the meeting. He explained that he felt that the proposal presented a great opportunity to develop an unsightly part of the Ormeau Road on a main arterial route. He explained to the Members that the applicant had responded to concerns from residents and had moved the location of the bin storage on the site.

In response to a Member's question regarding the use of white render in the draft ATC, the case officer explained that there was a mixture of materials used within the ATC, and that the proposals were therefore considered appropriate.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

(Councillors Groogan and O'Hara returned to the meeting at this point)

**(Reconsidered) LA04/2018/0328/F - 14 houses and pumping station at Lands to the rear of 21 Finaghy Park Central**

(Councillor Nicholl declared an interest in the item in that she had assisted residents with an objection to the application and advised the Committee that she would be speaking against it. She left the room while the Committee considered the application.)

The case officer reminded the Committee that it had deferred consideration of the application in order to undertake a site visit to allow Members to acquaint themselves with the location and the proposals at first hand. She explained that a visit to the site had initially been attended by Members on 1st August but that they had been unable to gain access on that date. A site visit for Members took place on 8th August.

She provided the Committee with the key aspects of the application for 10 semi-detached and 4 detached dwellings, garages, associated car parking and a pumping station.

The Committee was advised that, under the adopted Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001, the site was unzoned white land and, under both the current draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) 2015 and the 2004 version, a portion of the site fell within the proposed Finaghy Area of Townscape Character. The case officer explained that the proposed land use for housing was considered acceptable in principle, providing that it was compatible with all other relevant planning policy.

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She advised the Committee that the proposed layout of the development was deemed acceptable and it was considered that the site could accommodate the proposed number of dwellings of the scale and mass proposed, without detrimentally impacting on the residential amenity of existing neighbours. She added that the proposals met all space standards and that in-curtilage parking was provided for each dwelling, in addition to 8 visitor parking spaces.

In relation to the proposed amenity space for each dwelling, the case officer outlined that each of the proposed dwellings exceeded the minimum requirement of 40m<sup>2</sup>, with 13 out of the 14 dwellings exceeding the recommended 70m<sup>2</sup> as set out in Creating Places.

The case officer advised that an office meeting with residents, facilitated by Councillor Nicholl, had taken place on 30th July. She explained that a number of issues were discussed with the residents, including information relating to traffic, the sewerage system and the scale of the development. The case officer confirmed that no requests for Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) had been recorded for the site in the past 12 years.

She advised the Committee that NI Water and Environmental Health had both requested additional information in relation to the proposed pumping station and, having since received the information, had confirmed that they were content.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Nicholl, who wished to address the Committee on behalf of some nearby residents. Councillor Nicholl thanked the officers for the informative residents' meeting which had been held on 30th July, where the majority of their concerns had been addressed.

She explained that the residents which she was representing were not against any development taking place at the site and that they appreciated that development of the site could enhance the area and increase the value of their homes. She advised the Members that, for the most part, the residents were content with the design and quality of the current proposals but that they wanted to ensure that it wouldn't negatively impact their homes and the surrounding area. She explained that some residents had outstanding concerns, including the DfI Roads Traffic report, queries relating to which large trees were going to be removed as there was a risk of subsidence and concerns regarding the possible spread of Japanese knotweed. Additionally, she explained that NI Transport Holding Company had not responded as a statutory consultee and she requested that the Committee would consider deferring consideration of the application to allow a meeting with the Company to take place regarding a query over land ownership.

The Committee then welcomed Mr. D. Donaldson, the agent, to the meeting. He explained that the proposed development was a significant investment for a local company with a proven track record in high quality development. He explained that permission was urgently required in order to maintain continuity of employment for its workforce.

He pointed out that the report listed that 68 objections had been received, but he explained that the majority of the objections had been submitted from six addresses, with

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23 of the objections from the same address. He added that 80% of the addresses in Finaghy Park Central had not objected to the proposals.

He explained that a letter of support had been submitted from a nearby resident, outlining that the application was reasonable in scale, and that approval of the proposal would remove the uncertainties relating to the property prices in the area and what would eventually be constructed on the site.

Whilst he confirmed that the concerns from residents in relation to traffic were noted and were important, Mr Donaldson explained that paragraph 5.72 of SPPS stated that planning authorities should be guided by the principle that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and other material considerations. Given that BMAP had been quashed by the High Court, he pointed out that the BUAP 2001 was the statutory plan and it contained no designated plans for this site. He advised that DfI Roads had accepted that safe access had been achieved and that Finaghy Park Central could accommodate the development.

He explained that the proposed plans had taken into account that Finaghy Park Central was an established suburban area, providing 14 family homes of various sizes and thereby contributing to the Belfast Agenda targets. He advised that it was not a high density site and that one dwelling had in fact been removed from the original plans following consultation with the planning service.

In response to a Member's question, the case officer explained that NI Water had confirmed that there was capacity in current system and that the foul pumping station will be maintained and adopted by NI Water.

(Councillor Nicholl left the room at this point)

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. G. Lawther from DfI Roads was in attendance and he was welcomed to the meeting. A Member queried the Cumulative impact of a number of developments having been approved in the wider area, and whether DfI Roads had taken account of the impact on the wider traffic network. In response, Mr. Lawther explained that the predicted traffic volume for the site was approximately 100 vehicles per day, which would not be detrimental to the traffic volume or the risk of accidents in Finaghy Park Central.

In response to a Member's question regarding the site density, the case officer confirmed to the Committee that the application would not lift the density of the area to an unacceptable level.

A Member expressed concern that no response had been received from NI Railways/Transport Holding Company and suggested that the Committee should write to NI Transport Holding Company asking it to confirm its position on the application. The case officer explained that the red line application did not encroach onto the railway and she advised the Members that the company only engaged with applications which were of interest to it and that the application had been with the Planning Service for 18 months. She confirmed to the Committee that a consultation, and reminders, had been sent to the



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company regarding the application and that no response had been received, which indicated that they had no significant interest.

During discussion, a number of Members raised queries regarding land ownership and over possible subsidence if trees were to be removed. The case officer explained that the inner line of trees on the site could be removed at any time as they were within the ownership of the applicant and they were not protected. She highlighted that the stability of the land on the bank during construction was a civil matter and that officers had recommended a construction management plan as part of the recommended approval. The Committee was advised that, as the agent was in attendance, he could perhaps clarify the extent of the applicant's ownership.

In response to a request by the Chairperson, Mr. Donaldson confirmed to the Committee that the applicant owned everything within the red line of the application. He stated that he was confident that they could develop the site within their ownership satisfactorily without impacting on the railway or the bank.

The Director of Planning and Building Control advised the Committee that it could determine that the application be approved with the caveat that officers would obtain clarity over the land ownership within the red line of the application and, if no issues were identified, that officers could proceed to determine planning approval or, if an issue did become apparent, that the application could be brought back to the Committee.

A further Member suggested that the Committee should defer consideration in order to facilitate a discussion between the residents and NI Transport Holding Company. The Director of Planning and Building Control advised the Committee that it would not be the role of the Planning Service to facilitate discussion between residents and the NI Transport Holding Company, and that it was up to the company to confirm to the local planning authority what their position was to enable officers to determine the soundness of an application.

After discussion, the Chairperson put the case officer's recommendations to the Committee for its consideration, namely:

"That planning permission be granted, subject to conditions, and that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions as set out in draft in the case officer's report."

On a vote by show of hands, five Members voted for the recommendation and five against. As there was an equality of votes, the Chairperson exercised his second and casting vote for the recommendation and it was accordingly declared carried.

**LA04/2018/0619/F - 38 Dwellings on lands bounded  
north west of Lawnbrook Avenue**

(Alderman Rodgers left the meeting at this point)

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The Committee was apprised of the principal aspects of the application for two storey dwellings. She explained that the site was located within an inner urban area of the north west of the City and was part of a wider residential programme to replace old terraced housing stock in the area. The Members were advised that the adopted Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 designated the site as a Housing Action Area, whereas in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015, the area was within the proposed Shankill Area of Townscape Character. She explained that the Housing Strategy of BUAP 2001 included the renewal of poor housing stock as a development priority, where Policy H2 identified the clearance and rebuilding of unfit houses and that the principle of development was therefore acceptable.

The Committee was advised that the density of the proposed development was lower than the surrounding area, which ensured that each dwelling benefitted from front and rear gardens in lieu of the previous small rear yards.

In relation to parking, the case officer explained that ten in-curtilage spaces and 43 on-street spaces were proposed and, whilst this was less than the specified parking standard, given the sites inner urban location with good access to local amenities and public transport links, it was considered acceptable.

The Members were advised that Environmental Health, DfI Roads, NI Water, Rivers Agency, HED and NIEA had confirmed that they had no objections to the proposals.

The case officer outlined that a letter of support had been received. She also advised the Members that two letters had also been received which had no objection to the lands being used for housing but had raised concerns relating to construction traffic and seeking clarification on a boundary which was located outside of the site.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

(Alderman Rodgers returned to the meeting at this point)

**(Reconsidered) LA04/2018/2649/F - Demolition of existing building and construction of 178 apartments, a gym, 3 retail units and associated car parking and landscaping on lands at 3-9 Dalton Street (bordered by Middlepath Street and Bridge End)**

The case officer reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 2nd July, it had agreed to defer consideration of the proposal in order to undertake a site visit to allow Members to acquaint themselves with the location and the proposals at first hand. He explained that the site visit had taken place on 18th July.

He provided the Committee with the details of the proposed development for a building of no more than 17 storeys.

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The case officer outlined that the site fell within the City Centre boundary in both versions of dBMAP and he advised the Committee that the proposed uses were broadly acceptable. He explained that a previous permission, which had since expired, had been granted for the site which, similarly to the current application, comprised residential, retail and office uses. Accordingly, he advised the Members that the principle of development and mix of uses were considered acceptable.

He advised the Members that one objection from a neighbouring property had been received raising potential issues during construction. As it was a civil matter, he explained that this issue lay outside of the planning process.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, where two outstanding consultation responses had been received, from the Historic Environment Division (HED) and from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), both of which had no objections subject to conditions.

The Committee was advised that the proposed materials, design and fenestration were consistent with the area and were considered acceptable. The case officer explained that each unit had adequate outlook to the street and that they were all in accordance with, or exceeded, the standards as set out in PPS7.

The Committee approved the application and, in accordance with Section 76 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control, in conjunction with the City Solicitor, to enter into discussions with the applicant to explore the scope of any planning agreements which might be realised at the site. The Committee also delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2019/0553/F and LA04/2019/0420/DCA - Demolition of existing building and erection of 175 bed aparthotel with associated bar, restaurant and conferencing facilities and associated works on Land at Lyndon Court , 32-38 Queen Street**

Before presentation of the application commenced, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposals at first hand.

The Committee noted that, as the application had not been presented, all Members' present at the next meeting, would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.

**LA04/2019/0845/F - Alteration and conversion of former mill building to provide social housing comprising of 77no. units (19no. own door duplex townhouses and 55 no. 3 person 2 bedroom apartments) Brookfield Mill, 309-355 Crumlin Road**

Before presentation of the application commenced, a Member proposed that the application be deferred for a site visit.

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Moved by Councillor Hussey,  
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers

That the application be deferred to enable a site visit to be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposals at first hand.

On a vote by show of hands, five Members voted for the proposal and five against. As there was an equality of votes the Chairperson exercised his second and casting vote against the Motion and it was accordingly declared lost.

Accordingly, the case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application. She advised the Members that there had been an error in the report and that the application was for 77 units, 22 of which were own-door duplex townhouses and 55 of which were 3 person, 2 bedroom apartments.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, where an outstanding consultee response had been received from the Rivers Agency in relation to the submitted Drainage Assessment, stating that they had no objections subject to standing guidance.

The case officer explained that, given the development plan zoning and the surrounding context which consisted of housing and a business park, the principle of housing at the site was acceptable, subject to detailed design and layout considerations.

She outlined that DfI Roads, Environmental Health, Rivers Agency, NI Environment Agency, NI Housing Executive, NI Electricity and NI Water had no objections to the proposal, subject to conditions.

The Members were advised that the proposed scheme would create a quality residential environment, contribute positively to the local environment through the development of a dilapidated site whilst reusing the historic mill building. The case officer also explained that a Section 76 Agreement would be put in place to restrict occupancy to social housing and that this would therefore help to address need in the area.

She confirmed to the Members that the proposal included enhancements to the public realm immediately abutting the site and the provision of open space. She also explained that the agent was willing to provide public realm improvements onto the Crumlin Road and that it would be dealt with through a negative condition.

In response to a Member's question regarding the low provision of parking on the site, the case officer explained that the applicant had provided a survey of parking use for the adjacent social housing site, where a low level of car ownership had been demonstrated and that 68 car parking spaces for the site was therefore acceptable.

The Committee approved the application and, in accordance with Section 76 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control, in conjunction with the City Solicitor, to finalise the wording of conditions and to enter into the Section 76 Agreement.

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**LA04/2019/0909/F - Demolition of existing building at Oxford and Gloucester House and erection of 11 storey mixed use building, ground floor coffee/restaurant/retail use incl. odour abatement, upper floor office accommodation and all associated site and access works on lands at no's 43-63 Chichester Street 29-31 Gloucester Street and Seymour Lane**

The case officer provided the Committee with the key details of the application. He explained that the principle of demolition and the redevelopment with an 11 storey building had already been established under planning permission LA04/2017/2268/F. He explained that the proposal in front of the Committee sought to amend that permission.

The Committee was provided with an overview of the policies which the proposals had been measured against and the key issues which had been considered by officers, such as the principle of use on the site, access, movements, parking and transportation and impact on the Victoria Street/Oxford Street Area of Townscape Character (ATC).

The Members were advised that the basement car park had been relocated to the ground floor, comprising 14 car parking spaces and 170 cycle parking spaces, with a proposed vehicular access from Gloucester Street. The proposals also included that the top three floors would have a decreased set back from the original approval which he explained would still allow for the provision of a landscaped roof garden on the eighth floor.

The case officer advised the Members that no objections had been received and that no statutory consultees had raised any issues of principle. He explained that the Council's Urban Design officer had expressed reservations about the scale and massing of the proposal in its entirety but had acknowledged that the visuals had shown the proposed amendments to make minimal changes to how the building would be viewed at street level and that it was therefore considered that the changes would be acceptable on balance.

The Committee was advised that Rivers Agency had sought additional information in relation to the submitted Drainage Assessment and that it was therefore recommended that the Committee would delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report, and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

**Miscellaneous Items**

**Training Programme for Members**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of NILGA’s 2019 Planning Training Programme for elected members (Appendix 1); seek permission for two Planning Committee members to participate in the full programme; and to provide an outline programme for potential Committee workshops for August 2019 to April 2020 (Appendix 2).**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- **note the appended NILGA 2019 Planning Training Programme for elected members;**
- **approve the attendance of the Chair and Deputy Chair of Planning Committee, or their nominees, to participate in the NILGA 2019 Planning Training Programme; and**
- **consider the draft Continuing development Programme for Committee Workshops.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 NILGA 2019 Planning Training Programme Invitation**

**NILGA has designed a regional elected member development programme for implementation during 2019-2020 following on from the 2018 pilot. The programme builds on the NILGA training initiative co-designed with the elected member development groups and the Regional Working Group.**

**3.2 The overall NILGA elected member development programme includes a strand in respect of a Local Planning Programme for elected members, a copy of which is set out at Appendix One. NILGA has commissioned the seven module programme, which will run from September 2019 into April 2020 based on the experience from the pilot in 2018. Each module will be held on a Friday afternoon with a proposed study trip in March 2020. At this stage it is anticipated that the venue for the training will be Antrim Civic Centre.**

**3.3 The programme will be interactive in nature and will be delivered by a pool of planning practitioners (details of the providers are included at Appendix 1). The programme will include short presentations; discussions; case studies and benchmarking practice in other jurisdictions; workshops with role play activity; a mock appeal; question & answer sessions; and an optional site visit to a council in Scotland.**

**3.4 A pre-requisite for the enrolment in the programme is that elected members who are nominated to attend must be in a position to complete all eight modules. Elected members who successfully complete the full programme, to a satisfactory standard, will be accredited with an endorsed Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) development award.**

**3.5 Committee Workshops Programme**

**Members previously identified a number of areas of planning that could be included as part of a continuing development programme and this Committee requested a session in relation to the Local Development Plan. The appended programme seeks to set out suggested workshop sessions which will focus on some of the key issues identified and provide both support to members and the opportunity to explore some of the issues in more detail outside of the formal Committee sessions.**

**3.6 To address the issues raised the draft continuing development programme, detailing the proposed sessions and the indicative content, is set out at Appendix 2. It is proposed the programme will initially address the issues highlighted during previous discussions and as the programme progresses Members will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the sessions which they have attended and identify other topics or key issues they may wish to have included.**

**3.7 Finance and Resource Implications**

**The projected training costs associated with this report (£300-475 per participant and potential additional optional Study Visit cost) can be met from existing training budgets.**

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

**There are no equality or good relations implications associated with this report.”**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b>1</b>	Understanding Plan Making and the Role of Councillors	27th September 2019	Antrim Civic Centre
<b>2</b>	How Local Deve4lopment Planning is Linked to	25th October 2019	Antrim Civic Centre

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	Community Planning and Regeneration Activities		
<b>3</b>	Understanding the Local Development Plan Process from Draft Stage to Adoption	29th November 2019	Antrim Civic Centre
<b>4</b>	Understanding Development Management: The Planning Process and the Role of Councillors, Planning	21st January 2020	Antrim Civic Centre
<b>5</b>	Understanding the Statutory Appeal System and Best Practice	21st February 2020	Antrim Civic Centre
<b>6</b>	The Statutory Enforcement Process and the Role of the Planning Committee and other Councillors	20th March 2020	Antrim Civic Centre
	Study Trip	5th March 2020	Scotland
<b>7</b>	Maladministration Charges to the Ombudsmen and the Judicial Review of Planning Decisions	21st April 2020	Antrim Civic Centre

**Appendix 1:**

**NILGA Regional Programme for Elected Member  
Development 2019/20**

NILGA has developed an all council Regional Programme of Elected Member Development 2019/20, complementing your Council's specific training, designed to provide the local government sector's elected members with a co-ordinated toolkit of learning, suited to today's responsibilities and challenge. This builds on the NILGA delivered - nationally accredited Charter initiative, has been co-designed by councils' elected member development groups, councils' member services and human resource officials, and the NILGA Regional Working Group. As part of this, accredited provision is available to elected members related to Planning.

*The NILGA Local Planning Programme is an ILM (endorsed award), 7 Module Programme, commencing on the 27th September 2019 and will convene once every month as follows:*



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**Appendix 2**

**Draft Continuing development Programme for Committee Workshops.  
August 2019 – April 2020**

<b>Committee Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>
August 2019	<b>Local Development Plan</b> / Process / Examination / Policy Development / Future Status
September 2019	<b>Enforcement and Performance Monitoring / Improvement</b>
October 2019	<b>Development Management</b> / Process / Decision Making / Appeals / <b>Scheme of Delegation</b>
November 2019	<b>Developer Contributions</b>
January 2020	<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance</b> / Examples / Process / Policy Relationships / Future Status
February 2020	<b>Urban Design and Conservation</b>
March 2020	<b>Transportation Issues</b> /Highways / Access / Transport Assessments
April 2020	<b>Planning Conditions and Legal Agreements</b>

The Committee:

1. noted the NILGA 2019 Training Programme for elected Members;
2. agreed the attendance of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, or their nominees, to participate in the NILGA 2019 Planning Training Programme; and
3. agreed the draft Continuing Development Programme for Committee Workshops, and that all Members would be invited to attend.

**Response to DfC consultation on Affordable Housing definition**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 On 24 June 2019, the Department for Communities (DfC) launched a public consultation on proposed changes to the definition of Affordable Housing. The current definition, which is set out in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) for Northern Ireland, sets the regional policy framework within which new local planning policies for affordable housing in the Local Development Plan (LDP) have been developed.**

**1.2 This paper provides a brief overview of the proposed changes outlined within the consultation document and a summary of the draft response to be submitted by the Council.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:**

- **Approve the draft Council Response (Appendix 1) to Definition of Affordable Housing Consultation for submission to DfC in advance of the consultation deadline on 13 September.**

**3.0 Background**

**3.1 The Department for Communities (DfC) launched a public consultation on proposed changes to the definition of Affordable Housing on 24 June 2019. The move is aimed at improving access to suitable housing and therefore contributing to reducing housing stress.**

**3.2 The current definition of affordable housing, which is set out within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) for Northern Ireland, sets the regional policy framework within which new local planning policies for affordable housing in the Local Development Plan (LDP) have been developed. It was drafted to reflect the affordable housing products available at the time of its development, namely social housing and intermediate (shared ownership) housing.**

**3.3 However, the overall policy and funding environment has moved on somewhat since the SPPS was developed and, with new LDP policies emerging across NI, DfC now consider it timely to provide a revised regional definition of affordable housing. This is aimed at broadening the range of**

intermediate housing products available in NI to capitalise on opportunities presented as a result of new Government funding streams, the housing association sector's desire to diversify and grow and innovative new construction methods and products from private developers. The new definition of affordable housing will not impact on access to social housing.

- 3.4 As part of the emerging LDP, the Council published its draft Plan Strategy for public consultation on 20 September 2018. This included a new affordable housing policy (HOU5), which built upon the existing definition of affordable housing, emphasising the recognition that the definition of intermediate housing 'may change over time to incorporate other forms of housing tenure below market rates.' The proposal to review the regional definition to broaden is therefore particularly welcome in the context of the emerging LDP.

4.0 Main Issues

- 4.1 The existing definition of affordable housing states:

*'For the purposes of the SPPS, 'affordable housing' relates to social rented housing and intermediate housing.'*

- 4.2 Social housing is then defined in relation to provision by a registered housing association and offered to households in housing need with reference to the Common Selection Scheme. The consultation paper does not propose any fundamental change to this definition in relation to social housing.

- 4.3 Intermediate housing was then defined within the SPPS as shared ownership housing provided through a registered housing association, although it also recognised that this reflected the only intermediate housing product available at the time, and noted that the definition of intermediate housing 'may change over time to incorporate other forms of housing tenure below market rates.' The Council's draft Plan Strategy sought to broaden this definition of intermediate housing, suggesting a range of alternative products that may be available in the future. This broader range of products will be important to help greater viability in the delivery of affordable housing alongside private development.

- 4.4 The DfC consultation paper proposes the following revised definition:

*‘Affordable housing is housing provided for sale or rent outside of the general market, for those whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing which is funded by Government must remain affordable or, alternatively, there must be provision for the public subsidy to be repaid or recycled in the provision of new affordable housing.’*

4.5 The consultation then proceeds to identify a range of affordable housing models that offer examples of recognised affordable housing products in accordance with this revised definition. These reflect the list of products identified within the the draft Belfast LDP Plan Strategy and include:

- Social rented housing;
- Shared ownership housing;
- Rent to buy or Rent to own schemes;
- Shared equity schemes;
- Discount market sales housing;
- Affordable rent products; and
- Low cost housing without subsidy.

4.6 In summary, the response welcomes the proposed changes, but emphasises the importance of social housing remaining unchanged in terms of definition, continuing to be provided by registered housing associations in accordance with an agreed allocation process. It welcomes the change to allow the private sector to deliver other intermediate housing products where appropriate, but highlights the need to ensure this is effectively regulated /managed by the Department and /or NI Housing Executive. It also highlights the role of the Council through its planning function in relation to the delivery of affordable housing and the opportunity to continue effective joint working in relation to ‘operational level issues’ that require resolution in the short-term to ensure the effective delivery of our planning policy aspirations.

4.7 Members are asked to approve the full Council response to the consultation attached at Appendix 1.

4.8 **Finance and Resource Implications**

There are no resource implications associated with this report.

4.9 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

There are no equality or good relations implications arising from this report.”

Appendix 1 –

“Draft Belfast City Council response to the “Definition of Affordable Housing” Consultation Paper issued by the Department for Communities (DfC) on 24 June 2019

The Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Department’s proposals to revise the definition of affordable housing. As noted within the consultation document, the Council and DfC have worked closely together as the Council has developed its new Local Development Plan (LDP), particularly policies relating to affordable housing. The Council look forward to continuation of this strong partnership working following this consultation given that there are a number of ‘operational issues’ that will need to be resolved to achieve the shared objectives of the draft Programme for Government (dPFG), Belfast’s community plan, the Belfast Agenda, and the Council’s emerging LDP.

The Belfast Agenda seeks to “encourage more affordable housing (and agree a city target for affordable housing)” with the subsequent action to “develop, and consult on, planning policies (as part of the Belfast Local Development Plan development process) to support the delivery of affordable housing”. The proposal to update the definition will therefore support this by providing greater flexibility in the provision of affordable housing and by developing a broader range of intermediate housing products. The proposed broadening of the definition will also support the delivery of other Belfast Agenda commitments, in particular:

- Increase the tenure mix/supply of mixed tenure housing in the city centre;
- Grow the population in the city centre; and
- Address the housing needs of older and vulnerable residents.

The Council therefore welcome the revisions proposed, which broadly align with the policy approach the Council has already set out within our draft Plan Strategy (dPS) and the Belfast Agenda. With this context in mind, we have sought to provide feedback in relation to the consultation questions posed throughout the consultation document.

Q1. Do you think the current definition of affordable housing needs amended?

Yes, the definition of affordable housing should be reviewed to allow for a broader range of intermediate housing products in NI.

However, as recognised within the consultation paper, the existing definition of social housing is considered fit for purpose and as such

does not need to be amended through the revised definition. As part of our recent consultation on the draft affordable housing policy (HOU5) within the Belfast dPS, a number of respondents raised concerns that the social rented housing provision could be diluted through a broader focus on 'affordable' housing. To alleviate this concern, there may therefore be merit in stating explicitly that the definition of social housing is unaffected.

The current definition, as set out in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), achieves this by distinguishing firstly between social and intermediate housing as distinct sectors within a broader 'affordable' housing definition. There may therefore be some benefit in retaining this approach though the revised definition, with revisions to the broader definition of affordable housing only focussing upon the broader range of intermediate housing products.

**Q2. Do you agree with the overarching principles and objectives which have been identified?**

Yes, the Council welcome the overarching principles and proposed objectives, particularly the need "to provide a framework for how government and housing providers think about and deliver affordable housing" and "to provide clarity for the planning system". These are particularly important given the current context of councils developing new local affordable housing policies as part of emerging LDPs.

The need "to improve the range of affordable housing options" is also of importance and could maybe be strengthened through explicit recognition of broader affordability challenges within the private rented sector, which is not currently addressed by any of the affordable housing products available in NI.

**Q3. Do you agree with the proposed revised definition?**

As noted above, the Council welcome the proposed new definition for affordable housing, which broadly aligns with the Council's own approach to future planning policy as set out in Policy HOU5 of our dPS. This highlights the scope within the existing definition that "intermediate housing used for the purpose of this policy may change over time to incorporate other forms of housing tenure below open market rate".

The Council particularly welcome recognition – through omission from the revised definition – that intermediate housing need not always be provided by a Registered Housing Association (RHA). The Council view this change as extremely important in enabling broader intermediate housing products to be delivered by the private sector as part of mixed tenure development, which will be essential to

increasing the overall supply of affordable housing locally. Research completed recently for the Council by Colliers International notes that the funding models associated with the Build to Rent (BTR) sector will render existing affordable housing products undeliverable within this context. The recognition of the linkage between an affordable rent product and BTR in Chapter 7 is therefore particularly welcome.

Notwithstanding the above, the Council do not believe that it would be appropriate for social housing to be managed through the private sector, given the need for consistency in the allocation process, which is currently secured through the Common Waiting List and regulation of RHAs. This again may provide some justification for the revised definition to draw an explicit distinction between social housing and other intermediate affordable housing products. Alongside this, the Council note that it may be appropriate to future proof the definition of social housing by broadening the reference to an agreed allocation process rather than 'Common Waiting List'.

**Q4. Are there other products that we should consider for inclusion as examples of affordable housing?**

The Council welcome the range of affordable housing products highlighted within the consultation paper. These align closely with the work of Colliers International<sup>1</sup>, which highlights a number of affordable housing products available in other jurisdictions that could be considered in the NI context. We would encourage the Department to consider the recommendation of Colliers' work when evaluating the available products and funding mechanisms to ensure the products developed are appropriate to the Belfast (and NI) context. For example, the work highlights the need to differentiate the current co-ownership model for the Belfast City Centre market, given that the eligibility criteria relating to property size and or unit purchase price renders the existing product unsuitable for this context (see Recommendation 7 of Colliers' report).

As a note of caution, the Council would highlight the need to carefully consider mechanisms to monitor and regulate intermediate affordable housing products delivered, to ensure that the actual products delivered meet the objectives for affordable housing. There is a risk that the implementation of new affordable housing, particularly through the private sector, could be left to local councils to 'regulate' as part of the monitoring of s76 Planning Agreements.

Given that the councils do not have any explicit statutory function relating to affordable housing, it may be more appropriate for the Department and/or the NI Housing Executive (NIHE) to consider some form of accreditation of new products to verify that the products delivered continue to meet the agreed definition. This will be

particularly important in relation to eligibility for products in the light of the expectation that new products could “ultimately reduce pressure on social housing”, as well as the sale price/rental price for such products and the recycling of any public investment.

**Q5. Do you agree with our proposed definition of low cost housing without subsidy? And**

**Q6. Do you consider that low cost housing without subsidy should be included in a new definition of affordable housing?**

Whilst the Council have no objection to the inclusion of or definition of low cost housing without subsidy, it will be important that this does not result in sub-standard accommodation, in terms of size or design quality, in order to achieve a lower price. It is also the Council’s view that this should not become the norm in terms of affordable housing delivery by the private sector, but should rather be reserved as a last resort where it can be demonstrated that other forms of affordable housing product are unviable.

**Q7. What are your views on retaining affordable homes?**

The Council are of the view that affordable housing products should remain affordable in perpetuity wherever possible. Where this cannot be achieved, any public subsidy to develop affordable housing should be recycled into the delivery of replacement affordable products. This was reflected in the Council’s response to the consultation on the future of the House Sales Scheme in NI; a scheme which in effect results in the loss of affordable housing stock without a direct recycling of funding. However, as noted above, this cannot be left for local councils to secure this via s76 Planning Agreements.

**Q8. Are these the right target groups or are there other groups we should consider?**

The Council agree with the target groups identified within Chapter 8 of the consultation document. However, we would also highlight the fact that circumstances of any particular individual may mean an intermediate housing product could provide the best means of meeting their housing needs. The eligibility criteria for individual products should therefore enable any such individuals to access products if appropriate, even where they fall outside of these specific target groups.

**Q9. Do you have any other comments?**

The consultation paper stresses in Chapter 5 the importance of complementarity between councils and the Department in relation to



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**the provision of affordable housing, particularly given the councils' planning functions. The Council welcome this recognition and would welcome the opportunity for further joint working with the Department in considering "operational issues" at a later stage.**

**However, the Council would emphasise the need to consider these delivery issues sooner rather than later, as the establishment of delivery mechanisms will be key to ensuring that local affordable housing policies are deliverable. Paragraph 7.10 of the consultation refers to the retention of affordable housing being "underpinned by appropriate planning conditions", but there is no mention of s76 Planning Agreements, which may be a more appropriate mechanism to secure such requirements. As noted above, the Council cannot be left to monitor the delivery of affordable housing products via its planning function given that it has no direct statutory responsibility for affordable housing provision."**

After discussion, the Committee agreed the draft Council response to the Definition of Affordable Housing Consultation for submission to the Department for Communities (DfC), with the addition of a comment conveying the Committee's concerns in respect of the interpretation of affordable levels of rent or purchase along with a commitment to early engagement from DfC on the future approach to affordability assessment.

(At this stage of the meeting, the Committee agreed to adjourn for a period of 10 minutes.)

(Councillors Carson and Canavan left the meeting at this point)

**Restricted Items**

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

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

**Governance for Spending Developer Contributions**

(Councillor Brooks, Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

The Planning Manager (Development Management) provided the Committee with an update on the current position on, and of the proposed governance arrangements for, spending pre-existing and future financial contributions which had been secured through Section 76 Planning Agreements.

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He explained that the proposed governance arrangements would be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for its approval later in the month.

The Members were also advised that that an Annual Monitoring Report on financial developer contributions would be published each year.

In response to a Member's suggestion, the Director of Planning and Building Control agreed that the Planning Department would provide the Committee with updates on examples of good practice of where Section 76 Planning Agreements had made a positive impact on the City.

The Committee noted the update provided.

**Response to Dfl consultation on  
Development Plan Practice Note 10**

(Mr. K. Sutherland, Development Planning and Policy Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The Committee was advised that, on 22nd July, the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) had issued the "Draft Development Plan Practice Note 10 – Submitting Development Plan Documents for Independent Examination".

The Development Planning and Policy Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the proposed guidance and a summary of the Council's proposed response. He outlined to the Committee a number of concerns which officers had in respect of the Practice Note.

A number of Members expressed concerns that the document had been released over the summer months and shared the concerns which had been voiced by officers in relation to the meaning of the Practice Note.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. that the proposed response be submitted to the Draft Development Plan Practice Note 10 - "Submitting Development Plan Documents for Independent Examination";
2. that a cover letter be included with the Council's response, outlining Members' concerns in relation to the document having been launched over the summer months, as well as the concerns and points of clarity which the officers had raised in relation to the proposed guidance; and
3. that representatives from the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) be invited to a future meeting to discuss the guidance.

Chairperson

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

Monday, 19th August, 2019

### **MEETING OF BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE**

Members present: Councillor Mulholland (Chairperson);  
The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Canavan, Cobain, Flynn,  
Groves, M. Kelly and McAteer.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;  
Ms. C. Toolan, Managing Director, Belfast Waterfront  
and Ulster Hall Ltd.;  
Ms. L. Doyle, Operations Director; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Copeland and Councillors Collins and Kyle.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 20th March were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st April.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Ms. C. Toolan declared an interest in Item 2a, Board Evaluation Outcomes, in that some parts of the discussion would affect her role, and she left the room for the duration of the item.

#### **Schedule of Meetings 2019/2020**

The Committee agreed to the following schedule of meetings:

- Monday 18th November, 2019;
- Monday 20th January, 2020;
- Monday 17th February, 2020;
- Monday 18th May, 2020; and
- Monday 15th June, 2020.

**RESTRICTED ITEMS**

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

**Board Evaluation Report Outcomes**

(Ms. C. Toolan left the meeting for the duration of this item.)

The Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Governance Review and an accompanying officer report was tabled at the meeting.

The Director of Economic Development advised the Committee that an independent Board of Directors was established shortly after BWUH Ltd. had been formed as a company by the Council in early 2016.

He explained that the Board consisted of a Chairman and five Non-Executive Directors and that four of the current Directors had been appointed in April 2016. In accordance with the Articles of Association, they were due to retire at the end of March 2019 or be extended for a further three years. The Committee was advised that it had, at a Special meeting on 20th March 2019, agreed a temporary extension to extend their term to 31st July 2019, to allow the Board Evaluation to be completed.

The Members were advised that two additional Directors had been recruited in February 2018 in order to bring additional skills, knowledge and expertise which had been identified as priority areas.

He advised the Committee that the BWUH Ltd. Board Evaluation had been completed in March 2019. He outlined that the findings and recommendations were intended to support the Board and senior management to continue to improve the effectiveness of the board and the governance of the company, in order to ensure it had the structures, processes and behaviours to provide effective leadership and governance of this dynamic organisation in the future.

In line with the recommendations from the Evaluation, the Committee was advised that it was being asked to consider that the Chairman be reappointed to the Board for a further period of three years, up until 31st March 2023, and that the term of the longest serving Non-Executive Directors be extended to 31st March 2020, in order to allow enough time to recruit new members.

The Director of Economic Development explained that the Evaluation report had advised that, in line with good governance, a Board should appoint an officer of the company as a member of the Board. He informed the Committee that the Board wished to appoint the Chief Executive of the BWUH Ltd. as a Board member, and that she had the requisite experience and had completed the Certificate in Corporate Governance from the Institute of Directors.

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He outlined that the fees for the Non-Executive Board Directors and the Chairman were recommended to be enhanced in order that they would better reflect the requirements and expertise of the roles. He advised the Committee that, whilst private sector remuneration levels were significantly higher, and that it was difficult to find like-for-like organisations, officers had conducted some industry benchmarking through Pay Benchmark Scales and were recommending increases in fees for the Non-Executive Directors and for the Chairman.

A number of Members expressed concerns that, as the report had been tabled, they had not had the required time to read or consider the recommendations regarding the increase in remuneration paid to the Board Directors or the Chairman.

During discussion, a number of Members requested information on the Boards which officers had used as comparators and how much time BWUH Ltd. Board members spent on their role.

The Director of Finance and Resources highlighted to the Committee that the Board would not be able to advertise for two new Board Directors until the fees had been agreed.

Moved by Councillor McAteer,  
Seconded by Councillor Flynn and

Resolved - that the Committee agrees:

1. to defer consideration to a Special meeting on Friday, 23rd August at 1 p.m., regarding the proposed increase to the fees for the Non-Executive Board Directors and the Chairman; and
2. that information be circulated to the Committee in advance of that meeting, detailing the figures which officers used to benchmark the proposed new fees, and information pertaining to the number of days spent by the Chairman and the Non-Executive Board Directors on BWUH Ltd. Board-related work.

After discussion, the Committee further agreed that:

1. the Chairman be reappointed to the Board for a further period of three years from now until 31st March, 2023;
2. the term of the longest serving Non-Executive Directors be extended to 31st March, 2020 to allow enough time to recruit new members;
3. a process to recruit two new Board members would commence in September 2019, with two new Non-Executive Directors ready to commence in time for the financial year in 2019/2020 with a focus on the skills identified in the Board review Report;
4. the Chief Executive be appointed as a member of the Board of Directors; and
5. if officers deemed future reports commercially confidential, that Members of the BWUH Shareholders' Committee would be invited to view them at least 2 hours in advance of the meeting in order

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that they were not expected to make decisions without having all the information which they required to do so.

**Performance Report - Quarter 1, 2019/2020**

(Ms. C. Toolan, Managing Director of BWUH Ltd., returned to the meeting at this point.)

The Managing Director of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. (BWUH Ltd.) provided the Committee with an overview of the Company's mission, vision and governance structure. She invited the new Members of the Committee to undertake a tour of the ICC Belfast.

She advised the Committee of the Company's performance during April, May and June, 2019, and provided a detailed analysis of actual performance against the budget, in relation to sales and overhead costs. The Members were advised that the company was on target to achieve its goals.

The Members were advised of the company's strategic goals and how it was achieving, or surpassing, the targets in relation to the number of conferences held, the number of delegate days and the economic return to the City by 2020/2021.

The Committee was given an overview of the sales pipeline for conferences and entertainment for the coming years. It was pointed out that 2020/2021 remained a challenging year for the company.

The Operations Director provided the Members with an update on the pro-active sales and marketing activity which had been undertaken by the team. She highlighted to the Members that the recent C&IT Agency Forum had been very successful for the company and that the BWUH team's hard work had paid off in showcasing the City.

The Members were advised of the feedback which had been received from conference organisers and entertainment customers in relation to both venues.

The Operations Director provided the Committee with an overview of the targets as set out in the Letter of Offer, and the company's performance in each area. She highlighted that the absence figures were 1.2% higher than the target and explained that work was ongoing to reduce this.

The Managing Director highlighted to the Committee that more and more event organisers were interested in a venue's sustainability and environmental policies and that it would be important for the company's success moving forward.

She advised the Members that a new website and ticketing system had been launched for the entertainment side of the business and that they were operating well.

The Members were reminded that the previous catering contract for the business had been terminated in June, 2018. The Managing Director explained that the tender for the catering contract had been issued in March 2019 by an external consultant, with tenders for the cleaning and security commencing in the coming months.

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The Managing Director provided the Committee with an update on the company's Corporate Social Responsibility and explained that Autism NI had been chosen as the charity for the financial year.

The Members were advised that a Conditions Survey was being completed to establish priorities for the capital programme. In response to a request from a Member, the Managing Director confirmed that she would endeavour to outline the difference costs relating to each venue in future reports.

A number of Members requested information regarding the potential for apprenticeship positions within the business. The Manager Director explained that the creation of apprenticeships continued to be a challenge as they did not have any tradesmen as full-time employees within the business, but that they were still working towards apprenticeship positions within the business. The Operations Director added that they worked closely with the Ulster University and Belfast Met, and that they were soon hoping to take on a Digital Marketing student within the company.

In response to a Member's query regarding the impact of Brexit on the business so far, the Managing Director advised the Committee that five conferences had been lost as a result of the uncertainty around Brexit. She explained that one of the reasons cited by an organiser related to the uncertainty in relation to Value Added Tax rates.

In response to a further question, the Managing Director confirmed to the Committee that all staff employed by BWUH Ltd. received a Living Wage.

The Committee noted the update which was provided.

Chairperson

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

Friday, 23rd August, 2019

## **SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE**

Members present: Councillor Mulholland (Chairperson);  
The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford);  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Canavan, Collins, Flynn,  
Groves, Magee and McAteer.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Ms. C. Toolan, Managing Director, Belfast Waterfront  
and Ulster Hall Ltd.; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Copeland and Councillors Cobain and M. Kelly.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

### **RESTRICTED ITEM**

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

#### **Deferred Item**

#### **Remuneration for the Non-Executive Directors and the Chairman of the BWUH Ltd. Board**

The Managing Director of BWUH Ltd. provided the Committee with an overview of the comparative sources which had been used to determine the proposed increases in remuneration for the Non-Executive Directors and the Chairman of the BWUH Board.

A number of Members expressed concerns at the percentage increases which were proposed.

The Managing Director explained that, in order to attract and retain the people with the required skills, the company would have to pay the market rate for similar sized businesses. She emphasised that it was a commercial business and that she required

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the Shareholder Committee's support in order that she could continue to meet the objectives of the Business.

A Member suggested a number of ways in which the Board members could undertake a number of additional duties in order to justify the proposed increases, and to encourage more frequent interaction between the BWUH Board and the Shareholders' Committee.

After discussion it was

Proposed by Alderman Haire and  
Seconded by Councillor McAteer

That the remuneration be increased for the Non-Executive Directors from £5,000 per annum to £8,000 per annum, and for the Chairman from £10,000 to £18,000 per annum on the basis that:

1. the number of days work expected per Board Member be increased from 12 days to 24 days per annum;
2. Board Members, including the Chairman, be encouraged to attend the Shareholders' Committee meetings on occasion;
3. the Committee meets at the ICC Belfast at a future date, in order to meet both the Board and staff members; and
4. the Equality Commission's report on staff within the business be presented to the Committee for its consideration.

On a vote by show of hands, eight Members voted for the proposal and one against and it was accordingly declared carried.

Chairperson

## Brexit Committee

Thursday, 22nd August, 2019

### MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor de Faoite (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Haire and Rodgers; and  
Councillors D. Baker, Brooks, Canavan,  
Michael Collins, Flynn, Hutchinson, Magennis,  
McAteer, McLaughlin, McKeown, Newton and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. K. Walsh, Business, Research and Development  
Manager; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

No apologies were reported.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 20th June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### **Update on Day 1 Preparedness**

(Mr. D. Neill, Emergency Co-Ordination Officer, and Mr. D. Connolly, City Protection Manager, attended the meeting in connection with this item.)

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided an overview of the following report:

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

**The purpose of this report is to outline for Members work that is currently being undertaken in relation to the Council’s Brexit Day 1 preparedness.**

##### **1.0 Recommendations**

**Members are asked to note this update.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Members are reminded that that the previous Committee had been provided with regular updates on the work that is ongoing in relation to identifying potential Day 1 service implications in relation to Brexit. Members will be aware that there is ongoing uncertainty around the outcome and timings around the exit from the EU, therefore Officers are currently preparing for the possibility of a 'no deal' scenario on 31st October and any disruption that may or may not occur in the period leading up to and after it.

Work previously undertaken

Members are advised that in the period prior to the potential exit on the 29th March the following actions were undertaken:

- 1) The Council's critical services completed Brexit Resilience Measures templates to identify the potential impact that Brexit may have on service delivery over the six week period after exit from the EU and the necessary resilience measures that need to be taken before the exit date.
- 2) Responsible officers reviewed and updated their Business Continuity Plans ensuring that it deals with service delivery post Brexit, and have communicated it to relevant staff.

A process was also in place whereby emergency planning staff provided situational reporting and daily position statements to the Council's senior management team on critical services. A process for internal situational reporting was developed and critical services were asked to email the report to the Emergency Co-ordination Centre (ECC) each morning in order to allow Emergency Planning to collate the information and escalate any emerging issues. Collated information was then sent to the reporting points on a daily basis and where appropriate forwarded to Chief Officers, Heads of Services, Corporate Communications and Elected Members.

Members are advised that this process went live w/c 25th March and reporting took place for several days, however due to the change of the exit date from 29th March and uncertainty around the timings of the exit, it was decided by the NICS that daily reporting was not required at this point and that the frequency of reporting would be kept under review as the situation evolves. Members should note that this period of reporting was a good test of the reporting arrangements and

officers are confident that the process works and can be activated as required.

**Planned activities**

The Council's critical services are currently refreshing the Brexit Resilience Measures templates that they had previously completed to take account of the planned exit date of 31st October and to also consider normal 'winter pressures'. These templates will identify the potential impact that Brexit may have on service delivery over the six week period after exit from the EU and the necessary resilience measures that need to be taken before the exit date to ensure that the Council continues to deliver key services. Officers are currently scheduling an internal officer workshop for mid to end of September specifically with the purpose of updating / refreshing the templates, and considering wider implications based on the most up to date information we have.

Members should also note that emergency planning staff are working with partners and arrangements exist across Northern Ireland to respond to emergencies and ensure that the support provided to the public is co-ordinated. In Belfast the agencies use the Belfast Emergency Preparedness Group to undertake planning to enable this response.

Belfast Emergency Preparedness Group members will be meeting before and after EU Exit to ensure all agencies can raise concerns if these arise. Normal emergency planning arrangements will be available to respond to emergencies if required. These are the same processes employed for any large unexpected event that may impact on the city and, as a result, are already tried and tested. This may be as a result of a civil contingencies issue such as severe weather or if there is an EU Exit related issue which leads to a significant threat or significant cumulative impacts arising, which necessitate a locally co-ordinated response. The Emergency Co-ordination Centre in City Hall will be on standby to activate if required. Refresher training for staff who may be asked to work in the centre was undertaken in the period up to the previous exit date in March. The Council will establish an internal information hub in the period prior to the exit date and will maintain shared situational awareness across all Council departments/functions. This will include any potential business continuity issues, concerns which need escalated to central government or rising tide issues which could lead to an emergency activation being required.

Work has also been ongoing in several areas around preparations for Brexit including liaising with central government departments and working on civil contingency planning with other relevant partners. Central government departments are developing plans to prevent and mitigate any potential impacts of EU Exit. The Executive Office is leading this work across the NI Civil Service and is establishing co-ordination arrangements to ensure that any potential issues can be identified and addressed as quickly as possible. These arrangements will be established prior to EU Exit and continue until required but will be scaled up/down as needed. Belfast City Council works with a wide range of departments to deliver normal services. The Council will link with the central government co-ordination arrangements to discuss and escalate any issues which arise in relation to EU Exit.

As Members are aware the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) have developed a risk register that consists of 16 main council level risks that need to be considered in light of Brexit. Each risk has an associated outline action plan for councils to consider in preparing for the risk. The risk register also deals with possible impacts post Day 1 and to the wider Council area and not just the organisation. Officers are currently working on updating the risk register and continue to participate in SOLACE's Brexit Task and Finish Group.

#### **Food Safety and Port Health**

Members are reminded that there are potential implications on food businesses and the Council's Food Safety and Port Health Regulatory functions. For example, Brexit may affect local food producers/exporters and importers. Consequently, the Council's Port Health Unit have been working closely with DEFRA, DAERA, the Food Standards Agency and local importers to develop and roll out a new UK IT system for the pre-notification of import of high risk food to replace the existing EU TRACES system which may no longer be available in the event of a no deal exit. We have also gathered and analysed data to estimate and prepare for additional checks that may be required for transited products (imported foods travelling through the EU destined for the UK).

In a no deal scenario every export consignment of animal origin destined for the EU may require certification to demonstrate it meets the necessary health requirements. Whilst this is primarily a DAERA responsibility, Council Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) may certify fish and eggs. There are currently ongoing discussions between

SOLACE and DAERA around the option of Councils undertaking this work and DAERA are considering how this work may be funded. We have been assisting DAERA by contacting businesses to establish their certification requirements and developing procedures to enable businesses to apply to Councils for certification where possible. We have been working closely with DAERA and the FSA to support the arrangement and delivery of workshops for potentially affected businesses. We have been taking the opportunity to signpost businesses to government advice and to support them to understand the potential changes and how to prepare for a no deal Brexit. Guidance for the food industry has been provided on the Council's website.

We are providing additional training for the Council's EHOs (both inland and at the Port) on the new IT systems and processes and to ensure we have sufficient trained officers to deliver the additional services required when the UK exits the EU.

Members are advised that Officers from Emergency Planning and Food Safety and Port Health Regulatory functions will be in attendance at this meeting to provide updates on the work that they are undertaking in relation to Brexit Day 1 Preparedness.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no financial implications relating to this report but the work that is being undertaken to further define potential Day 1 impacts, risks and mitigations may have financial and resource implications and these will be reported to the relevant committees as required. It is likely that there will be direct costs associated with preparing for Brexit e.g. in relation to civil contingency planning and potential requirements for additional staff and where possible these will be claimed back from central government.

Members should note that the Council has not included an increase in its recurrent budgets because of the uncertainty around Brexit, however, if one-off costs are to be incurred these will be financed through Council's general reserves.

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

There are no implications relating to this report.

**Appendices**

**None.”**

He stated that the term ‘Day One Readiness’ referred to the six weeks leading up to the UK’s official withdrawal date from the European Union and the six weeks afterwards. He advised that emergency arrangements and mechanisms would be put in place from 14th October. He pointed out that the Northern Ireland Hub would be in operation from this date which would comprise representatives from all of the central civic contingency groups, with Local Government and multi-agency partners reporting into it.

He tabled draft Brexit Resilience Templates which included resilience measures to deal with immediate-term potential risks of the 15 critical services of the Council. The document illustrated what work had been undertaken across the Council to prepare for an emergency. He advised that an internal workshop would take place with staff of the critical services and a report, encompassing the updated templates, submitted to the Committee in October for consideration.

The Emergency Co-Ordination Officer provided an overview of the activation of the emergency plan and outlined the work which had been undertaken internally and externally to ensure Day One Readiness, such as testing and updating of the emergency plan. He indicated that the Service had been working closely with the Council’s critical services and successful internal and external practice exercises had taken place. He highlighted that the Business Continuity Services and the Emergency Plan continued to be reviewed and ready to activate in October and the Emergency Co-ordination Centre would remain on standby throughout the period.

The City Protection Manager summarised the work of the Food Safety and Port Health Regulatory functions and highlighted the contingency arrangements that had been put in place, such as additional staff training, checks and regulations, together with mapping and tracing exercises. He highlighted that, in the short term, the Government had agreed that there would be no additional checks in relation to imported food coming from the EU, but this might change over time due to regulatory divergence. He suggested that there could be an increase of up to 50 per cent in the food checks in which the service had to carry out.

He advised that, as the Council would no longer be able to rely on EU database in relation to imported food trace checks, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs had designed a new system for the UK. He pointed out that as Food Safety and Port Health Regulatory changes would impact a range of businesses, the Council had planned a range of stakeholder events to ensure Day One Preparedness.

During discussion, Members raised concerns in relation to the potential for a backlog of lorries at the Ports caused by additional checks, the lack of communication from Government in relation to the potential of a ‘no deal’ Brexit and highlighted the importance of the Council’s Contingency Plans.



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The City Protection Manager confirmed that some wider customs issues were outside of the Council's remit and the internal contingency plans were based on the services which the Council provided.

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised that the Council would continue to engage with external bodies to ensure potential impacts on services would be mitigated.

During further discussion, Members raised the following concerns:

- The need for fortnightly Committee meetings to be kept up to date on the fast pace of change;
- Further engagement with various external bodies to keep well-informed of Brexit Readiness;
- The impact on the Council's financial reserve, revenue estimates and rates;
- The legal status of EU nationals, freedom of movement and the requirements of the EU settlement scheme;
- The importance and necessity to review the internal draft Brexit Resilience Templates;
- Access to the Shared Prosperity Fund;
- Impact on businesses, low income families, food, medical supplies, cyber security, energy and transport prices, animal welfare, and the internal BACS system,

After discussion, the Committee:

- I. noted the contents of the report and agreed to an additional meeting per month to prepare for contingency planning and Day One readiness and, accordingly, that the Brexit Committee would meet once a fortnight;
- II. agreed that an updated report be submitted to a future meeting in relation to the legal status of EU nationals and the requirements of the EU settlement scheme;
- III. agreed that the Brexit Resilience Templates be sent to the Committee once the internal workshop had been undertaken and the draft updated;
- IV. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting in relation to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund;
- V. agreed that the following be invited to attend a future meeting:
  - Representatives from Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, in relation to the potential shortage of medicines;
  - Representative of the Department for Infrastructure, Roads Service, in relation to Port contingency plans;

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- Update from the Director of Finance and Resources in relation to Brexit Readiness and effect on Revenue Estimates;
- Representative from the Executive Office and Head of the Civil Service in relation to Exports, Port Health and Decision Making Matters; and
- Representative from the Department for Communities, in relation to the impact on the unemployed and low income families.

**Brexit Committee Workplan**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

**The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a draft workplan for their consideration. It is proposed that the draft workplan covers the period up to the exit date of 31st October and that it is revisited after this date when it is likely that the situation around EU exit will be clearer.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**Members are asked to agree the workplan as outlined in this report, subject to any additions or amendments Committee may request.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

**Members are reminded that at its meeting in June it requested that a draft workplan be submitted to this meeting for their consideration and that ‘in terms of the impact of Brexit upon Workers/Human Rights and on the environment, agreed that the following be invited to attend a future meeting:**

- Representatives of Trades Unions
- Representatives of environmental organisations;
- Dr. Mary Dobbs – Queen’s University;
- Professor Colin Harvey – Queen’s University; and
- Dr. Daniel Holder – CAJ.

**The Committee also agreed that the Local Government Auditor be invited to attend a future meeting in order to discuss the section within the Local Government Auditors Report 2019 referring to local government preparations for leaving the European Union.**

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A request has also been made by the Chair to invite a representative from the Department of Economy to update the Committee on the recently published data paper on Northern Ireland's trade and investment under 'no deal' as part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service's work on EU Exit.

Members are also advised that Officers have met with representatives from the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels and that their Director, Andrew Elliott has offered to attend the Committee meeting in September to update Members on the programme of work that the Office is currently undertaking. Members are reminded that Andrew and his team were helpful in identifying people to meet and providing contact details during the organisation of the previous visit to Brussels.

Officers have now contacted the various people as outlined above to determine their availability to attend Committee and their responses are outlined in the table below. Subject to Committee agreeing the proposed speakers list, Officers will confirm these dates.

<b>Brexit Committee</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>Prof. Colin Harvey and Daniel Holder, Deputy Director</b>	<b>QUB &amp; CAJ</b>
	<b>Andrew Elliot, Director</b>	<b>NI Executive Office in Brussels</b>
	<b>Shane Murphy, Head of Analytical Services</b>	<b>Department for the Economy</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>Sean Kelly, Development Manager to co-ordinate forum leads</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)</b>
	<b>Dr. Mary Dobbs</b>	<b>QUB</b>
<b>Has agreed to attend Committee but date not yet agreed</b>	<b>Owen Reidy, Assistant General Secretary</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Committee - ICTU</b>
<b>Awaiting a response</b>	<b>Pamela McCreedy, Chief Operating Officer and Local Government Auditor</b>	<b>NI Audit Office</b>

Members are also advised that a request was sent to Party Group Leaders seeking any additional speakers they wished to add to the list and to date none have been received.

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In addition to the above speakers it is proposed that in the period up to 31st October, the following reports are brought to Committee for consideration:

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Areas covered</b>	<b>Committee date</b>
<b>Update on Day 1 preparedness</b>	<b>Council preparations to ensure business continuity for its critical services</b>	<b>Recommendation that this is a standing item</b>
<b>Update on legislative alignment</b>	<b>Report on the various European Directives and legislation governing the work of the Council</b>	<b>September</b>
<b>Update on eastern economic corridor</b>	<b>Report on the work that is ongoing in relation to the development of this</b>	<b>September</b>
<b>Update on medium term planning</b>	<b>The potential impact on the City of Brexit in the medium term and support that may be required</b>	<b>October</b>
<b>Update on EU Settlement Scheme – Information Sessions</b>	<b>Update on the holding of information sessions</b>	<b>October</b>
<b>Update on QUB research</b>	<b>Report on the work currently being undertaken by QUB in relation to future relations with the EU</b>	<b>TBD when the report becomes available</b>

As Members will be aware information in relation to EU exit is continually becoming available. If any relevant information is released in the period up to the 31st October reports on this will be brought to Committee. Members may also have specific issues that they would like to request, through Committee, that a report be produced and these can be added to the workplan as required.

Given that there is ongoing uncertainty around the outcome and timings of the exit from the EU, it is proposed that the workplan is revisited after 31st October, when it is likely that

**the situation around EU exit will be clearer and this is brought to the November Committee meeting for consideration.**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

**There are no specific financial or resource implications relating to this report but there may be implications related to specific papers and these will be outlined in the relevant report.**

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

**There are no equality or good relations implications relating to this report.**

**Appendices**

**None.”**

The Committee agreed to the Workplan as outlined in the report and that Members could send any further proposals for deputations to Democratic Services to be included for consideration at the next Committee.

**Visit to Brussels for Open Week of Regions and Cities**

(Ms. L. Leonard, European Manger, attended the meeting in connection with this item.)

The European Manager reminded the Committee that, in January, 2019 an All-Party delegation from the Council undertook a visit to Brussels to engage with EU officials. During the visit, members had met with a range of officials and politicians to discuss the different perspectives and views from Belfast and the wider region.

She highlighted that from 7th - 10th October, 2019 the European Week of Regions and Cities would be held in Brussels and suggested that this might be a suitable time for a further visit of the Brexit Committee. During this event, the Northern Ireland Office, in conjunction with other devolved administrations, would be holding an Open Week event. She advised that, although MEPs had no official duties during the EU Week of Regions and Cities, and might not be in attendance, elected members and officers of city and regional councils from across the EU, plus the EU Commission and Regional offices would be present. As such, the event provided an opportunity to network and see how other regions were managing Brexit, and to discuss future relationships and opportunities within Europe.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,  
Seconded by Councillor Flynn,

That the Committee agrees to an all-party deputation plus appropriate officers from the Council be appointed to visit Brussels in relation to the ongoing Brexit developments and noted that the upcoming European Week of Regions and Cities from 7-10th October has been identified as an appropriate time to attend, subject to a budget being approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

On a vote by show of hands nine Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was declared carried.

**Update on EU Settlement Scheme Information Session**

The Business, Research and Development Manager provided a brief overview of the EU Settlement Scheme to date. She advised that it would enable European Economic Area and Swiss citizens living in the UK, and their family members, to obtain the UK immigration status they would require to live, work and study in the UK after 30th June, 2021 (or after 31st December, 2020 if there was a no deal exit).

She highlighted that the Council had participated in Home Office teleconferences with Local Authorities across the UK to update them on the scheme and any relevant updates from these would be provided to Members. The last teleconference was held in July to provide an update on the number of applications that had been received and processed. She advised that statistics were only currently available at a regional level but Members would be notified, in the future, if they became available at Local Level.

She reported that, in Northern Ireland, the organisations which had received funding from the Home Office funding scheme were Advice NI and a consortium made up of the Law Centre and STEP Dungannon.

The Members were reminded that information sessions on the EU Settlement Scheme had been planned to take place in the City Hall, one for local organisations who had been granted funding from the Home Office scheme, and a follow up session to target potentially affected individuals.

Noted.

**North South Collaboration Mapping Exercise Report**

It was reported that on 20th June, the Committee on Exiting the European Union had published a UK Government document on North-South cooperation that had been prepared in September, 2017. The scoping exercise, that informed the document, had been undertaken by the UK Government, Northern Ireland Civil Service, European Commission and Government of Ireland. It focused on six areas: agriculture, environment, transport, health, tourism, and education. The purpose of the mapping exercise had been to chart the range of formal and informal cooperation that existed with a view to

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maintaining North-South cooperation following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

The City Solicitor advised that the document provided significant detail and outlined 142 areas of cooperation. For each of these areas, information had been provided as to the extent that they were underpinned by the Good Friday Agreement or existing EU legal and policy frameworks. Of the 142 areas, 54 were classified as directly linked, 42 as partially linked, and 46 as not linked.

He informed the Committee that Officers had reviewed the 142 areas of collaboration and identified the areas which were most relevant to the Council. That is, in terms of whether the collaborations directly referenced Belfast, or local government, or involved areas where the Council had statutory responsibilities.

He highlighted that further details were available in [appendix one](#) of the report and that the items that specifically mentioned Belfast included:

- 10 All-Island Congenital Heart Disease Network; and
- 19 Cross-border Enterprise Rail Services.

Items listed that specifically mentioned councils (in general) and local government included:

- 51 Spatial Planning;
- 112 Cooperation beyond North/South Ministerial Council (local councils);
- 111 All-Island Local Authority Programmes; and
- 112 Local authority led cross-border engagements.

Other items listed with direct relevance to Council functions included:

- 3 Food Safety Promotion Boards;
- 30 Cooperation on checks on third country products of animal origin, including fish products and bivalve molluscs ;
- 8 Tourism;
- 1 Special EU Programmes Body;
- 43 PEACE IV programme; and
- 44 INTERREG funding.

He advised that officers would continue to monitor outputs from the Committee on Exiting the European Union in relation to cross-border collaborations affecting the Council and the results from the scoping exercise would also feed into Council's ongoing Day One Readiness work.

Noted.

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**Additional Item – Letter to Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi**

With the permission of the Chairperson, one Member raised an additional matter to acknowledge the points made recently by Chuck Schumer, U.S. Senate Democratic leader and Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.

During discussion, a Member raised an objection to the letter and highlighted the importance of UK's potential trade deals with other countries.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McKeown,  
Seconded by Councillor Flynn,

The Committee agrees to write to Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi acknowledging their recent public statements in relation to Brexit, specifically in regards to protecting the Good Friday Agreement and peace in Northern Ireland and avoiding a hard border.

On a vote by show of hands nine Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was declared carried.

Chairperson