

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 on Monday, 3rd February, 2020 at 6.00 pm, for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Council (Pages 1 - 6)
5. Official Announcements
6. Requests to Address the Council

To consider a request from:

- i. Mr. Chris Rintoul of Extern's Drugs and Alcohol Consultancy Service to address the Council in advance of Councillor McCusker's motion on a Drug Task Force; and
 - ii. Dr. Shane Colclough of the University of Ulster to address the Council in advance of Councillor Heading's motion on Sections 43A and 43B of the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012.
7. Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies
 8. Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 7 - 56)
 9. People and Communities Committee (Pages 57 - 92)
 10. City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 93 - 110)
 11. Licensing Committee (Pages 111 - 120)
 12. Planning Committee (Pages 121 - 152)
 13. Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee (Pages 153 - 156)
 14. Brexit Committee (Pages 157 - 162)

15. Motions

a) Menopause Aware

Proposed by Councillor M. Kelly,
Seconded by Councillor Long,

“This Council resolves to work with organisations to ensure that Belfast City Council and its staff are Menopause Aware and have an understanding of the support available should they be concerned over symptoms which they might be experiencing.”

(To be debated by the Council)

b) Support for People with a Gambling Addiction

Proposed by Councillor Kyle,
Seconded by Councillor Lyons,

“This Council notes the outdated and deeply flawed nature of the current law on gambling in Northern Ireland and the need for urgent root and branch reform of gambling legislation. It welcomes the announcement by the Department for Communities of a consultation on gambling law and policy.

The Council notes also with concern the report on problem gambling published by the Northern Ireland Office (September 2019) which states that *‘no gambling specific services are commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board for individuals suffering from gambling addiction’* and the negligible financial contribution from the gambling industry for these services.

The Council calls for an urgent review to be conducted by the Department of Health into the support provided for people with a gambling addiction and calls upon the gambling industry to significantly increase the financial support which it provides for problem gambling services.”

(To be debated by the Council)

c) Cycle Lanes

Proposed by Councillor Black,
Seconded by Councillor Donnelly,

“Safe cycling is paramount to developing a carbon-neutral city.

This Council, therefore, agrees to seek a meeting with the Minister for Infrastructure to discuss previously agreed motions on safe cycle networks throughout the City.”

(To be debated by the Council)

d) Drug Task Force

Proposed by Councillor McCusker,
Seconded by Councillor Smyth,

"This Council calls upon the Ministers for Health, Justice and Communities to establish a drug task force to respond to the increase in deaths. The figure is 40% higher than 2017 and has more than doubled over the last 10 years.

The primary role of the taskforce will be to co-ordinate and drive action to improve the health outcomes for people who use drugs, reducing the risk of harm and death.

Safe injection rooms, prevention, quicker access to services, including crisis intervention, with an urgent review of current provision is required to deal with an increase in drug and alcohol related deaths.

The Council agrees, therefore, to write to the aforementioned Ministers calling for the establishment of a drug task force to be prioritised as a matter of urgency. We can no longer wait and watch the devastation being witnessed in every community."

(To be debated by the Council)

e) Public Sector Pay

Proposed by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson,

"This Council notes that NIPSA civil service members are currently campaigning for fair pay, which included a recent strike campaign across Belfast and beyond. The Council notes the context of wage freezes and attacks on working conditions for public sector workers and believes that strike action is a measured response to the insufficient pay deal that was most recently offered to public sector workers.

The Council fully supports NIPSA in its campaign for better pay and better terms and conditions, including the strike action which continued after the re-establishment of the new Executive, which has the power to deliver fair pay.

To this end, the Council agrees to write to the Minister of Finance to implore him to immediately implement fair pay for civil servants, in line with NIPSA's demands."

(To be debated by the Council)

f) Sections 43A and 43B of the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

Proposed by Councillor Heading,
Seconded by Councillor Kyle,

“This Council will be aware of Sections 43A and 43B of the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 outlining that new public building owned by public authorities from 2019 and all new buildings, including social and private housing developments, “must be a nearly zero energy buildings”, (NZEB43B) by 31st December, 2020.

The Council reaffirms its commitment to work with statutory and non-statutory agencies to end fuel poverty and the reduction of carbon emissions.

In addition, it acknowledges the evidence gathered by the World Health Organisation and environmental groups indicating the damage to both health and our climate from fuel poverty.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to:

- i. write to the Minister of Finance in the NI Assembly seeking an update on how the Department will assist local councils in implementing Sections 43A 43B and enquiring if the Department has had an assurance from the building industry that they are prepared and their staff trained to meet this policy implementation;
- ii. seek a meeting with the Minister of Finance or his officials to consider the adoption of Passive House standard as an amendment to the 2012 Building regulations or in any new legislation reforming building regulations;
- iii. seek an all-Party meeting with the Northern Ireland Federation Housing Association and the Chartered Institute of Housing to discuss how their members will implement and adhere to Sections 43A and 43B and NZEB;
- iv. seek an all-Party meeting with the Minister for Communities or Department officials to discuss Passive House standard for all social housing developments, as a means of meeting current obligations set out in Sections 43A and 43B; and
- v. write to the Minister for Infrastructure to ascertain if there are any proposals for planning legislation to be amended or introduced to tackle fuel poverty.”

(To be referred to the People and Communities Committee)

g) Graffiti

Proposed by Councillor Nicholl,
Seconded by Councillor M. Kelly,

“This Council notes that graffiti is an area of concern for many residents of Belfast. It spoils the local environment and can encourage other forms of anti-social behaviour.

The Council notes also that it can also be costly to remove graffiti and that it is not a service which it currently provides, but believes that it is an issue it should be taking responsibility for.

The Council will, therefore, review current practices in other councils to remove graffiti and will work through the Area Working Groups to develop an Anti-Graffiti Strategy, which will identify areas of partnership in order to creatively and proactively tackle this growing problem.”

(To be referred to the People and Communities Committee)

h) Market Gardens and Urban Farming

Proposed by Councillor de Faoite,
Seconded by Councillor McKeown,

“This Council:

- i. notes the objectives of the Growing Communities Strategy 2012 – 2022, which include supporting environmental sustainability and the development of the social economy;
- ii. recognises that, as society continues to care more about how food is produced, processed and transported, market gardens and urban farming are increasingly popular alternatives for climate-conscious consumers;
- iii. further recognises that market gardens and urban farming align closely with the three pillars of sustainable development: they contribute to production; they boost social integration; and they improve our environment and general health;
- iv. acknowledges that market gardens and urban farming can play a positive role in supporting the development of environmental and agricultural education at all levels; and
- v. resolves to work with all relevant partners to establish an urban farm for community use and market garden development on an existing site within the Belfast City Council land bank, using revenue raised by the disposal of other sites.”

(To be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)

i) Irish Language Street Signage Policy

Proposed by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

“This Council has one of the most restrictive policies of any council in the North in regards to Irish Language Street Signage Policy.

Currently, the policy is that you need a 1/3rd of the eligible electorate in a street to sign a petition which starts the process. Once the process has been initiated, a letter is sent to everyone in that street who is on the electoral register asking if they consent to have bilingual signage installed. The resident has three options, namely, Yes, No and Don't Care. For the process to come to a successful conclusion, 2/3rds of the total electorate in the street need to consent to yes. If a letter is not returned, it is considered by the Council as saying that they don't consent for the bilingual signage. Furthermore, where residents send the survey back saying 'Don't Care, this is also considered to be a negative response.

If we, as Elected Members were held to the same standard as this policy in the Local Government elections, not one Member would have been returned to serve on this Council, as we would not have met those restrictive parameters. The Council's Language Strategy refers to increasing the visibility of the Irish Language in our City. However, it is essential not to impose the Irish language on residents if the majority of them in a street do not consent to it.

Therefore, this Council will amend its Irish language street signage policy to the following:

- i. continue with the 1/3rd of the eligible electorate in the street to initiate the process;
- ii. change the policy to reflect that it will be the majority of respondents to the survey that will decide if the process has been successful. Therefore, it will be 50% +1 of respondents that will determine if the petition to erect bilingual signage has been successful. Non-respondents will not be considered as a negative response; and
- iii. those respondents who respond as 'Don't Care' are not considered to be a negative response and will be treated as a void vote.”

(To be referred to the People and Communities Committee)

j) Growth Deal

Proposed by Councillor Beattie,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

“This Council agrees to task officers to prepare an initial report on developing a new growth deal for the city of Belfast.

The Belfast Agenda recognises and builds on our City’s achievements. Our success in economic growth is making a vital contribution to the broader economy. We are a significant employer of people living in and outside the city. However, for Belfast to achieve its ambitions, it needs to work in partnership with the Executive.

One potential avenue for this growth deal could be the regional rate. If the Council was to work in conjunction with the Department of Finance and secure an additional 2% from the regional rate, it would derive an additional £30 million in revenue.

Two of the potential sectors to benefit from this additional growth fund could be in the building of much needed public housing or the renewable energy market in the form of an offshore wind farm. Currently, there are no offshore wind farms in the North of Ireland. These two potential options both conform to the Belfast Agenda and the draft Programme for Government. They are sustainable projects which would ensure a steady return to this Council over many years.”

(To be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)

k) Belfast Zoo

Proposed by Councillor Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor Murphy,

“This Council agrees to an ambitious plan to transform Belfast Zoo into a world-class visitor attraction by 2025. The display of caged animals in enclosures is wrong and unethical, it doesn’t mirror in any way their natural habitat and has no place in modern society.

The ratepayers of this City have to subsidise the zoo to the sum of £2.5 million per year. The savings from the Zoo site could provide substantial funding for the much-needed regeneration of the City, create jobs, opportunities and attract more visitors. The five-year transitional period will enable the Council to safely return animals to their natural habitats in a carefully crafted phased approach.

Furthermore, the Council will retain on-site an animal conservation programme for indigenous animals. The five years will also enable the Council to consult with trade unions, staff and residents of the City through direct engagement and consultation. The Council will commit to securing all jobs currently on the Zoo site, with the options of retraining and redeployment. This will create an opportunity for the Council to develop the site, create jobs and to promote the City ethically.”

(To be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)

l) Historic Graveyards

Proposed by Councillor McAteer,
Seconded by Councillor Magee,

“This Council is deeply concerned about the serious neglect of two of our Belfast Historic Cemeteries, namely Balmoral and Clifton Street. In Balmoral Cemetery, many headstones and monuments are dilapidated and many of the Victorian iron surrounds have been damaged and suffer from rust. The railway and northern embankments at Balmoral are completely covered with undergrowth, making it impossible to locate the graves in these sections. Clifton Street Cemetery suffers from a similar set of conditions, the undergrowth along its perimeter walls is accelerating the deterioration of a number of headstones and tablets. Often, when environmental work is carried out, rubbish is left on graves near the entrance.

Given the historical importance and worth of these burial grounds to the narrative of our Belfast history, it is proposed that the Council organise a tour of the two cemeteries for Members; prepare a maintenance and conservation plan; provide a report on the plan and costs and set a timeframe for the completion of the required works.”

(To be referred to the People and Communities Committee)

m) Sustainable Transport

Proposed by Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor O’Hara,

“This Council supports the promotion and expansion of sustainable transport in Belfast as a critical step in addressing the dangerous levels of air pollution and congestion across the City and in the context of our climate emergency.

With the appointment of a new Minister for Infrastructure, the Council should ensure that the Minister is clear about our commitment to sustainable transport options and the need for urgent action on climate.

Therefore, the Council agrees to write to the Minister to state that the Experimental Traffic Control Scheme Permitted (Taxis in Bus Lanes), which was proposed by her Department, does not have the Council’s support and to urge her to not progress this further, instead focusing efforts on further measures to enhance the provision of public transport, cycle infrastructure and pedestrian priority in the City.”

(To be referred to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee)

n) High Speed Rail Connection

Proposed by Councillor S. Baker,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

“This Council welcomes the commitment in the ‘New Decade New Approach’ document which states that “The Irish Government is supportive of serious and detailed joint consideration through the NSMC of the feasibility of a high-speed rail connection between Belfast, Dublin and Cork, creating a spine of connectivity on the island.”

As this is also a Council priority, the Council will seek a meeting with Irish Government officials, Council officers and party group leaders to discuss this proposition further.”

(To be referred to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee)

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzanne Wylie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

Chief Executive