

# 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 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“This Council notes the outdated and deeply flawed nature of the current law on gambling in Northern Ireland and the need for urgent root and branch reform of gambling legislation.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 cursive script, appearing to read "Suzanne Wylie".

Chief Executive

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## **Council**

### MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 6th January, 2020  
at 6.00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

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

#### **Summons**

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors McAllister and McDonough-Brown.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### **Minutes of the Council**

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor D. Baker),  
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting and the special meeting of the Council of 2nd and 18th December respectively be taken as read and signed as correct.

#### **Official Announcements**

#### **Expressions of Sympathy**

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, extended his condolences to Councillor Dorrian on the recent death of his mother, Maureen.

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The Lord Mayor, at the request of several Members, extended his condolences to the families of Cillian Draine, Eoin Hamill, Sophie Hamilton and Gary Laverty following their recent untimely deaths.

**New Member**

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, welcomed Councillor Maskey, who had replaced former Councillor Finucane, to the meeting.

**High Sheriff of Belfast**

Alderman Sandford highlighted the fact that his term as the High Sheriff of Belfast had ended in December and expressed his appreciation for the support which he had received from the Civic Dignitaries, Members and officers over the course of the year. He wished his successor, Councillor Verner, well during her term as High Sheriff.

Several Members paid tribute to Alderman Sandford and congratulated Councillor Verner on her appointment.

**Councillor Hargey**

The Lord Mayor reported that this would be the last meeting which would be attended by Councillor Hargey, as she had been selected by her Political Party to fill a vacancy in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

He, together with a number of Members, paid tribute to Councillor Hargey for the service which she had provided to the Council and her constituents during her time as an Elected Member and wished her well in her new role.

Councillor Hargey thanked the Members for their kind remarks.

**Congratulations**

At the request of Councillor de Faoite, the Lord Mayor agreed to extend, on behalf of the Council, his congratulations to Mrs. Hillary Clinton on her recent appointment as the Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast and to host an appropriate event once she had taken up that position.

**Climate Crisis**

Councillor Flynn referred to the significant ecological and environmental impact of the bush fires which were currently sweeping across large areas of Australia, expressed his solidarity with all those who had been affected and emphasised the need for a global response to avert a catastrophic climate breakdown.

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**Change of Membership on Committees and Outside Bodies**

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the following Political Parties of changes to membership of Committees/Outside Bodies:

**Alliance**

- Councillor McMullan to replace Councillor McAllister on the Brexit Committee; and
- Councillor Nicholl to replace Councillor McMullan on the Planning Committee.

**DUP**

- Councillor Bunting to replace Councillor Pankhurst on the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

**Sinn Féin**

- Councillor Magee to replace the Lord Mayor (Councillor D. Baker) on the Brexit Committee;
- Councillor McAteer to replace the Lord Mayor (Councillor D. Baker) on the People and Communities Committee;
- Councillor Murphy to replace Councillor Hargey as the Chair of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee;
- Councillor Walsh to replace Councillor Hargey on the City Growth and Regeneration Committee;
- Councillor Donnelly to replace Councillor Garrett on the City Growth and Regeneration Committee;
- Councillor Garrett to replace Councillor Donnelly on the People and Communities Committee;
- Councillor Maskey to replace Councillor Canavan on the Planning Committee;
- Councillor McLaughlin to replace Councillor Hargey on the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee;
- Councillor Magennis to replace Councillor Corr on the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership;
- Councillor Maskey to replace Councillor Murphy on the North Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership; and

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- Councillor Donnelly to replace Councillor Corr on the Belfast Hills Partnership.

The Council approved the changes.

**Request to Address the Council**

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Ms. G. Poots, on behalf of the Northern Ireland Students' Climate Network, to address the Council on the climate crisis.

The Council approved the request and Ms. Poots was welcomed to the meeting.

Ms. Poots referred to the increasing threat of climate change and highlighted the devastating impact of the bush fires which were currently affecting large areas of Australia. She outlined the challenges which would be faced by future generations should the climate crisis fail to be addressed as a matter of urgency and urged the Council to build upon the work which it had undertaken to date by, for example, identifying additional renewable energy sources, conserving resources and promoting the use of public transport.

The Lord Mayor thanked Ms. Poots for her presentation, following which the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**

Moved by Alderman Kingston,  
Seconded by Councillor Dorrian,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 17th December, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Amendment**

**Brexit Committee - Commissioning of a Report**

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,  
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 17th December, under the heading "Brexit Committee - Commissioning of a Report", be rejected and accordingly the Council agrees that officers research the issue and bring back a report on how it would be developed, resourced and led.

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

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**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 17th December, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, were approved and adopted.

**People and Communities Committee**

Moved by Councillor Michael Collins,  
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 3rd December be approved and adopted.

**Christmas Waste Collections Update**

The Council agreed, in response to issues which had been raised by Alderman McCoubrey, to include on the agenda for the monthly meeting of the People and Communities Committee on 14th January an item on the collection of waste generally.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 3rd December were approved and adopted.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee**

Moved by Councillor Murphy,  
Seconded by Councillor Beattie and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 27th November and 4th December be approved and adopted.

**Licensing Committee**

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 11th December, 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 Brooks and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 10th and 16th December, omitting matters in respect of

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which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Brexit Committee**

Moved by Councillor de Faoite,  
Seconded by Councillor McKeown and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 4th December be approved and adopted.

**Notice of Motion**

**Lucy's Law**

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

“This Council recognises the important work carried out by local animal charities, including the Dogs Trust, which recently suspended its adoption service over the holiday period to highlight the fact that dogs are for life and not just for Christmas.

The Council notes with concern that unethical breeders and profit-driven third party commercial traders of young animals has led to an industry rife with serious neglect and abuse of animals across the United Kingdom and Ireland and has led to the unnecessary suffering of animals bred in dissolute puppy farms.

The Council recognises the successful campaign for the introduction of Lucy's Law in England, which will come into effect from April 2020. This new legislation will ban the sale of puppies and kittens from third parties, ensuring that buyers deal directly with registered breeders.

Accordingly, the Council resolves to write to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to express its concerns, affirm its support for Lucy's Law and request that preparatory work be undertaken to allow for Lucy's Law to be legislated for in Northern Ireland.”

The motion was seconded by Alderman Rodgers.

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

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson



## Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 24th January, 2020

### MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mrs. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. R. Crozier, Customer Focus Programme Director; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

#### Apologies

No apologies were reported.

#### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 17th December, omitting those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee, were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 6th January.

#### Declarations of Interest

Councillor McDonough-Brown declared an interest in relation to item 8d – Response to the Liquor Licensing Laws in Northern Ireland Consultation Document in that he was associated with a brewing company and left the meeting whilst this item was under discussion.

#### Restricted Items

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following 5 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

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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.

**Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2020/21**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th December, 2019, it had agreed the cash limit for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2020/21 and the recommended cash limits for the People and Communities, City Growth and Regeneration and Planning Committees, subject to consultation with the other Committees prior to this meeting.

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance and Resources reported that those Committees had now agreed their cash limits and accordingly he was seeking the Committee to confirm those and to agree the district rate for 2020/21.

The Committee:

1. Agreed that the following decisions should not be subject to call-in because it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 15 February 2020.
2. Confirmed the cash limits agreed by the Committee at its meeting on the 17th December 2019 as follows:
  - a. A cash limit of £44,136,840 for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2020/21, including £3,270,000 for Belfast Investment Fund and £2,000,000 for City Deal.
  - b. A cash limit of £82,852,276 for the People and Communities Committee for 2020/21.
  - c. A cash limit of £17,267,724 for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for 2020/21.
  - d. A cash limit of £1,289,467 for the Planning Committee for 2020/21.
  - e. A Capital Financing Budget of £21,774,021 for 2020/21
3. Agreed that the increase in the district rate for 2020/21 should be 1.99%, based on an estimated penny product of £6,456,100 meaning a non-domestic rate of 25.9166 and a domestic rate of 0.3394 and that the amount raised through the district rate in 2020/21 will be £162,028,153.
4. Noted the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources statement on the adequacy of the Council's reserves position and the robustness of the revenue estimates as required by the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011.
5. Noted the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement as required by the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (NI) 2011.

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**Assets - Proposed Disposal**

The Committee considered a report in relation to the disposal of a land strip to Choice and Radius Housing Association and an associated acquisition of Northern Ireland Housing Executive freehold land and accordingly the Committee:

- Glen Road – Approved the disposal of a 1 metre wide strip of Council land to Choice Housing Association and Radius Housing Association as tenants in common to facilitate the construction of 225 housing units on third party lands at Glen Road Heights. In order to ensure clear title to facilitate the disposal, the Committee noted that it would be necessary for the Council to acquire the freehold of the adjacent NIHE land at Glen Road which included the 1 metre wide strip which was held by the Council by way of 10,000 year lease; and
- Agreed that a report on capital receipts be submitted to a future meeting.

**Department for Communities Consultation on the Regulation of Gambling**

The Committee was advised that the Department for Communities (DfC) had launched a consultation on the Regulation of Gambling in Northern Ireland, in December, 2019. The closing date for responses was 20th February, 2020. The legislation principally concerned with the regulation of gaming was of some vintage, that is, Betting, Gaming and Lotteries (NI) Order 1985. The betting and gaming industry had moved on significantly with the development of technology and web-based online gaming platforms. With those significant changes and the passage of time, the consultation represented a very comprehensive document looking at all types of gaming/gambling. It also asked if some independent/government controlled regulator needed to be established rather than the current court based process that looked at regulation through a narrow legal lens of formulaic approvals.

After discussion the Committee:

- agreed to a corporate response being made to the DfC Consultation on the Regulation of Gambling; and
- that each of the Party Group Leaders nominate a Member to engage with officers to draw up the response.

**Strategic Site Assessment Update**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 22nd November, 2019, as part of the update on the Strategic Site Assessment (SSA) works, it had agreed that the Council should explore the feasibility of taking ownership of a site in Corporation Street which was currently owned by the Department of Finance (DoF) given its proximity to the Council-owned Exchange Street car park site.

The Committee was reminded that this had been identified as being a site with the potential to provide mixed tenure, residential-led development opportunities. Accordingly, the

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Director of Physical Programmes submitted a report in relation to a proposed mechanism to facilitate the acquisition of the Corporation Street site.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted the significant regeneration opportunity of aligning the Department of Finance Corporation Street site with the Council's existing Exchange Street site as part of the Dunbar link Strategic Site Assessment to provide an enhanced mixed tenure, residential-led development opportunity; and
- approved the acquisition of a site at 24/42 Corporation Street from the Department of Finance at a consideration of a sum not greater than £5.0 million to be financed through the capital receipt from the disposal of the head leasehold at James House within the Gasworks Estate to the Department of Finance, which was the current owners and occupiers of the building, at a consideration of not less than £3.75 million, with the remaining gap to be secured from the City Centre Investment Fund on terms to be agreed by the Estates Team and Legal Services.

**Report on Council decision to erect bilingual/  
multilingual external naming and internal  
directional signage in Andersonstown, Lisnasharragh,  
Olympia and Templemore Leisure Centres**

The Committee was reminded that, at the special meeting of the Council on Friday, 11th October, 2019, it had been agreed to engage in the citywide consultation in respect of bilingual and/or multilingual naming and the type of signage to be used in the centres designed to have a citywide catchment, together with local consultation. Subsequently, it had been agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would be given delegated authority to approve the consultation framework. The consultation had been carried out under considerable time constraints in order to meet the deadline for ordering the signage for Andersonstown Leisure Centre, which was due to open to the public in April, 2020.

The public consultation had been undertaken from 5th November, 2019 to 10th January, 2020 on the Council decision to erect bilingual multilingual external naming and internal directional signage in the four citywide leisure centres which were being delivered as part of the first three phases of the Council's £105m Leisure Transformation Programme, that is, Andersonstown, Lisnasharragh, Olympia and Templemore. Each of those centres had been designed to provide state-of-the-art, specialised facilities for the benefit of users across the city and beyond.

The results of the consultation had been prepared by an independent consultant, Mr. John Kremer, and he was in attendance to provide the Committee with further information.

Mr. Kremer outlined the consultation methodology and provided details on a number of responses which had been received. He then proceeded to outline the findings and the conclusions arising from the consultation.

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After discussion, the Committee:

- agreed to proceed to erect bilingual external naming and internal directional signage in Andersonstown Leisure Centre;
- agreed to defer, until its next monthly meeting, consideration of bilingual / multilingual signage at Lisnasharragh, Olympia and Templemore and, in the meantime, agreed to hold discussions with relevant stakeholders to seek to get a resolution; and
- agreed that the decision in relation to the Andersonstown Leisure Centre should not be subject to call-in because it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests.

**Matters Referred Back from Council/Motions**

**Motion - Support for Health and Social Care Workers –  
Responses from Permanent Secretaries**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 2nd December, it had passed the following motion on Support for Health and Social Care Workers which had been proposed by Councillor McAteer and seconded by Councillor Groves:

“This Council supports the overwhelming result of the Royal College of Nurses’ ballot in favour of industrial action, supports the industrial action already being undertaken by UNISON and the decision of the other Health and Social Care (HSC) Trade Union, NIPSA, to ballot members on industrial action.

Health and social care workers are the system’s greatest assets and are entitled to fair pay and conditions, safe staffing levels and parity of pay with NHS colleagues.

Health and social care workers are taking action as they are no longer willing to see patients being denied the care to which they are entitled. There are currently over 7,000 non-medical vacancies, including 3,000 nursing posts, within the HSC system in the north of Ireland. These frontline vacancies are having a detrimental impact upon patient care and staffing, compromise the safety of staff and patients alike, contribute to long waiting lists and add enormous pressure to the existing HSC workforce, who are doing everything they can to care for patients.

This Council calls upon the Permanent Secretary, Department of Health, to engage respectfully and meaningfully with Trades Union representatives on a pay deal. It calls also upon the Permanent Secretary, alongside his colleagues in the Department of Finance and the Head of the Civil Service, to secure the fu0nding that is needed to achieve pay parity for health workers.

Furthermore, the Council agrees to convene an all-Party meeting with those Trades Unions representing health and social care staff to hear directly the

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challenges which they are facing and to take such action thereon to support staff and patient care at this time.”

It was reported that responses had since been received from Ms. S. Gray, Permanent Secretary, Department of Finance, and Mr. R. Pengelly, Permanent Secretary, Department of Health. A response had yet to be received from the Head of the Civil Service. It was pointed out that the responses had been written prior to the recent restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the ensuing discussions between the Health Minister and Health Unions.

In her response, Ms. Gray had pointed out that Health and Social Care staff were central to the delivery of a vital public service and that she understood the deep sense of frustration felt by them at this time. She concluded by highlighting the challenging budgetary position being faced currently across the public sector by stressing her commitment to working with colleagues in the Department of Health and with the Head of the Civil Service and other parties to find a way forward.

Mr. Pengelly had referred to the work which the Department of Health had undertaken to date, in partnership with trade unions, to progress pay discussions and highlighted the significant constraints in terms of affordability and the inability in the absence of Ministers to achieve pay parity with other regions. He had explained that the decision to depart from pay parity had been taken at Ministerial level and it would be the responsibility of any incoming Minister to restore parity. He provided details of the Department of Health’s latest financial offer, affirmed its commitment to securing a resolution and stresses that continued industrial action could only exacerbate an already difficult situation. He concluded by confirming that the Health and Social Care Trust have developed contingency plans, with a view to minimising disruption for the wider public, and that they would work with unions at a local level to protect vital services.

The Committee noted the responses.

**Public Awareness Campaign on the  
Responsible use of Fireworks**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

**1.1 At the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22 November 2019, the following issue was raised by Councillor Long:**

- **To actively promote a public awareness campaign on the responsible use of fireworks –including specific information on the legal consequence of misuse; the impact of fireworks on vulnerable people and animal welfare; and precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks.**
- **To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays**

- To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display
- 1.2 The Committee agreed that a report would be brought back before the Committee regarding a public awareness campaign on the responsible use of fireworks and how this could be facilitated, resourced and managed.
- 2.0 **Recommendations**
- 2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the following actions:
- Council officers to request a meeting with the Department of Justice with a view to asking it to lead on a high profile public awareness campaign in 2020 highlighting the impact of fireworks on vulnerable people and animals and promoting the use of low noise fireworks.
  - Council to write to the Office for Product Safety and Standards at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, requesting it to consider amending the current legislation to limit the noise level emitted by fireworks to 90db.
- 3.0 **Main report**
- Key Issues**
- 3.1 The House of Commons Petitions Committee recently published a report on fireworks (Appendix 1). The report highlighted evidence that petitions calling for greater restrictions on sales and use of fireworks had been motivated by justified concerns. It suggested in many cases there were substantial adverse effects, for example on people with a wide range of health conditions and disabilities. Also distressing effects on people with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and the report suggested animals could suffer serious and long-term effects.
- 3.2 The Petitions Committee looked closely at the proposal to ban sales and use of fireworks by the public but was not persuaded to recommend this course of action at this time. The Committee expressed concern that a ban could have consequences for competently-run, voluntary, community displays, which use fireworks to raise funds for local good causes. In many cases these community displays have widespread local support and increase community cohesion.
- 3.3 Some of the recommendations in the report are already in place in Northern Ireland as it has the strictest controls on fireworks in the

**UK. The Department of Justice Firearms and Explosives Branch oversees the legislation. Currently in Northern Ireland possession of fireworks without a license (with the exception of indoor fireworks or sparklers) is an offence and the supply of licensed fireworks is age restricted to those over 18 years of age.**

- 3.4 Council officers work on an agency basis with the Department of Justice to regulate the safe supply, use and storage of fireworks and to ensure that public fireworks displays in the city are safe to attend. Fireworks sold in Northern Ireland must comply with the requirements of the Pyrotechnic Articles Safety Regulations 2015. These regulations, which implement two EU Directives, set out the essential safety requirements which must be met before pyrotechnic articles can be placed on the UK market. The purpose of the legislation is to protect consumers and individuals from unsafe pyrotechnic articles and they limit the noise levels emitted by fireworks to 120 decibels. This is a European safety standard but given the concerns expressed in the Petition Committee report and by Cllr Long it is recommended that the Council writes to the Department for Business, Industry and Industrial Strategy, asking it to consider amending the regulations to reduce the maximum permissible noise limit emitted by fireworks to 90 decibels. By way of comparison a car door slamming is approximately 97 decibels; a thunderclap approximately 120 decibels and a shotgun firing approximately 150 decibels.**
- 3.5 There has been a move by some of the large supermarkets to sell low noise fireworks, concentrating on the colours and effects rather than the noise. However these supermarkets do not appear to sell fireworks from their stores in NI, possibly because of the requirement for the purchaser to have a licence and also the requirement for the company to be registered to sell explosives. Sainsbury's banned the sale of all fireworks from its stores across the UK in October last year.**
- 3.6 Over the years there have been a number of firework safety campaigns organised by various government departments and the emergency services, with key public messages being promoted in the run up to Halloween. Belfast City Council, through its Environmental Health Service has supported these campaigns and there has been a downward trend in complaints, with fewer fireworks complaints being reported to the Department of Justice during 2018-2019.**
- 3.7 Having said that, more can be done to raise public awareness of the negative impact caused by inconsiderate use and misuse of fireworks. Council officers will seek to meet with the Department of Justice to discuss the negative impact fireworks can have on vulnerable individuals and animals and to consider opportunities**



for a high profile public awareness campaign in 2020, promoting low noise fireworks and key messages for preventing misuse. Officers will also recommend that the firework safety code on nidirect (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/fireworks>) is updated to encourage the purchase of low noise fireworks. Officers will propose that the Department of Justice leads the public awareness campaign with support from local councils, the emergency services and other relevant stakeholders.

**3.8 Financial & Resource Implications**

The Council's contribution to any future public awareness campaign will be met within existing budgets.

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

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Update: Notice of Motion regarding  
Domestic Violence**

The Committee considered the undernoted:

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

**1.1 At the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 23rd August 2019, a Motion regarding Domestic Violence was passed. The Motion noted:**

**‘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.’**

**This report outlines action being taken by the Council and its partners to support victims of domestic violence and identifies the**

next steps in Belfast being designated as a Safe Borough / City, for Members consideration.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The committee is asked to:**

- Note the content of the report;
- Agree to the Council progressing action to attain the Safe Borough / City accreditation; and
- Agree to support the White Pledge Charter, as set out within the requirements for a Safe City / Borough Accreditation.

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

**Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace Policy**

- 3.1 Members approved a revised policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019 and this was ratified by the Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019.**
- 3.2 The Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace policy applies to all Council employees (including casual and temporary staff) with the aim to support and assist employees experiencing domestic violence and abuse as well as providing guidance on managing situations where employees are perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse.**
- 3.3 Following the revision to the Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace policy, an additional 16 employees and 1 elected member have attended training with a further 7 employees completing the Trusted Colleague training, taking the total number of Trusted Colleagues within Council to 35. Further communication and awareness raising is planned to ensure all staff are fully aware of the Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace policy.**
- 3.4 The revised policy and subsequent rollout of related communication and training were key to Council's re-accreditation of the ONUS (a social enterprise organisation offering best practice advice and specialist training on domestic violence and abuse) Workplace Charter (Safe Place) at Platinum level. Accreditation for the ONUS Workplace Charter is on an annual basis with Council first being awarded at Platinum level in 2018. In October 2019, Council was successfully re-accredited at Platinum level.**

**Safe Borough / City Accreditation**

- 3.5 Additional to the Workplace Charter, officers have engaged with ONUS regarding the requirements for Belfast to be designated as a Safe Borough / City, which is defined by ONUS as a Borough / City that:
- promotes zero tolerance to domestic violence or abuse;
  - recognises that domestic violence or abuse impacts upon many people living or working there, regardless of age, religion, disability, ethnic or cultural background and while the majority of victims are female, domestic violence or abuse can be experienced by men and by people in same sex relationships; and
  - aims to provide an inclusive means of providing information on the range of organisations available to help anyone affected by domestic violence or abuse.
- 3.6 Safe Borough / City accreditation is linked to Council's Workplace Charter (Safe Place) accreditation at a Platinum level. It requires the Council to be an advocate for the message to never condone or stay silent about domestic violence and to work in partnership with ONUS and others to extend the message of Safe Place, raise awareness of anyone experiencing domestic violence and develop new means of rolling out 'participation pathways' to create safer workplaces, churches and communities.

The full list of requirements for Safe Borough / City accreditation can be found within Appendix 1.

**Progress towards Belfast being recognised as a Safe Borough / City**

- 3.7 Through engagement with ONUS and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PSCP), the need for, and opportunity to collaborate on the roll out of an extensive programme of Safe Churches training was identified and agreed. The roll out will see the delivery of two Safe Churches training sessions in each quarter of the city and will be supported and promoted through a range of partners including the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).
- 3.8 Safe Churches is a bespoke pathway that enables Churches to recognise and respond to anyone affected by domestic violence or abuse. Once accredited, the Churches can offer information on the wide range of support services available to anyone affected by domestic violence or abuse and they possess a range of Safe Place resources to signpost individuals to the appropriate

assistance. Further information on Safe Churches can be found in Appendix 2.

- 3.9 Additionally, within the requirements for Safe City / Borough accreditation, is an action that 'Council management and elected members have signed and will display the White Ribbon Charter: a personal pledge to never commit, condone or stay silent about domestic violence'. The White Ribbon Charter is part of the largest male-led Global campaign to end men's violence against women, with a presence in over 60 countries.
- 3.10 Annually the White Ribbon Campaign is marked with 16 Days of Action, which run between the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25th November) until Human Rights Day (10th December). Council have in previous years supported the White Ribbon Campaign by facilitating the display of a White Ribbon on the cobbled area in front of City Hall, on 25th November. Subject to approval from elected members, officers will undertake to include all associated actions with supporting the White Ribbon Campaign within Council's internal plan for Safe Place Platinum re-accreditation.
- 3.11 Members are asked to agree that annually the Lord Mayor will reaffirm Council's commitment to Belfast being recognised as a Safe Borough / City, by signing the White Ribbon Charter. Ongoing promotion of this initiative will further assist with awareness raising of Domestic Violence and Abuse, both internally and externally.

**Further requirements for a Safe Borough / City**

- 3.12 Parallel to advancing work listed above, the Council through the PCSP, continues to support a range of work linked to the Belfast Area Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Partnership, including work to raise awareness of domestic violence and services available for those experiencing domestic violence; such as the series of 'Domestic Violence Raising Awareness Sessions', which took place throughout January in each quarter of the city. Council officers will continue to engage with partners and build on this work as part of our commitment to Belfast being recognised as a Safe Borough / City. It is envisaged that Safe Borough / City status can be achieved by Autumn 2020, as part of the annual re-accreditation of Council's Workplace Charter (Safe Place) at Platinum level.
- 3.13 **Financial & Resource Implications**

There are no Financial or Resource implications to the recommendations outlined above.

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

**The work to raise awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse, and support available, has been progressed through the Women's Steering Group as part of the Council's Gender Action Plan. The revision and development of the Council's Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace policy was undertaken with engagement and support from a number of Section 75 groups and supports the Council's wider equality agenda."**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Update on Motion: Soft Opt Out Organ Donation**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 2nd September, had passed the following motion on Soft Opt Out Organ Donation, which had been proposed by Councillor Donnelly and seconded by former 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."

It was reported that a response had been received from Mr. R. Pengelly, Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health.

Mr. Pengelly had advised that, following a detailed examination of all aspects of opt out systems, the Northern Ireland Assembly had decided, in 2016, not to proceed with specific legislation to introduce an opt out system. He explained that, however, the Assembly, in recognition of the importance of promoting organ donation, had passed legislation that placed a statutory duty on the Department of Health to promote transplantation and to increase awareness about transplantation and the donation of human organs.

That legislation also required that the Department would provide an annual report about transplantation each year, and every five years the report must include the Department's opinion, as to whether the legislation had been effective in promoting transplantation and any recommendations that it considered appropriate in amending the law so as to further promote transplantation.

In December 2018, the Department had also launched a Policy Statement giving effect to the requirement to promote organ donation and transplantation. He reported that work on implementing the Policy Statement had recently gotten underway, with the establishment of an Organ Donation Steering Group to oversee its implementation, with arrangements also being made to recruit a Regional Organ Donation Promotion Manager/Co-Ordinator, whose role would include working with local councils and to establish a sub-group for charities to further help to implement the Policy Statement.

The Committee noted the response.

**Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

**Delivering a Smart Belfast**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 The Smart Belfast programme established by the Council in 2017 fosters collaborative innovation between our universities, industry and the public sector. In doing so the Council seeks to develop innovative solutions to urban challenges, while at the same time supporting local business to prepare for the disruption that new technologies are expected to make across our economy.
- 1.2 The approach has informed the Digital Pillar of the Belfast Region City Deal and has been an important factor in securing these investments for the city.
- 1.3 In order to maximise the opportunities that digital investments represent, and to continue to grow Belfast’s reputation as a globally significant location for technological innovation, Smart Belfast has identified a number of critical foundations that the city needs to have in place going forward. This report seeks Members approval to proceed on these strands of work.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked:

- 1. To approve the development of an urban data framework for Belfast City Council which would be informed by an initial internal Data Maturity exercise, the recommendations from which would be presented to Members later in 2020.
- 2. To approve a contribution to support a doctoral student to work with Belfast City Council and its partners on the ethical and legal implications of a data-driven Smart Belfast.
- 3. To approve the commissioning of expert support for digital infrastructure ‘barrier-busting’.

**3.0 Main report**

- 3.1 The ‘Smart Belfast’ framework fosters the conditions in which city partners can work together to exploit leading-edge technologies (such as AI, robotics, wireless networks, data science and industrial service design practices) to address urban challenges in more innovative ways. These conditions also provide a rich environment in which researchers, start-ups, business, and public

sector agencies, can innovate in the development of new products and services.

- 3.2 The value of the 'smart cities' market is estimated to be worth over £2 trillion within the next five years and Belfast is well-placed to position itself as a global location for digital innovation. The city has already begun to prove the value of the approach – successfully attracting co-investments and delivering joint projects with our universities and industry. The proposed £350 million of digital innovation pillar investments from the Belfast Region City Deal will be an important element in accelerating this success.
- 3.3 Each place has its own unique approach; however, there are a number of common foundations that a successful smart city needs to have in place and which Belfast's partners need to focus on:
- 3.4 A data-enabled city
- Data lies at the core of most modern urban services, whether public or private. This is a trend that is only likely to accelerate over the coming decade as technology continues to permeate most aspects of city life. This has implications for Belfast City Council not only as an organisation that designs and delivers its own data-driven services, but also in terms of our role and responsibilities as the civic leader of a 'smart city'. It is important that the Council continues to build its capabilities in this area and learns from the experience of other places.
- 3.5 Having a well-planned approach to urban data will also help make us a more attractive location for investing in innovation while at the same time making sure that our approach is citizen focused.
- 3.6 Other local authorities are already addressing their data challenges, improving their data maturity and implementing radical changes in their services and programmes. For example, Smart Cambridge (ie, a partnership of local councils, technology businesses, the University of Cambridge and other partner organisations) has built the council's own capabilities in this area; established data partnerships; and set up a 'data trust' to address key city challenges.
- 3.7 With this in mind it is proposed that the Council initiate the development of an urban data framework that will (i) seek to enhance the Council's own approach to generating and managing its data in relation to the delivery of its services and (ii) develop the organisation's capabilities as the lead partner in a data-driven Smart Belfast. The programme would begin with a Data Maturity exercise that would establish the organisation's current baseline

and help to identify action that would inform the design and delivery of a full data framework programme. These recommendations would be presented at a committee meeting later in 2020.

- 3.8 Complementing this approach, the Council has been engaging with Professor Daithí Mac Síthigh at the School of Law at Queen's University to develop an opportunity for a Phd researcher to support the Council to explore the legal and ethical implications of a data-driven Smart Belfast.
- 3.9 Prof MacSíthigh has applied for funding to the Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme for a full time studentship and, if successful, is seeking a financial contribution from Belfast City Council of £2,000 pa for three years to support the work. If awarded this researcher would be able to draw on emerging thinking on these issues to assist Belfast City Council and its partners in the development of an ethical data model.
- 3.10 The City Innovation team has also been asked to contribute to the new Law & Technology Masters degree (LLM) which is being launched by Queen's University in September 2020. This Masters examines the legal work and practice on technological innovation and introduces students to the interplay of and interfaces between technology and law.
- 3.11 Digital infrastructure
- Alongside data, a digital innovation economy is also dependent on state-of-the-art digital connectivity. Much of the planned investment under the Digital Pillar of the Belfast Region City Deal is focused on ensuring Belfast and the region has the latest wireless and fibre connectivity to ensure that the city is capable of supporting the data-intensive services of the future (such as autonomous vehicles, remote bio-medical monitoring, energy management, etc.) Belfast City Council has also been successful in attracting substantial funding for Local Full Fibre deployment across its estate.
- 3.12 Members may also be aware that the national mobile telecoms operators (including EE, Vodafone, O2 and Three) have also pledged that Belfast will be at the forefront of future wireless investment.
- 3.13 These infrastructure investment projects are complex and have the potential to be disruptive if not well co-ordinated. Other places, such as Glasgow, Manchester, Dublin, Birmingham, etc, have established small 'barrier-busting' groups that brings together planners, regeneration and digital staff to ensure the positive



impact of such infrastructure investments for the city. They also seek to ensure that other capital urban regeneration projects (eg) road improvements, new builds, have digital embedded in their plans.

3.14 Drawing on advice from other cities, it is proposed that Belfast City Council establish a small infrastructure group that, with cooperation from relevant Government Departments and agencies, would work to ensure that a city level approach to digital infrastructure is adopted. In support of this ambition it is proposed that the group seek expert support in the following areas over a six month period:

- Assisting our planning services to identify efficiencies in working with the mobile network operators (MNOs) and smaller companies re planning application process.
- Support for the development of the city level ‘barrier-busting’ resource.
- Support for policy engagement at UK and Northern Ireland levels (eg, in terms of understanding how regional and national infrastructure policies will support the city’s Digital Innovation objectives.)
- Specific support in developing a wireless infrastructure model that supports local innovation at the proposed smart district level. This might include some form of shared infrastructure model.

3.15 In support of this ambition Members are asked to approve the commissioning of this expert support.

3.16 Financial & Resource Implications

The initial Data Maturity exercise will cost approximately £5,000 (excluding VAT) with an additional £8,400 (excluding VAT) at a later stage to provide training workshops with a cross section of staff from different functions for shared learning and to support the roll out of recommendations from the data maturity exercise. This has been identified within existing departmental budgets.

3.17 If the application to the Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme is successful Belfast City Council would contribute £2,000 pa to a full-time Law and Technology Phd student working with Smart Belfast for three years. The council would also provide in-kind contributions (eg) access to staff; meetings; hot-desking facilities. The financial contribution for 2020/2021 has been identified within existing departmental budgets.

- 3.18 The commissioning of strategic support for digital infrastructure barrier busting is approximately £75,000. This has been identified within existing departmental budgets.
- 3.19 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations

### **Customer Focus Programme Update**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 Members are reminded that in March 2019 the Committee considered proposals for the Customer Focus Programme following the Discovery phase and agreed the implementation approach, key milestones of the implementation plan, the programme workstreams and the resource requirements necessary to successfully take forward the programme of work.
- 1.2 Since March 2019 the programme team has worked with our Strategic Delivery Partner, PA Consulting, progressing through Discover and Develop phases of the programme, conducting a number of workshops with elected members and staff to develop a future blueprint for a customer hub and improved delivery of council services.
- 1.3 The Discover and Develop phases have endorsed our initial outline business case and draft blueprint approved in March 2019 which explained the need to improve our service to all our customers. This report provides an update on activity during the Develop phase providing an overview of the future blueprint for customer service and high level implementation plan for delivery.

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

##### **2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

1. Note the Service design approach adopted as outlined at Appendix 1.
2. Note progress to date and the draft future blueprint at Appendix 2 and high level implementation plan attached at Appendix 3.
3. Note the update on services for Elected Members which have been progressed to outline design stage as part of the future blueprint.

4. Note that staff and Trade Unions have been engaged as part of the service design approach undertaken and will continue to be consulted as we move to delivery phase.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Service design approach

Since March 2019 a new service design approach for service reviews has been developed comprising 3 phases – Discover, Develop and Deliver. This approach has been used as the service design framework for the Customer Focus programme and has been adopted as the Council's approach to service design. The approach is outlined in more detail at Appendix 1.

The Discover and Develop phases included staff, resident and member engagement to understand current customer relationships and to highlight areas for improvement. The activity included ride-alongs with waste collection teams, shadowing calls, and focussed workshops with elected members and staff.

This new approach will ensure that we deliver:

- Optimised customer contact – professionalising resources and providing modern digital and telephony systems with access to real time data on contact performance
- Channel shift – moving where possible to digitally enabled self-serve solutions
- Customer centricity – designing our services around the needs of our customers.

3.2 Future Blueprint – what it will look like

The diagram attached at Appendix 2 sets out the draft future blueprint for the Customer hub. The blueprint puts our customers at the heart of everything we do and will ensure we provide a consistent and professional service affording our customers choice and convenience. This means improving and aligning all our access to service channels – telephone, face to face, website, social media. Furthermore it will clarify roles and responsibilities and improve relationships between the 'front and back' of the organisation building strong links between the customer hub, council services and continuous improvement. This will also result in increased capability through improved training and development and professionalisation of our customer function. A presentation will be provided at the meeting to take Members through the key elements of the new customer function.

### **3.3 Deliverables:**

Given the complexity of the customer programme it will not be possible to implement all its elements at one time. It is anticipated that by September 2020 we will have the following in place.

#### **3.3.1 Customer Hub**

This new function will deal with customer contact for all departments and services, across all channels (online, mobile, telephone, face-to-face, email, and social media).

Initially the hub will manage all customer contact for cleansing/waste and calls currently through the main switchboard and corporate complaints numbers. There is further work planned to co-design processes including the handoff to services in other departments.

We expect the customer hub team to comprise approximately 20 staff, coming from across the Council, who will facilitate all customer contact channels, provide customer support for digital channels and build capability in service performance and analysis working with departments and the Continuous Improvement team to inform and shape service improvement.

There will be improvements to our telephony system and a Customer Relationship Management system which will manage and track customer contact to resolution.

Discussions on the location of the customer hub are at an early stage however it is anticipated that it will be in the Cecil Ward Building. Work has begun to look at the feasibility of options and, as part of the Physical Programme update report, members are being asked to agree to add the creation of a new Customer Hub as a Stage 1 Emerging project, under the Capital Programme.

#### **3.3.2 Website**

We will launch an improved website from May/June 2020. We are currently engaging with departments on refreshing content. This will improve how customers access information on services reducing unnecessary contact.

#### **3.3.3 Elected Members**

As part of the Develop phase a Task and Finish Working Group has been established with elected members who have participated in 3

workshops to date to identify and design solutions to support elected members in their constituency work.

- 3.3.4 We plan to have a dedicated contact channel for elected members within the Customer Hub. Additionally we will provide members with real time information on service delivery so they can be informed of issues earlier, enabling them to be responsive to constituents' queries. Members will also have the ability to track issues they have raised and will have visibility of issues emerging in their areas.

3.3.5 **Bulky Waste**

We will commence a specific service design project on improving our bulky waste service. This will be digitally enabled so that customers can book online. The service design will include addressing current problems with types of collections, timescales etc. and will result in better information to customers and improved use of our resources.

3.3.6 **Missed Bins**

Aligned to the overall Resources and Fleet transition and improvement programme, we will seek to address the issue of missed bin collections. We will focus specific resource on how we can address these issues including information flows between elected members, customers, staff and managers. An element of this project will centre on business intelligence and improved understanding of the cause of service failures and identifying interventions to improve service.

3.4 **The plan for implementation and how we will do this**

Attached at Appendix 3 is a high level plan setting out the key milestones for new Web services to be implemented in May/June 2020 and the Customer Hub which will be live from September 2020. Staff and customers have been involved in the programme to date and this will continue throughout the Deliver phase.

Integral to the overall delivery is the inclusion of staff and Trade Unions in understanding the impact of these changes on current posts and post holders and the transition to the new Customer Hub.

3.5 **Financial & Resource Implications**

SP&R agreed in November 2017 that a budget of £500k be set aside for the customer focus project.

**Staff and Trade Unions have been engaged throughout the programme. As we move to Delivery, with Trade Union agreement we are establishing a sub group of JNCC to facilitate further engagement and consultation on staff implications of the programme in line with agreed HR policies and procedures.**

### **3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications**

**Work on the EQIA for the Customer Focus Programme is in progress. Our *Putting you First* vision is live on our website for public consultation and a schedule of drop-in sessions are taking place to engage with customers and to gather feedback on our vision. The consultation period closes on 2 February 2020 and the information gathered will be used to complete the EQIA screening.”**

The Chief Executive outlined the significance of this corporate programme and the Customer Focus Programme Director then provided a review of the customer vision, the prioritised areas of work for ‘day one’ implementation, the service design, the draft blueprint for the new customer function, details of the customer hub, the improved website which would be launched from May/June 2020, the role of Elected Members and the high level implementation roadmap.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Area Working Groups**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided details on the proposed agendas for the forthcoming meetings of the Area working Groups, which would primarily focus on the development of Belfast City Council’s approach to neighbourhood regeneration.

### **Climate Commission**

The Committee was reminded that, in March 2019, it had approved the Council’s membership of the ESRI-funded Place Based Climate Action Network. That decision had enabled the Council to work in partnership with Queen’s University, and alongside a range of other cities, to develop strategies and approaches to climate adaptation and mitigation. It was a unique project, and Belfast had been chosen to be one of three cities, alongside Edinburgh and Leeds, to establish a Climate Commission. It was reported that the Council was working to tackle climate breakdown and create a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy, with well-paid employment, innovation and creativity at its core and a thriving social economy and healthy communities. While some progress had been made towards achieving city-wide carbon reduction targets, many carbon reduction and climate resilience opportunities remained unrealised at a citywide level.

In the face of a challenging national policy context, the limitations on what the Council could achieve on its own, the declarations of a ‘Climate and Ecological Emergency’ by the UK and Irish parliaments, the value in bringing together key city partners to form a Commission to mirror the UK Committee on Climate Change, was recognised and the Belfast Climate Commission had been launched formally on 10th January, 2020.

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The Commission was based on the geographic area of Belfast City Council but also, where appropriate in its work, included the 5 adjacent local authority areas of the Belfast Region City Deal (Ards and North Down, Lisburn and Castlereagh, Mid and East Antrim, Newry Mourne and Down, and Antrim and Newtownabbey).

The Commission aimed to foster collaboration by bringing together public, private and civic sectors to promote, guide, monitor and review on-going climate and energy transitions. The Commission would also act as a forum for organisations and individuals to exchange ideas, research findings, information and best practice to help Belfast make positive choices on carbon reduction, energy transition and climate resilience.

The Commission would bring together different groups to develop a climate risk assessment and transition plan for the city/city region and for vulnerable communities and businesses within it. It would strengthen networks, build capacities, transfer good practice and explore ways of raising the investment needed while monitoring the progress of the city towards meeting its carbon reduction targets and recommend options to keep the city on track.

The Belfast Climate Commission had formally been established in November, 2019 and its first phase runs until December, 2020. Progress would then be reviewed and the second phase will run from January, 2021 to December, 2021. The key deliverables set for the Commission include:

- The collation of existing carbon reduction targets and measures for organisations across the city using an agreed methodology.
- Agreed strategic and shared priorities and opportunities for carbon reduction, low carbon energy transition and climate resilience across the city.
- To support Belfast, and Belfast Region City Deal, based organisations' understanding of the importance of energy and low carbon initiatives to their business. The aim was to facilitate the start of a pipeline of investable low carbon projects which would be supported by work to address perceived barriers to the availability of cost effective finance.
- Collaborations with other organisations to identify effective carbon reduction, low carbon energy transition and climate resilience measures, research and develop projects, and attract funding for project development and/or delivery.
- An annual report monitoring project delivery and evaluating progress across the city towards the city's climate reduction target and advising on future measures and updating data on emissions.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Inclusive Growth Strategy: Development of a Social Value Procurement Framework**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is provide an update on the development of a programme of work related to Social Value as part of the Inclusive Growth Strategy.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that Members:**

- Note the work in relation to social value that is currently being undertaken
- Agree to the establishment of a task and finish Social Value Working Group for Members which would meet bi-monthly

**3.0 Main report**

**Background**

- 3.1** Members agreed a Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Beattie in January 2019 on the development of a social value strategy to further social, environmental and economic goals of Belfast City Council and will be aware that work is continuing on the development of an Inclusive Growth Strategy as part of the Belfast Agenda.
- 3.2** Social value is the additional benefit to the community from the commissioning or procurement process which is over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and works, including economic, environmental and social well-being or community benefits that can be delivered to a local area. It is about maximising the impact of public expenditure to get the best possible social outcome.
- 3.3** This work builds on the approach taken by the Council since 2013 to integrate social clauses within relevant council procurements to provide ring-fenced employment and work placement opportunities and promote accessibility to small enterprises. Whilst these clauses represent a laudable effort to promote skills development and employment, impact has been limited by a narrow approach and outcomes difficult to discern in terms of measurement. In part it must be recognised that the current legal framework in N Ireland does not provide the same breadth of opportunity to promote social value as other jurisdictions. With the return of the Assembly one of the key actions will be to raise with ministers the issue of new enabling legislation and amendment or repeal of existing legislation which may inhibit the ambition held by the Council to use social value as a vehicle to drive inclusive growth.
- 3.4** Much work has already been undertaken in terms of contract analysis and looking at themes, outcomes and measures that would contribute to a new social value/inclusive growth framework with strategic alignment to the themes in the Belfast Agenda. In



that context there is a nexus with an ethical trading framework that should sit snugly with the social value framework and which will be developed in tandem, albeit that the ethical trading framework incorporating a rights based approach to trading, in addition to promoting sustainability and the environment, should have its own platform.

- 3.5 Members should also note that it was agreed at [People & Communities in December 2019](#) to broaden the remit of the officer social values working group to consider how to eradicate single-use items through more effective purchasing procedures, assessed against the waste hierarchy and the wider sustainable agenda.
- 3.6 Officers have also looked at other cities to learn from their experiences and to understand the challenges and opportunities presented by developing and implementing a social value framework. From the work undertaken to date the officers believe they are now in a position to progress the development of a framework for the Council.

#### Key Issues

- 3.7 In order to take this work forward, a work programme relating to procurement has been developed under the Inclusive Growth Strategy. An officer working group which meets monthly has been established comprising staff from each department and chaired by John Walsh, the City Solicitor, who has been appointed Senior Responsible Officer.
- 3.8 One of the key tasks is the establishment of a draft Social Value Procurement Framework governing how social value could be incorporated into the Council's procurement and contractual processes. This draft framework will have to be agreed through Committee before being issued for public consultation. This will be the central policy document establishing meaningful criteria sitting at the heart of contractual relations with third parties and which will have measurable/reportable outcomes.
- 3.9 It is proposed that a task and finish Social Value Procurement Member Working Group is established which would meet bi-monthly and make recommendations to Committee on the framework. Through this it is hoped that focused engagement will allow the Council to adopt the policy within the ambitious timeframe set out in the project plan.

**3.10 Financial & Resource Implications**

The work programme is being led by officers from Economic Development and Commercial and Procurement Services and involves officers from each department. A new Member Working Group would be resourced by Democratic Services.

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

Equality, good relations and rural needs implications will be considered in the development of the framework.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Belfast Policing and Council Service Delivery Coordinator**

The Committee considered a report which sought approval to progress the secondment of a senior Police Officer (Chief Inspector level) to work alongside the City and Neighbourhood Services Department.

The post holder would be aligned with the work of City and Neighbourhood Services, and contribute to more effective joint planning and working across a range of operational and community safety issues affecting the city. The post holder would also enhance representation on a range of relevant public forums, including, for example, Community Planning, Shared City Partnership, City Centre ‘Clean, Green and Safe’ partnership, as well as attending relevant committees as an observer. It was believed that the secondment would help to develop a greater understanding across both organisations of the key issues affecting local communities in Belfast, improve communication between the Council and PSNI, and contribute to more effective joint problem solving.

The Committee approved the secondment of a senior Police Officer (Chief Inspector) to Belfast City Council, to be positioned within the City and Neighbourhood Services Department, and subject to review at six monthly intervals.

**Proposal for Civic Visit to Nashville**

In March 2019, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee had approved the International Relations Plan for the financial year 2019/2020. A key element of that activity involved the development of jointly-agreed work programmes for each of the Council’s Sister Cities (Boston, Nashville and Shenyang), focusing on areas of shared interest.

It was reported that, as part of the working relationship with Nashville, the Lord Mayor of Belfast had recently received an official invitation from the newly-appointed Mayor of Nashville, Councillor John Cooper, to travel to Nashville to attend the Music City Irish Festival which would take place from 15-17 March, 2020. The Lord Mayor was unavailable to travel at this time and consequently the Deputy Lord Mayor had agreed to travel on behalf of the city, pending the Committee’s approval.

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This year marked the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Belfast-Nashville Sister Cities agreement. This was the inaugural year of a new event for Nashville – the Music City Irish Festival – and the Council was keen to ensure Belfast’s involvement in the event, given the long-running ties between the cities and the importance of music as a common area of interest.

In addition to musical performances on each of the three days, Belfast had been asked to consider providing promotional materials for display at the event. Council officers were currently working with Visit Belfast to secure relevant materials. The event had a number of music-related sponsors and it was understood that Tourism Ireland were also considering involvement in the event.

While in Nashville, the Deputy Lord Mayor would undertake a programme of meetings with both universities, Vanderbilt and Belmont (linked to QUB and Ulster University), youth organisations linked to the Council’s Youth Forum and business organisations, including Invest NI, Nashville Chamber and the Nashville Healthcare Council. The conversations with the business organisations would focus on scoping out in further detail the plans for the proposed Belfast City Council/Invest NI business mission to Nashville in August 2020.

The cost of the proposed visit to Nashville would not exceed £6,000 and had been provided for within the agreed 2019/2020 International Relations budget.

The Committee approved the participation of the Deputy Lord Mayor and the Director of Economic Development (or nominee) on a civic mission to Nashville from 13th – 17th March 2020.

### **Physical Programme and Asset Management**

#### **Physical Programme Update**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

**1.1 The Council’s Capital programme is a rolling programme of investment which either improves the existing Council facilities or provides new Council facilities. This seek approval to move projects to the next stage of project development process, as provides an update on other projects on the capital programme.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to –**

**Movements under the Capital Programme**

- *Customer Focus Programme – Customer Hub location:* agree to add the creation of a new Customer Hub as a Stage 1 Emerging project, under the Capital Programme.**

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- **City Hall Statues Project** – agree to add the creation of new statues within the grounds of City Hall as a Stage 1 Emerging project, under the Capital Programme.

**Further consideration and updates**

- **Lord Mayor's Car** - note the outcome of further consideration of the replacement of the current car with a new hybrid model.
- **Leisure Transformation Programme** - note key visitor and membership figures for Lisnasharragh and Brook now they have been formally opened.

**3.0 Main report**

**Proposed Movements – Capital Programme**

**3.1** Members have previously agreed that all capital projects must go through a 3 Stage process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP&R. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. Members are asked to agree to the following additions on the Capital Programme:

**3.2**

Project	Overview	Stage
<b>City Hall Statues</b>	New statues within grounds of City Hall arising from the EQIA on Memorabilia within the City Hall	Add as a Stage 1 – Emerging project
<b>Customer Focus Programme – Customer Hub location</b>	Create a new Customer Hub location (Cecil Ward Building) which has emerged as part of the Customer Focus Programme which has already been agreed by Members	Add as a Stage 1 – Emerging project

A Strategic Outline Caste (SOC) will now be worked up for both of above mentioned projects, and presented back through internal governance and Committee approval process.

**Fleet Replacement Programme - Replacement of the Lord Mayor's Car**

**3.3** At SP&R Committee 17th December, members were advised that the current lease for the Lord Mayor's vehicle was due to expire in February 2020 and that the replacement car - a hybrid model

similar to size a model of current vehicle but with a combined 99mpg, and cleaner lower emission CO2 levels – would be sought under a 4 year lease arrangement. Following discussion it was agreed that further options including looking at sponsorship, other forms of transport and a full electric model and would be considered and brought back to Committee.

3.4 The key issue remains around acquiring a replacement vehicle that achieves value for money, offers reliability and fulfils the function of a civic vehicle for high profile Office (security of both Lord Mayor and Chain; wide ranging travel needs from short to long distance journeys), while balancing sustainable/green priorities for the Council. In looking at the options available the Fleet Unit engaged closely with the Lord Mayor's Unit to ensure that the requirements, duties and obligations of the Office of the Lord Mayor were taken into consideration and Members are asked to note the following –

- The option to acquire a sponsored or subsidised vehicle - this option has been investigated previously which highlighted significant challenges of finding appropriate sponsorship proposition given the neutrality of the Lord Mayor Office and political sensitives
- The option of non-vehicle means of travel (eg push bike) - the Lord Mayor requires the Lord Mayor's Chain on all public occasions; other means of safely and securely transportation of the Chain to any event will still need to be in place, thereby reducing any green sustainable credentials this option is seen to achieve. Climatic conditions and longer travel distances also make this option prohibitive.
- The option to purchase or lease a full electric vehicle – the purchase of a full electric vehicle is deemed not to represent value for money given the current high purchase costs of vehicles coupled with the current time and deliverability implications. A exercise was also undertaken in relation to analysing the current mileage of the Lord Mayor's Car and while the usage profile is mainly around the city there is a reasonably regular requirement for longer trips and as such one of the key requirements continues to be for a long wheel based format which will allow for comfort on longer journeys.

3.5 Given the above it is considered that the lease option of a similar, replacement model – with improved fuel efficiency and cleaner lower emissions of a hybrid vehicle – remains at present, the preferred option. This will provide continuity in terms of the standard of vehicle required balancing the requirements of duties of the Lord Mayor Office while reflecting a change and recognition

of more sustainable approach to travel. In addition, in the event of any problems with the vehicle, the reliability and quality of the after care service provided by the service provider is particularly important, an issue that has also been taken into consideration.

Members will however be aware that technological advancements are taking place quickly particularly in the car industry and that while the capital implications of a full electric vehicle are currently high that it is likely that these will reduce over the coming period of time. Members will also be aware that the Council is looking at options for the electrification of its wider fleet. Given this we have committed to looking breaks in the lease arrangements, to allow for arrangements for an all-electric vehicle, should the capital / costs implications become more favourable. In addition and in the interim, steps will be taken to look at the installation of a charging point within the grounds of the City Hall.

*Leisure Transformation Programme – Lisnasharragh and Brook brief update*

- 3.6 Lisnasharragh and Brook Leisure Centres were formally opened by the Lord Mayor on 8th and 17th January respectively, with these new facilities being met with a very positive response from GLL, key stakeholders and users.

In the first six weeks of operation both centres have seen unprecedented user numbers. To date the Lisnasharragh has had over 18,000 people through the doors and over 1,800 individuals have taken out new memberships. This membership figure, combined with the 1,000 members that transferred from Avoniel, means Lisnasharragh's current membership of 2,800 already represents the largest membership of any centre across the city. In the same period Brook has had over 3,000 people use the facility, and over 1,000 pre-paid memberships have now been sold, greatly exceeding pre-opening targets.

- 3.7 Employment- The creation of the three new leisure facilities will create up to 75 new permanent jobs and up to 100 casual positions for the city. To date GLL have recruited 64 permanent posts and 27 casual roles for Lisnasharragh and Brook. Three Leisure Academies have now been delivered in life-guarding and fitness training, and of the 28 individuals completing the accredited training 26 have accepted positions with GLL (93%).

In addition, the recruitment campaign for Andersonstown was launched in December at the Leisure Academy Graduation Event. To date all the management posts have been filled and the process for recruiting the remaining staff is currently underway, with:

- A further three Leisure Employment Academies being delivered between January and March;
- Recruitment team and Service Managers for Andersonstown attending Andersonstown Jobs and Benefits Office on Tuesday 21st January to signpost re jobs and Academies.
- 4 employment roadshows being held at various venues across the city during January.

### **3.8 Financial & Resource Implications**

#### *Financial –*

- City Hall Statues and Customer Focus Hub – costs to be worked up
- Fleet Replacement Programme – Lease of the Lord Mayor’s Car – these costs are covered under the Fleet Replacement Programme

*Resources – Officer time as required.*

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

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

The Committee considered each of the recommendations and agreed the following:

#### **Customer Focus Programme – Customer Hub location**

The Committee agreed to add the creation of a new Customer Hub as a Stage 1 Emerging project, under the Capital Programme.

#### **City Hall Statues Project**

Moved by Councillor Lyons,  
Seconded by Councillor Groogan,

That the Committee agrees not to add the creation of new statues within the grounds of City Hall as a Stage 1 Emerging project, under the Capital Programme until a report of the indicative costs had been submitted to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands three members voted for the proposal and ten against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the City Hall Statues Project in relation to the creation of new statues within the grounds of the City Hall be added as a stage one emerging Project under the programme.

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**Lord Mayor's Car**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the replacement of the current car to enable information to be provided on an electric vehicle.

**Leisure Transformation Programme**

The Committee noted the key visitor and membership figures for the Lisnasharragh and Brook Leisure Centres following the formal openings.

**Asset Management**

The Committee approved:

**I. Ormeau Golf Club, Ormeau Park, Park Road – Lease Renewal**

- the renewal of the lease of c. 137 acres of land at Park Road to the Trustees of Ormeau Golf Club for a term of 25 years from 1 July 2020 at a rent of £14,500 per annum with rent reviews every 5 years

**II. Ballymacarrett Walkway**

- the acquisition for a nominal sum and to enter into licence agreements to carry out works on following strips of land which are currently owned by Connswater Homes Ltd to facilitate the Ballymacarrett Walkway project on terms to be agreed by the Estates Unit and Legal Services:
  - Land to the rear of 11-29 Severn Street
  - Land to the rear of 37-65 Severn Street
  - Land to the rear of 67-89 Severn Street
- approve the completion of a Deed of Dedication to Urban Villages in respect of the works to be carried out as part of the Ballymacarrett Walkway project.

**III. The Entries – Environmental Improvement Project**

- agreements to be entered into between the Council and property owners within the Entries Environmental Improvement project area in the city centre for the purpose of erecting lighting, artwork and painting walls with terms to be agreed by the Estates Unit and Legal Services.

**Finance, Resources and Procurement**

**Contracts Update**

The Committee:

- Approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 1**).



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- Approved the award of single tender actions in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 2**).
- Approved the estimated expenditure of permitted excluded contracts as detailed in Financial Regulations K11 Appendix 1 (**Table 3**)

**Table 1 – Publically Advertised Tenders**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Senior Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Proposed contract duration</b>
(T2008) Provision of Office Supplies	Ronan Cregan	Up to 4 years
(T2045) Market Research Framework	John Walsh	Up to 4 years
(T2046) Brand Services Framework	John Walsh	Up to 4 years
(T2043) Provision of Specialist Property & Financial Advice	Alistair Reid	Up to 1 year
(T2050) Removal Storage and Retrieval of Office Records	John Walsh	Up to 10 years
(T2047) Video Production Framework	John Walsh	Up to 4 years
(T2049) Tender for Supply & Delivery of Tyres & Tubes	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
(T2048) Tender for Hire of vehicles up to and over 7.5T & Glass Collection vehicles	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
(T2037) Tender for the Collection & Recovery of Vehicles & Plant	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
(T1978) Tender for the Supply & Delivery of Mechanical Sweeper Brushes	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
(T2044) Tender for ambient air quality assessment within the Council boundary for PM2.5 and NO2 ambient pollutants.	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 2 years
(T2041) Tender for the provision of temporary agency workers	John Tully	Up to 4 years

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**Table 2 - Direct Award Contracts (Single Tender Action)**

<b>Title of tender</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Annual estimate</b>
Development of the DHPS as an option for the continuation of mitigations for Housing Benefit claimants impacted by SSSC and Benefit Cap.	Northgate	£97,750 (£77,750 implementation and £20,000 licences).

**Table 3 – Excluded Service Contracts**

<b>Supplier *</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Estimated expenditure FY 20/21</b>
Sound House	Production of radio commercials	Circa £11k
Belfast Telegraph	Online advertisements	Circa £15k
Daily Mirror/ Belfast Live	Online advertisements	Circa £15k
ITV	Video on demand	Circa £3k
Cool FM	Radio commercials	Circa £66k
Northern Media Group	Radio commercials	Circa £47k
U105	Radio commercials	Circa £46k

\* Supplier used may change depending on availability and business need.

**Equality and Good Relations**

**Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting  
on 13th January 2020**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Shared City Partnership Meeting held on 13th January 2020.

**Equality and Diversity: Extending the Sign Language  
Video Interpreting Service provision**

The Committee was reminded that a 12-month pilot using SignVideo, a remote video sign language interpreting service, had been launched in May, 2019. The service had been available on the Council's website, Cecil Ward Building, Belfast Zoo and Olympia Leisure Centre.

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The City Solicitor reported that a request for funding from the Department for Communities had been approved in December, 2019 for providing the SignVideo service at a further fourteen Council sites, including the Tropical Ravine, the City Hall and twelve leisure centres/community hubs. The funding would be used to purchase 14 iPads valued at £5,600 to support Sign Language users and front-line staff in accessing the SignVideo service.

Following an evaluation of the usage of the service during that period and the successful application for funding, he recommended that the service be continued and should become part of the Customer Focus Programme from May, 2020.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Operational Issues**

**Requests for use of the City Hall  
and the provision of Hospitality**

The Committee approved the recommendations made in respect of applications received up to 13th January, 2020, as set out in the undernoted appendix:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
<b>2020 EVENTS</b>						
North Belfast Interface Network	13 March 2020	<b>Exploring Cultural Identities Celebration –</b> Event to celebrate the end of cross community training event and present certificates to participates.  Numbers attending - 100	C&D	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine reception	Approve No charge Wine Reception
Women's Tec	13 March 2020	<b>2020 Women's Tec Gala Awards -</b> event will be a celebration of education and learning and will recognize student achievement.	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea, Coffee and Biscuits	Approve No charge Tea and Coffee Reception

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<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION</b>	<b>FUNCTION DATE</b>	<b>FUNCTION DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CRITERIA MET</b>	<b>ROOM CHARGE</b>	<b>HOSPITALITY OFFERED</b>	<b>CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND</b>
		Numbers attending – 100				
Belfast Media Group	28 March 2020	<b>Best of the West Awards 2020 –</b> celebratory event for the services, businesses, products and people based in West Belfast and their contribution to West Belfast and the community.  Numbers attending 400	B & C  1 in 3 rule	Yes - £825	No hospitality	Approve, 1 in 3 year basis Room charge No hospitality
Ulster University	10 September 2020	<b>Collaborative European Research Conference Dinner –</b> dinner linked to 3-day conference taking place in Belfast.  Numbers attending –150 - 200	A & B	No  <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	No Hospitality	Approve No charge No hospitality
Northern Ireland Electricity	3 or 10 September 2020	<b>NIE Networks Social Club 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner –</b> celebration dinner to mark 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society.  Numbers attending – 100 -150	C	Yes - £300	Yes, Wine Reception  <i>(celebrating significant anniversary)</i>	Approve Room charge Wine Reception

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Belfast Bible College	20 November 2020	<b>Post-Graduation Reception</b> – Reception event to make the graduation and achievements of the students at the college.  Numbers attending – 250 - 300	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea, Coffee and Biscuits	Approve No charge, Tea and Coffee Reception
Common Purpose	7 December 2020	<b>Meridian Award Ceremony</b> – final day of the Meridian Programme to review progress made and present awards to participants of the course.  Numbers attending – 40	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes – Tea, Coffee and Biscuits	Approve No charge, Tea and Coffee Reception
<b>2021 EVENTS</b>						
British Society of Animal Science	14 April 2021	<b>BSAS Annual Conference Dinner</b> – welcome dinner linked to 3 day conference taking place in Belfast.  Numbers attending – 175-215	A & B	No  <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	No Hospitality	Approve No charge No hospitality

**Request for use of City Hall for Trans Pride NI Festival**

The Committee was reminded that requests for the use of the City Hall were normally dealt with under the authority delegated by the Committee to the Director of Legal and Civic Services using criteria agreed for his purpose. Occasionally, however, it was necessary to

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place such a request directly before the Committee, and the following request fell into that category.

The Committee was advised that Trans Pride NI, was a charity organisation which campaigned for Gender Equality in Northern Ireland, for transgender, intersex, non-binary, gender questioning and all other people. The City Solicitor reported that Trans Pride NI wished to hold their Trans Pride Festival in the City Hall grounds on 6th June, 2020. The purpose of the festival was to celebrate gender diversity, raise awareness of transgender people and ensure gender equality. The festival would be free to all participants and the organisers estimate up to 500 people attending. The event would take place on the front lawn of the City Hall from 3.00 pm to 5.00 pm, although access would be required earlier and later in the day for set ups and strip downs. Activities would be concentrated on the front lawns, as a consequence, areas such as the Titanic Memorial Garden and Cenotaph would remain open to the public. Access to City Hall building for tours, visitor exhibition, the Bobbin, function rooms would not be affected.

Activities at the festival would include a stage truck and sound system for rally and performers, inflatables, games, face painting, art exhibition and health fair stalls. The final details would be planned and approved by the City Hall Function Management Unit to ensure that the event ran smoothly. Trans Pride NI would provide all security, stewarding/marshalling staff, cleaners, first aiders and would comply with the usual conditions, including insurance, indemnities for damage and submission of a formal event-management plan for review and approval by the aforementioned Unit.

In terms of the main festival, there would be no costs to the Council as the organiser would bear any/all costs for stewarding/ equipment etc. themselves. The utilities costs on the day were of a very minor nature. There would be no concerns from an asset management point of view, although the organisers would be required to provide the usual insurances, indemnities and obligations.

The Committee:

1. authorised Trans Pride NI to use the City Hall grounds on 6th June 2020 for activities programmed as part of Trans Pride NI Festival; and
2. authorised the festival in line with similar events previously approved by the Council.

**Consultation response to the DAERA  
Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 **Members are requested to note the proposed BCC response to the DAERA Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland, as discussed and approved by the People and Communities Committee at its meeting on 14 January 2020.**

## 2.0 Recommendations

### 2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Note the contents of the attached People and Communities Committee report of 14 January 2020, the draft BCC consultation response to the DAERA Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland, and to consider the inclusion of the amendments put forward by the Green Party, as well as factor in some developments as a result of restoration of the Executive referenced in 3.2-3.3 below. The Green Party's amendments are attached at Appendix 3.
- Note the request for an extension to the Response to DAERA was agreed and is the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020

## 3.0 Main Report

### Key Issues

- 3.1 Amendments to the consultation response were tabled by Councillor Smyth on behalf of the Green Party at the aforementioned meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Committee would review the proposed changes put forward by Councillor Smyth, and submit any feedback to the City and Neighbourhood Services Department for compilation and onward submission to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to approve the final consultation response to DAERA. No responses have been received.
- 3.2 However officers had advised at the People and Communities committee they could also review the comments in light of the 'The New Decade, New Approach Deal' as a result of the restoration of the Assembly. In light of this, the executive have now agreed to include a Climate Change Strategy and Act, to address immediate and longer term impacts of climate change. They have also committed to introduce legislation and targets for reducing carbon emissions in line with the Paris Climate Change Accord and this will be addressed through the programme for Government. A new Energy Strategy is to be developed that will set ambitious targets and actions for a fair and just transition to a zero carbon society. It is also acknowledged that these actions and interventions will be required across a wide range of areas in order to address the impacts of climate change in a fair and just way. The executive has also committed to the establishment of an Independent Environmental Protection Agency to oversee this work and ensure targets are met. Given that these are now Assembly positions, officers would propose adding into the formal response that these developments are strongly welcomed and supported by this Council.

- 3.3 The key response for consideration is outlined in the attached People and Communities report, and this committee is asked to note the associated appendices. On the attached Appendix 3 officers have indicated where comments may be substantially covered off via the New Deal as referenced above. Members are also reminded that at the October meeting of this committee, agreement was reached and wording updated following a notice of motion on carbon emissions and therefore this could be the revised wording (as set put below) to be included in the response to the DAERA consultation. It is proposed to add to the response that's DAERA needs to consider more informed and ambitious targets.

*'This Council has supported a motion to declare a Climate Emergency and in light of these, this Council commits to a more ambitious and more urgent target of net-zero emissions than 2050. This target will be informed by the work undertaken below [to produce a Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plan] and will reflect the ambition of similar cities in the UK, who have carbon neutrality goals more ambitious than the 2050 target. Glasgow, Bristol, Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield and Leeds have committed to 2030 and Manchester to 2038.'*

3.4 **Finance & Resource Implications**

None.

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

None."

Moved by Councillor Garret,  
Seconded by Councillor Carson,

That the Committee agrees that the Corporate Response as submitted to the People and Communities Committee on, 14th January, be approved as the Council's response to the the consultation.

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

**Council response to the Liquor Licensing Laws in Northern Ireland Consultation Document**

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 seek approval from the SP&R Committee to a Council response to the Department for Communities Consultation Document on 'Liquor Licencing Laws in Northern Ireland'.



## 2.0 Recommendations

### 2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- note and review the attached draft response to the Liquor Licensing Laws in Northern Ireland Consultation Document at Appendix 1.
- approve the draft council response subject to any amendments.

## 3.0 Main report

### 3.1 Background

The Department for Communities has produced a consultation document entitled 'Liquor Licensing Laws in Northern Ireland'. The Department is seeking views on the effectiveness of the current liquor licensing laws rather than putting forward any policy proposals.

The last general review of Northern Ireland's liquor licensing laws took place in 2012 resulting in the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill 2016. This Bill included measures aimed at contributing towards a reduction in alcohol related harm and making the licensed trade more sustainable and attractive to tourists. The Bill was making its way through the Assembly's legislative process and when the Assembly collapsed in January 2017, it could no longer be progressed.

Given the passage of time since the last review, recent developments in other jurisdictions and growing public interest in licensing issues, the Department believes that it is appropriate to carry out a consultation on the current liquor licensing policy. The aim of the exercise is to determine public opinion on current licensing laws and views on whether changes could be made in future to ensure Northern Ireland has a more flexible and modern licensing framework to respond to changing expectations and lifestyles.

### 3.2 Draft Corporate Response

The consultation document seeks the views of interested parties across a number of general policy positions and principles. The Committee are asked to review the suggested Council response to each of the policy positions contained in the draft response at Appendix 1. A summary of the council response to each of the issues is included below.

### Categories of licence

The Council agrees that local 'Micro' brewery type businesses should be allowed to sell their product directly to the public at markets or other special events. One solution would be to introduce a license to permit the brewery to sell at their own premises and also to sell for consumption off the main premises. Another would be to introduce an exemption scheme whereby such premises could apply for an exemption from the requirement to hold a license (restricted to those businesses which sell a certain amount of alcohol and only operating up to a certain time). A district council should be able to acquire a licence to host events showcasing local product permitting the sale of such product for consumption on or off the premises. Consideration should also be given to enable specific and streamlined licensing of tourist facilities and artisan markets owned or controlled by district councils.

### Permitted hours

The Council believe that flexibility in opening hours is important in promoting tourism and the night time economy and welcomes the ability to apply for additional opening hours. However, the extension of 12 times per year does not go far enough to address the change in current demand and provide an alternative to home drinking and to visitors. This view is shared by the industry who consider that they should be able to have late extensions for the sale of alcohol until 2.00am twice a week. The Council agree that one hour, twice per week would be a moderate increase that would help deliver staggered closing and attract people out of home drinking and into licensed premises. This change could help facilitate a more gradual and steady dispersal of patrons, reducing the impact of 'spilling out' of customers en-masse from licensed premises.

### Additional hours – small public houses

The Council agree that the number of occasions that police may authorise late opening hours in small pubs should be increased provided there is consideration given to location, other mixed-use services and infrastructure surrounding the business.

The Council strongly urge that provision is made within legislation that the police must consult with their local council prior to granting such occasional licences to ensure that no problems such as noise and nuisance behaviour have arisen, particularly in residential areas. In addition, a clear definition of what constitutes a small pub is required if the number of occasional licences are to be significantly increased. If not the implications are that some

larger pubs will relinquish their article 44 licence, apply for occasional licences and not provide entertainment or substantial refreshment at all.

#### Easter opening

The Council recognises the significance of the Easter period for many people. However that has to be balanced against those people who would wish to see a relaxation of the restrictive Easter opening hours at a time when they are likely to be off work and wish to socialise during that period. There is frustration in both the tourism and licensing industry that licensed premises are effectively closed during what could be a positive trading period.

In addition to the restricted opening hours, there is no retail activity available on Easter Sunday. The Council is concerned that the combination of these factors leads to tourists either staying away or not enjoying their visit and therefore being unlikely to return or recommend Belfast as a tourist destination. In light of all those considerations, it is the Council's view that the current hours are too restrictive.

#### Drinking up time

In 2016 the Council, on balance, welcomed the proposal for drinking up time being extended from 30mins to 1 hour. However there were some concerns that it might encourage binge and excessive drinking, as people will have more time to consume their last drink and may buy more than they would have previously. If successful and implemented responsibly by licensees, the extra 30 mins may facilitate a more gradual and steady dispersal of patrons, therefore reducing the impact of 'spilling out' of customers' en-masse from licensed premises.

#### Removal of off-sales

It is the Council's view that similar timings and conditions should exist for both the on and off trade for the sale of unopened alcohol to be taken off the premises. The Council would support the prohibition on being able to remove alcohol after 11.30pm as there is a risk that alcohol being purchased after that time could increase the likelihood of alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour, noisy parties, etc.

#### Places of public entertainment

At the time liquor licensing legislation was enacted, betting at race tracks was not permitted on a Sunday. The Betting and Gaming (NI) Order 2004 permitted on-course Sunday betting, but with no

corresponding changes to liquor licensing law, the sale of alcohol on a Sunday therefore remains illegal under a 'Place of public entertainment' race track licence.

Following the conclusion of the 2012 consultation and during the early passage of the Bill, representations were made to amend the law to allow permitted hours on a licensed race track on a Sunday. The Council agrees that this anomaly should be rectified.

#### Major events

The Council consider that special arrangements or dispensations should be made for special events given their importance to the local economy and tourism. The current licensing laws caused difficulties in delivering the MTV Music awards and when the Council was assisting in preparing the UK and Ireland's bid for the Rugby World Cup. It is essential that the Department takes proactive steps to provide more flexibility for special events now so as to provide more confidence for statutory agencies bidding to bring international events to Northern Ireland.

As Northern Ireland, and in particular Belfast, seeks to establish itself on a global scale, it is important that there is flexibility for international events which are of regional economic significance. The legislation should be worded in such a way as to allow the decision to designate an event as a major event to be taken by either the Chief Constable or senior civil servants. Otherwise the requirement to enact legislation to make the decision may act as a hindrance to securing these events and/or delivering them. In particular, for street based events, special arrangements should provide for the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquor by establishing zones outside licensed premises in which this would be permitted. The same dispensation should apply within areas designated for events associated with festivals/carnivals within town and city centres. This would be subject to appropriate controls including stewarding of the areas in question.

#### Alignment of entertainment and liquor licences

The 2016 Bill proposed that entertainment cannot be provided any later than the permitted hours for the consumption of alcohol which, on the basis that drinking up time was extended, would be 1am on a Sunday and 2am the rest of the week. Entertainment until 3am would only be permitted 12 nights per year for certain licensees who have applied for a court order to sell intoxicating liquor until 2am.

To support the night-time economy and Belfast as a destination for tourism the Council believes the proposed limitation of 12 nights

per year should be amended to permit these liquor licensing arrangements to 2am on two nights per week for certain licensees, subject to strict controls relating to patron dispersal and nuisance. Consideration should be given to giving district councils power to designate areas/zones in which these licences could be granted.

The Council believes the alignment of hours for liquor and entertainment licensing is not required and that flexibility should be permitted in respect of licensees who wish to provide entertainment going beyond the hours for which the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquor is permissible.

The Council remains of the view that district councils should be given powers to deal with both Liquor Licensing and Entertainments Licensing, as they are best placed to administer and issue both types of licence. This would allow alignment of the licences and ensure there is a holistic approach to dealing with issues around how premises are operated.

#### Children's certificates

The Council supported removal of the requirement to have Children's certificates and the extension of a person under the age of 18 being allowed on the premises to 9.30 pm instead of 9.00 pm as proposed in the 2016 Bill.

#### Deliveries of alcohol

The Council continues to welcome the 2016 proposals in this regard. The experience of Council officers is that the delivery of alcohol to under 18s through taxis (Dial a Drink) or online via supermarkets is contributing towards anti-social behaviour issues involving minors as these deliveries tend to be consumed 'on street' or in parks.

The Council view is that alcohol should not be delivered to a minor and verification of age should be sought when delivering alcohol – a system of introducing this to supermarket deliveries and also allow controls on other delivery options such as Taxis should be an enforceable offence and may require additional legislative control.

#### Underage functions

The Council supported the proposed 2016 changes as it will permit hotels and other venues to host events and functions catering for the younger audience, provided there are strict safety controls in place, without fear of breaching their Liquor Licence. The

Department may, however, wish to consider introducing a lower age limit for these events.

#### Family functions

The Council agrees that the current law should be reviewed to facilitate under 18's, when attending family events in licensed premises. However, a family function must be defined in the legislation to avoid any potential ambiguity for enforcing authorities.

#### Young people in sporting clubs

The Council welcomed proposals in the 2016 Bill that young people be permitted to remain in the bar area of a registered club until 11.00 pm during the summer months or to attend an awards ceremony on one occasion in a calendar year. The Department may wish to consider that competitions and ceremonies are not just confined to the summer months and clubs may have more than one awards night per year.

#### Restriction on advertising in supermarkets and off-sales

The Council continues to support the 2016 proposal and considers it appropriate that, with the current societal problems with alcohol, advertising and promotions be restricted from view in places and environments where children are likely to be present.

#### Advertising of functions in clubs

The Council remains supportive of the proposal in the 2016 Bill that a registered club will be allowed to advertise any function outside a club premises where the advertisement clearly states that only members of the club and their guests may attend.

#### Provision of entertainment in restaurants

There is a need to provide a diverse range of entertainment venues and care should be taken not to affect the current ability for restaurants to provide entertainment as an ancillary means of enhancing their offer.

However, there have been significant problems in the past associated with restaurants operating as a bar and providing entertainment when they only have the benefit of a restaurant licence thereby effectively using the premises as a nightclub. The Council would welcome measures to prevent this occurring. It may be that more detailed conditions could be attached to such licences to prevent this use and introduce a power to immediately

suspend a licence for a limited period where these conditions appear to have been persistently breached rather than having to apply for a Court Order. Such an immediate deterrent will be much more effective in ceasing the unauthorised use. As the premises is unlikely to hold valid insurance for the provision of entertainment other than as ancillary to the provision of food, the Council is of the view that such a legislative provision would be appropriate in the interests of public safety.

#### Self service

The Council agrees that self-service of alcoholic drinks for immediate consumption should be regulated.

Our view is that this type of self-service in a bar or club environment does not encourage patrons to alternate their alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic drinks and does not promote responsible drinking. Bar staff cannot monitor when individuals have consumed too much alcohol and therefore are not in a position to refuse service.

#### Codes of practice

The Council agrees that the Department should formally approve a Code of Practice in relation to the display or sale of alcohol, as well as any activities designed to promote the sale of alcohol. Whilst the 2016 Bill requires a court to be satisfied that a licensee is aware of the Code upon the grant, transfer or renewal of a Licence it does not refer to protection orders. Nor did it make it an offence to fail to comply with any such approved Code.

Whilst this is welcomed in principle, the Council remains concerned that the fact it is not an offence to fail to comply with the Code will render it meaningless and that PSNI and others will seek to enforce this Code through the prism of Entertainments Licensing. It is imperative that some statutory force is afforded to such a Code, which should be written by the Department, in conjunction with both PSNI and local councils and in consultation with the relevant trade bodies.

#### Remote sale of alcohol

The Council agrees that clarity is required. The Council would like to reiterate its previous comments around the delivery of alcohol to young people and the need for the proposed additional safeguards including prohibiting under 18s from receiving any deliveries of alcoholic drinks and requiring proof of age to be shown and recorded upon delivery as proposed in the 2016 Bill.

### Loyalty Schemes

The fact is, even among supermarkets, it's not completely clear how effective loyalty cards are. Asda and Waitrose, for instance, manage to attract a loyal following without them. Unless there is clear evidence that changing the law in this regard will have any significant impact on alcohol misuse or alcohol related harm there would seem little need at present to make such a change.

### Other aspects of liquor licensing law that should be changed

There are two additional areas which the Council feels should be changed.

Controlling wider patron dispersal – At present there is a significant issue around liquor licencing, the hours of operation and the management of patrons spilling out on the street in the wider university and Lower Ormeau Road area. The problem is exacerbated by fast food outlets staying open until 4 am to accommodate lingering patrons which perpetuates the noise, littering and other anti-social behaviour issues. This is having a significant impact on those local neighbourhoods. The inability to effectively deal with these issues demonstrates, in the Council's view, that current licensing legislation is not fit for purpose. These issues cannot be dealt with through the prism of entertainment licensing as the majority of the issues occur in public rather than on the premises. It is essential that provisions are introduced to allow a wider control of patron dispersal where it is considered necessary to do so.

The Council is of the view that it is important to look for innovative ways to feed community views into the liquor licensing process. This could be, for example, requiring operators to carry out a community impact assessment where their premises have been identified as potentially being linked to anti-social behaviour or if their premises is located within a certain area of the city in which such behaviour is considered prevalent. Furthermore, all operators could be required to submit an anti-social behaviour plan which must be approved by PSNI in consultation with local councils. There should be an express legislative requirement that these assessments and plans must assess the cumulative impact of their premises together with other licensed premises within the local area.

Irresponsible drinks promotions – Drinks promotions continue to be prevalent at certain times of the year at events such as students' Fresher's, Halloween etc. These promotions have the potential to result in increased antisocial activity in residential areas within the city and impacts on the wider community living



within those areas and risk the health and wellbeing of those consuming the alcohol.

The introduction of effective management and controls of drinks promotions would be welcomed as part of the review of liquor licensing laws, with the ability to ban in certain areas in which such promotions would be likely to result in anti-social behaviour.

**3.3 Financial & Resource Implications**

None.

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

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**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 16th January, 2020.

**Minutes - Active Belfast Ltd. Board**

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Active Belfast Ltd. Board of 20th January, 2020.

**Minutes of Meeting 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 13th January, 2020.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Customer Focus Working Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Customer Focus Working Group of 8th January, 2020.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Girdwood – Councillor Dorrian**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Dorrian requested the Committee to consider the potential closing of the gates at the Girdwood Hub on a more permanent basis, when the Centre itself wasn't open, due to ongoing anti-social behaviour in and around the site.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Friday, 24th January, 2020**

After discussion, it was agreed that a report in relation to the issues raised be submitted to the North Area Working Group for consideration.

**Regeneration Powers**

In the absence of Councillor Nicholl, Councillor Long requested the Committee to consider writing to the Minister for the Department of Communities requesting that she consider again the transfer of regeneration powers to local councils.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

Chairperson

## People and Communities Committee

Wednesday, 8th January, 2020

### SPECIAL MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Michael Collins (Chairperson); and Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain, de Faoite, Garrett, Kyle, Magee, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, and Verner.

In attendance: Harry Booker;  
Ben Matchett;  
Aoife McCallin;  
Shántana McCullough;  
John Joe McGrady;  
Lauren Murphy;  
Che Robinson-Taylor;  
David Shields, and  
Carter Wickham, Belfast Youth Forum;  
Ms. C. Taggart, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Ms. A. Hargey, Young People's Co-ordinator; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Belfast Youth Forum Update**

In accordance with a previous decision, the Committee was advised that representatives from the Belfast Youth Forum were in attendance to provide an update in relation to the work of the Forum.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed the representatives to the meeting and they proceeded to provide the Committee with an update on a number of their campaigns.

#### **Relationship and Sexual Health Education Project**

The Committee viewed a video which outlined the experiences of the members of the Belfast Youth Forum on the issue of relationship and sexual education in schools, following which members of the forum presented the report.

The Committee was advised that the report entitled 'Any Use?' Young People's Opinions on Relationship and Sexuality Education in Belfast 2019 had been launched in the City Hall in November. The research had been undertaken as Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE) had been highlighted by young people as an issue and the Forum had decided to select it as one of their campaign areas.

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The aims of the report were to find out young people's opinions on RSE in Belfast; how useful young people find their current RSE; and if young people understand their rights in relation to RSE.

The research had been undertaken in conjunction with the QUB Centre for Children's Rights and Common Youth who had helped develop an online survey, designed survey questions, collect surveys from young people and analysed the findings. 771 young people had taken part in the survey and some of the main findings included the following:

With regard to the right to receive RSE:

- 72% of young people said they knew they had a right to receive RSE in school;
- 52% of young people said they felt their right to RSE was not being met;
- Only 23% felt that adults trusted young people to make their own choices about relationships and sex;
- The proportion of 14 – 16 year olds saying their right was met (56%) was significantly higher than the proportion of those 17 or over saying this (43%); and
- 58% felt that adults did not trust them and one in five (20%) said they did not know if adults trusted them in this regard.

The report then highlighted how young people described their RSE and, overall, negative word associations dominated those answers with the four most common being basic, unhelpful, useless and bias.

With regard to learning about sexual relationships, the three most popular sources from which young people said they learned about relationships and sex were through friends and peers (62%); social media (55%); and lessons in school (54%).

The survey then asked a range of questions about RSE in schools and how useful it was. The vast majority of young people (86%) felt that school was the best place to receive RSE, yet only 60% of respondents said that this actually occurred. In relation to how useful their RSE in school was, 66% of young people felt that the information they received was either "not very useful" or "not useful at all", with only 10% saying that they thought the information they received was "very useful". The report then highlighted through which subjects RSE was taught in schools and questioned how the young people felt RSE should be delivered in schools and who should deliver it, with the most commonly given response being a qualified RSE teacher. The survey also sought views on what should be taught to young people in RSE, with the most popular subject young people wanted to learn about was personal relationships.

The representatives of the forum then presented its recommendations for government and policy makers which were:

1. To adopt a rights-based and proactive approach to relationship and sexual education;
2. Work with young people to co-produce a RSE curricular programme for schools; and

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3. For such a curricular programme to be taught by specialised, qualified and trained staff.

After lengthy discussion, during which the members of the Committee commended the Belfast Youth Forum on its RSE campaign and the production of the report, it was agreed that letters be forwarded to the Permanent Secretaries of both the Department of Health and the Department of Education seeking a joint meeting with representatives of the Committee and the Belfast Youth Forum to discuss its 'Any Use?' Relationship and Sexual Education Campaign and report. The wording of this letter to be sent to BYF members for input before the final draft was completed and sent.

### **Racism and Diversity**

The Committee was advised that the Youth Forum was undertaking a racism and diversity project and would be holding workshops in the City Hall in February with young people from immigrant/refugee/asylum seeker communities in Belfast. The workshop would explore these young people's experiences of living in Belfast, as well as gathering their opinions in how best to promote multi-culturalism and diversity in the city. The forum would use the feedback from the discussions on the day to create a video report, which would be launched in the Queen's Film Theatre in spring 2020. Dr. Jonny Byrne from the Ulster University was working with the Forum to create the workshop content and to analyse the data which was collected. The Forum members also updated the Members of their plans to source funding to visit Auschwitz in Poland as part of their diversity project. The Members welcomed this and committed to helping the Forum source funding for this.

Noted.

### **"Elephant in the Room" Mental Health Campaign**

Members of the Youth Forum presented their "Elephant in the Room Campaign", a report which explored young people's awareness of mental health in Northern Ireland.

The report was developed on the recommendations of the UN Committee on the rights of the child which had recommended that the Northern Ireland Assembly should invest heavily in children and young people's mental health services. Following an event held in October, 2016 at which young people had requested a campaign on mental health, the Youth Forum, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and the Children's Law Centre, had developed an on-line survey. The survey had been sent to all post-primary schools in Northern Ireland and a total of 1,117 young people had completed it, out of which 91% had indicated that mental health was a huge issue for young people in Northern Ireland.

The findings of the research could be broken in to three broad themes:

- Stigma – young people indicated that there was a huge negative stigma attached to mental health which in turn led to a "culture of silence", where young people were afraid to talk about mental health issues;
- Safe Spaces – 76% of survey respondents stated that young people were afraid to talk about mental health and there was a lack of safe spaces available to talk about it. The overall view from young people

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was that on-line was a good place to access mental health information, but there was issues with being able to separate fact from fiction. In addition, the young people had identified social media as having a negative impact; and

- Schools and Information – according to young people, the three most common places they would source information about mental health were on-line (59%), a family member (48%) and friends (45%). However, young people said the problem was that the quality of the information was inconsistent and it wasn't always useful, for example, it was usually framed in a negative way.

The Youth Forum then outlined the recommendations for government in relation to the three broad areas:

- Stigma – to support the creation of a youth-led mental health campaign challenging the culture of silence and negative stigma. To work with young people to develop a new and positive language around mental health by creating a “Mental Health Dictionary”. This could be used as part of a potential mental health curriculum programme;
- Safe Spaces – to engage with young people to create a fun, safe, digital solution, such as a dedicated App, to receive mental health information and support. These digital solutions should be designed by young people for young people; and
- Schools – to create a compulsory curriculum programme for all schools and colleges on mental health and wellbeing that helped to raise awareness and challenge stigma and allowed young people to access consistent mental health information. The programme should be long-term and embedded in schools as one-off workshops would not be effective. In addition, there should be mental health and wellbeing training for all teachers, school support workers and youth workers so that the curriculum programme could be delivered effectively.

After discussion, during which the members of the Youth Forum reflected on their own experiences in relation to mental health issues. The Committee commended the report and agreed that the aforementioned meeting being sought with the Permanent Secretaries for Health and Education should also include discussions on young people's mental health issues.

It was agreed also that Members meet with the Youth Forum to discuss bringing cross-party RSE and mental health motions to full Council in the coming months.

**“Poverty: It's not a Choice”**

The Committee was reminded that in 2016 the Youth Forum had launched its “Poverty: Its's not a choice” campaign. Following that, in October 2019 the Youth forum had met with the Permanent Secretaries of the Department for Communities, the Department of Education and the Department of Infrastructure to discuss the findings. Subsequently, the Council had recently launched its Inclusive Growth Strategy and the findings, research and recommendations in the forum's poverty report in relation to young people's views had not been mentioned in the Council's strategy. Accordingly, the forum was seeking the

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Committee's views on how the poverty report could be incorporated as part of the Inclusive Growth Strategy and that it did not sit as a separate piece of work.

After discussion, during which the Committee discussed the minimum wage, the high cost of public transport and the need for the findings to be part of the inclusive growth, it was agreed that the Committee commend to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee the Youth Forum's findings in it's pilot study "Poverty: Its not a choice campaign" and that those findings be included in the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy and that this would be an opportune time for the representatives of the Youth Forum to present to that Committee.

**Nashville Sister City Podcast**

The Committee was advised that the Youth Forum would be taking part in a podcast with a school from Nashville. There would be three episodes with four representatives from the Youth Forum and four representatives from the school taking part in each of the episodes. The first episode would be entitled 'who we are' and would take place the following week, the second would be entitled 'what we face' and would take place in February with the third episode being 'how we will change it'.

Noted.

**Belfast Youth Forum Recruitment**

The Committee was provided with an update in relation to the recruitment to fill current vacancies for the 2020 – 2022 Belfast Youth Forum.

The Young People's co-ordinator reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 23rd December, it had agreed the timetable for the 2020 – 2022 recruitment. Accordingly, she was seeking the Committee's approval to have this amended for the recruitment process to begin in September and end in October, rather than in April and May, as had been previously agreed ,as that was a time when young people were undertaking exams.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

**Date of next Special Meeting**

The Committee noted that the next special meeting at which the Youth Forum would attend was Tuesday, 2nd June and it was agreed that all Members of the Council be invited to attend.

Chairperson

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# People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 14th January 2020

## MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Michael Collins (Chairperson);  
the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds;  
Alderman McCoubrey;  
Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain, Corr, de Faoite,  
Garrett, M. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, McAteer, McLaughlin,  
Mulholland, Newton, Smyth and Verner.

In attendance: Mr. N Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors McCusker and McMullan.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of 3rd December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 6th January.

### **Declarations of Interest**

In relation to Item 2. b) Community Development Funding Programme 2020/21- Recommended Allocation, Alderman McCoubrey and Councillors Black, Corr, Kyle, Newton and Verner declared an interest in that they worked for or were associated with organisations which had applied for funding, and they retired from the meeting whilst that item was under consideration.

### **Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following 3 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 on the following 3 items as, due to their nature, 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.

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**Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2020/21**

(Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources, attended in connection with this item).

The Committee considered a report, which had been prepared by the Director of Finance and Resources, in relation to the establishment of the District Rate and the compilation of the Estimates of Revenue Expenditure for the year 2020/2021.

The Director outlined that the paper would not be subject to call-in as it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council and the public's interest in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2020.

He referred to the cash limit for the People and Communities Committee for 2020/2021, as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 17th December, and outlined the next steps in the rate setting process leading to the setting of the district rate by Council at its meeting in February 2020.

Following consideration, the Committee noted the next steps in the rate setting process and:

- agreed that the report would not be subject to call-in, given that it would cause an unreasonable delay and would be prejudicial to both the Council and the public's interests in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2020; and
- agreed a cash limit for the People and Communities Committee for 2020/21 of £82,852,276 and the individual service cash limits;

**Community Development Funding  
Programme 2020/21- Recommended Allocation**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting in December, in relation to the Community Development Grants Programme 2020/21 funding allocations, it had agreed that:

- officers would move to final allocations on the basis of the 4 band system and the associated scoring ranges for each band;
- the shortfall in funding be brought to the attention of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and requested that this be considered as part of the rate setting process; and
- officers produce a funding allocation report for Members' consideration in January.

The request was considered at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 17 December 2019 in relation to Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2020/21, and it had been agreed that:

- Community Grants and Managed Facilities: £329,636 (People and Communities Committee). Agreed that the arrangements in place for independently managed centres would be reviewed in time for

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the 2020/21 revenue estimates and that in future years the arrangement would include an annual Consumer Price Index uplift.

- Agreed the use of the unallocated funding of £220,000 and that it be allocated to part fund the shortfall in the Community Development Grants Programme and that the remaining shortfall of £150,595 be funded from the 2020/21 Belfast Investment Fund allocation.

The Committee considered the allocation of the Community Development Funding Programme 2020/21, as outlined in the report.

During discussion, the Director of Neighbourhood Services explained further the allocation model and submissions process. He clarified that the Council had implemented a city wide programme of support to assist groups to access Community Development Funding during the open call and referenced work with the Department for Communities in relation to coordinating support for communities to develop capacity in North Belfast.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to the following:

- Approved the funding allocations based on the recommended levels provided, as outlined in the report;
- Noted that any offer of funding would be fully dependent upon formal confirmation of Council's contribution and a stable level of Department for Communities income from the regional Community Support Programme grant allocation and that a further report be presented when the Council received confirmation of Department for Communities funding; and
- Approved officers to progress with the funding allocation process including; sending out letters of intent, agreeing programmes of work with applicants based on the recommended funding allocation, processing funding agreements (when final budget had been agreed by Council) and ensuring that all monitoring requirements were implemented.

**'Wild Lights' Show – Botanic Gardens**  
**November – December 2020**

The Committee considered a report which sought permission from Wonderland Productions Ltd to use Botanic Gardens in 2020 and beyond to host an illuminated show. The event known as 'Wild Lights' takes place throughout Britain and Ireland and runs throughout November and December, finishing at the end of the Christmas period.

The Committee approved the use of Botanic Gardens for the above event subject to the following:

- That the appropriate legal agreements including bond arrangements were prepared to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;
- The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for use of the facility taking into account

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costs to the Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the city economy;

- Event Organisers meet all statutory requirements and responsibilities, including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, Food Safety and entertainment licensing;
- The timely payment of the bond as required in the legal agreements;
- Event Organisers consult with public bodies and local communities as necessary;
- The preparation of an event management plan which would be subject to the organisers liaising with Council officers and meeting all statutory, legal and Health and safety requirements; and
- Organisers reinstate all Council property to its original condition after use. Organisers would be reminded that the current ground conditions and location of this event might have to change due to adverse weather conditions which should cover all aspects of management including health and safety, access and would comply with the current events policy.

The Committee also agreed that the Council suggest that the event organisers examine the potential of holding future similar events in Parks across the City.

**Committee/Strategic issues**

**Affordable Warmth Scheme update**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

- 1.1 Belfast City Council has been engaged in a partnership with the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) in the delivery of the Affordable Warmth Scheme (AWS) since 2014.**
- 1.2 The scheme aims to address fuel poverty for the most vulnerable households in the city by targeting those households that meet certain criteria, as identified by Ulster University by providing home improvement measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation, replacement boilers and new double glazed windows. While it is a targeted scheme, self-referrals are also considered. To qualify for the scheme occupant’s income must be below £20,000 (gross).**
- 1.3 The eligibility criteria for the boiler replacement element of the scheme includes:**
  - **have an existing central heating boiler that is at least 15 years old; and**
  - **be aged over 65; or**

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- receive Child Benefit for a child under 16 years of age; or
- receive DLA/PIP.

1.4 This report provides an update on the scheme including confirmation received from the DfC of the funding allocation for 2019-2020 and the level of referrals to be provided.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- note the contents of the report and consider delegating authority to the sign the SLA to the Director of Planning and Building Control subject to satisfactory arrangements being agreed.

3.0 **Main report**

**Key Issues & current position**

3.1 **Referral numbers and funding**

Referral numbers have changed from November 2019 with a revised target of 39 for January – March 2020 which will result in additional funding for each referral.

3.2 In a change from what has happened to date, NIHE will only pay for each referral made, rather than provide the funding for the target number of referrals, which councils used to provide staff who work on the ground in an attempt to get referrals. Obtaining referrals requires input from the householders, and is therefore not within the control of officers. Therefore this new approach could result in BCC having to further subsidise the cost of staff where referrals targets are not met.

3.3 Total number of referrals sent to NIHE to date for 2019 - 2020 is 144, see breakdown below:

Month	Number of referrals	Referrals sent to NIHE
April	18	18
May	18	18
June	18	18
July	18	14
August	18	18
September	18	18

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October	18	18
November	22	22

**3.4 Targeted nature of scheme**

DfC continue to work with UU to review the targeting of the scheme. Councils have raised concerns that the current model of 80% targeted will not be possible with the current funding and staffing levels, and the addresses provided by UU.

**3.5 Cancellations**

Each month there are a number of referrals to be cancelled where this relates to the householder not replying to NIHE where applications have not progressed, or not wanted to proceed. NIHE have agreed to inform councils of these cases to allow AW staff to follow up on their initial work with the householder prior to final closure to attempt to secure the householder cooperation.

**3.6** The above issues will result in changes to the SLA and will be provided by the DfC in due course.

**3.7 Background**

On 22nd August 2019 the DfC confirmed that they have secured approval of a 5 year business case from 1 June 2019 to 31 March 2024 (Appendix 1). In order to adhere to the conditions on which the approval was granted assurances must be given for the following requirements.

- Service Level Agreements (SLA) to be signed off.
- As a targeted scheme the ratio of targeted addresses/self-referrals of 80/20 must be strictly adhered to.
- All non-targeted referrals should be processed using the agreed triage matrix.
- Quarterly meetings between Council Senior Officials, NIHE representatives and DfC officials will be reinstated.

**3.8** On 19th September 2019 a meeting was convened with Council officials, NIHE representatives and DfC officials. During this meeting a number of issues were raised in relation to the approved business case and SLA particularly around the 80/20 ratio targeted addresses/self-referrals, notification of cancellations and the in-year financial fluctuations with no lead in time to allow adequate resourcing of the scheme.

3.9 In Belfast, the scheme continues to receive a high volume of enquiries. While the scheme is primarily targeted, the service received significant number of self-referrals, with 745 households currently on the self-referral holding list, 103 of these households reside within a targeted address.

3.10 Correspondence issued from DfC to Councils on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 (Appendix 2), addressed some of concerns raised during the meeting on 19th September 2019 .

- Payment to Councils has increased from £191.00 to £222.92 per referral from 1 June 2019 to 31 March 2020,
- To the end of October referral rate was 18 referrals per council per month. Following a review of the available budget DfC confirmed the number of referrals will change as detailed below, increasing by an additional 59 referrals over a 5 month period:

Month	Number of Referrals
November 2019	22
December 2019	10
January 2020	39
February 2020	39
March 2020	39

3.11 The increase in unit cost and the additional referrals will result in a financial increase of £18,898, if referral targets are met. The overall funding remains equally split between the 11 council areas, and no consideration is taken on the variations in number of households waiting to be considered, or the nature of the measures involved.

3.12 The additional funding is welcome by the council however it is insufficient to fully cover the current salary costs to administer the scheme. The service is currently considering how we can resource the team based on the additional in-year funding of £18,898 to meet the new referral targets.

3.13 The Building Control Service also continues to subsidise the administration of the AWS as it handles the significant number of calls about the scheme. This remains in the region of £40,000 per year.

3.14 The team continue to triage the cases, in line with a process agreed with DfC, to ensure that the most vulnerable are helped.

The triage should ensure that referrals are made for those most vulnerable, with broken boilers or the elderly but significant numbers of eligible households will not avail of the scheme at this time.

3.15 However, councils continued to communicate concerns with the scheme and these were discussed at a meeting convened on 5th December 2019 with Council officials, NIHE representatives and DfC officials.

- **Payment to each Council** – Councils noted a change in this process, where now councils will only get paid for the referrals made. To date an annual budget was agreed and paid on a quarterly basis, allowing councils to have certainty of funding when recruiting staff and make best efforts to provide the target number of referrals. The change to payment by referral means an annual budget is not secured which in turn causes difficulty in securing resources.

Final referral numbers can be outside council's powers, as there is still an onus on the householders to provide information in a timely fashion. This could lead to councils carrying out significant work, in an effort to get referrals submitted, without a final referral being possible, and therefore no payment for this work.

Councils, including officers from Belfast, informed the DfC that if this position is not changed they would have difficulty if administrating the scheme.

- **Increase in referrals** – Again, while welcoming additional referrals to provide assistance to more vulnerable households, all Councils raised the difficulty this imposes on existing resources and recruiting additional resources to meet an in-year increase, without a secure budget. The DfC have asked all Councils to confirm if they can deliver the increase of 21 referrals from January to March 2020. BCC staff are looking at methods to use the potential additional funding to provide the additional referrals.
- **Referral cancellations** – referrals that have previously been assessed by councils and NIHE but then later cancelled will not receive an additional fee payment if the household reapplied for the scheme. In such cases, the old ID number will be reused and the file reactivated. This causes concern for Councils as an additional visit



and gathering of information would be required and no payment would be provided for this work.

- **Target and Self-referrals** – The DfC have approached UU to review the targeted list taking into consideration the entire street that would be linked to a post code/s within an area. The Department will write to all Council's once this action is carried out. This should increase the targeted list however if the ratio of 80/20 remains it will cause difficulty for Belfast.
- **Fixed repairs scheme** – The NIHE have proposed a new process for Council's to administer for broken boilers under 15 years old, therefore not meeting the criteria for the AW scheme. This includes the Council's providing the boiler manufacturer detail's to house owners/landlords, who will be required to pay a call out charge and to agree repair options including charges. If the manufacturer concludes the boiler cannot be fixed they will provide a report to the house owner/landlord and at that point they can then go forward to the Affordable Warmth Scheme. Our recommendation to DfC is that this duty should be carried out by NIHE and only those that qualify for the scheme be passed to councils. The Department is to review this process and write to all Council's.

### **3.16 Financial & Resource Implications**

The DfC will provide a revised total of up to £60,153 in funding for 2019-2020 if councils sign up to the revised referral targets. This is insufficient to cover current employee costs to administer the scheme. DfC have also confirmed that method of payment will change to a per referral basis, which will potentially leave councils subsidising salary costs if referral targets are not met.

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

**There are no equality, good relations or rural needs issues."**

The Committee noted the contents of the report and delegated authority to sign the Service Level Agreement to the Director of Planning and Building Control, subject to satisfactory arrangements being agreed.

The Committee also agreed to write to the Minister of the Department for Communities to request a meeting to discuss the Scheme, in the form of a deputation to a future Committee meeting or an all-party delegation.

**Consultation response to the DAERA Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland**

The Committee considered the following report and draft Consultation Response (Appendix A, copy available [here](#)):

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

1.1 Members are advised that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) have recently commenced a consultation into proposals for a new Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland. DAERA have stated that a Northern Ireland Environment Strategy is required to form the basis for a series of interventions that can deliver real improvements in the quality of the environment and thereby improve the health and well-being of our citizens, create opportunities to develop our economy and play our part in protecting the global environment for many decades to come. The various consultation documents are available to download via the following weblink:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/esni-public-discussion-document>

1.2 This report serves to summarise the contents of the consultation document and to highlight some of environmental statistics and environmental progress that DAERA have referred to within the consultation document.

1.3 This report also includes proposed consultation responses to the various questions that DAERA have proposed throughout the overall Environment Strategy consultation document.

1.4 Members should note that the consultation has been discussed by the All-Party Working Group on the Climate Crisis. Moreover, this report will also be presented to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee for notation, given the Committee’s interest in climate action.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Members are requested to note;

- the draft response and to agree that the council’s consultation response, as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report, be forwarded to DAERA for consideration.

2.2 Members are advised that the City Solicitor has written to DAERA concerning an extension to the Department’s stated

consultation deadline of 17:00 on the 23rd December 2019. DAERA have advised that the Department is presently considering an extension to the public discussion exercise into the New Year and would hope to announce a revised closing date to the consultation process at the end of the current election period. The council's consultation response will be submitted in accordance with any revised DAERA consultation timetable.

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 Key Issues**

DAERA have advised that within the current draft Programme for Government (PfG) 2016-2021, the Department is responsible for Outcome 2 – *'We live and work sustainably, protecting the environment'*, and for five of the six associated indicators relating to greenhouse gas emissions; household waste that is reused, recycled or composted; annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations at monitored urban roadside locations; levels of soluble reactive phosphorus in rivers and levels of dissolved inorganic nitrogen in marine waters and; biodiversity – the percentage of protected areas under favourable management. DAERA have also advised that at a Departmental level, their vision is of *'A living, working, active landscape valued by everyone'*.

**3.2** DAERA have advised that an Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland is therefore now required due to a number of factors including, environmental challenges, climate change, publication of the UK Government document, *'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'*, Brexit and environmental knowledge gaps.

**3.3** In terms of progress with the PfG indicators, DAERA have advised that for greenhouse gas emissions, Northern Ireland accounts for around 4% of the overall UK total and in terms of the UK Climate Change Act committing the UK to at least an 80% reduction by 2050 from 1990 baseline levels, DAERA have stated that Northern Ireland emissions have decreased by 17.9% from 24.3 to 20 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent between 1990 and 2017. For household recycling, DAERA have stated that the NI household waste recycling rate was 48.1% in 2017/18; an increase from 44.3% the previous year, with a new high of over 420,000 tonnes of waste sent for recycling. DAERA therefore consider household waste recycling to have experienced a positive change since the baseline year. In terms of ambient air quality, DAERA have advised that the nitrogen dioxide average annual mean

background figure measured in urban areas has remained relatively stable over recent years, whereas monitored roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations have been variable. For river and marine water quality, DAERA have stated that levels of soluble reactive phosphorous in river water are unchanged since the baseline year and levels of dissolved inorganic nitrogen in our marine waters have also remained relatively stable. For biodiversity, DAERA have advised that whilst the total terrestrial and marine protected areas have increased between 2009 and 2018, the proportion of these areas under favourable management has shown a decreasing trend.

- 3.4 DAERA have stated that the normal procedure for developing an Environment Strategy document would be for the Department to take its lead from the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and that the form and content of any Environment Strategy would be a matter for a DAERA Minister and NI Executive. DAERA have also stated that in the absence of a Minister, they would wish to obtain as broad a view as possible on what a future Environment Strategy might seek to address in order to help inform an incoming Minister. DAERA are therefore seeking views on what the environment should look like in the future, what the environmental priorities and objectives should be, and how the Department should achieve them.
- 3.5 DAERA have advised that at the very least, the key environmental areas covered by the new Strategy will be climate change (mitigation and adaptation); the natural environment and landscapes; resource efficiency, the marine environment, environmental quality (air, water and neighbourhood); fisheries (inland and sea) and aquaculture and the built environment.
- 3.6 To help inform the consultation process, DAERA have posed eleven questions for consultees to consider and address. The DAERA consultation document has been internally circulated to relevant council Departments and Services, and responses have been provided to the consultation questions where deemed necessary and where the questions relate to areas of council responsibility. A copy of the questions, together with proposed council responses have been provided as Appendix A to this report.
- 3.7 In terms of the headline environmental issues and matters highlighted within the council's proposed responses, Members are advised that the council has highlighted the issues of climate change and climate adaptation; biodiversity; ambient air quality and its links to transportation; neighbourhood

environmental quality; local development planning and the built environment; the consideration of natural capital in environmental decision making; resource and energy efficiency; zero waste and achieving a circular economy; waste management and enforcement; the need for a Northern Ireland litter strategy; dealing with dangerous structures and tackling dilapidations and; the need for greater education on the environment.

**3.8 Financial & Resource Implications**

None

**3.9 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessments**

None.”

During discussion, Councillor Smyth tabled the following additions to the response for consideration:

**Q1**

- *Paragraph 1 – ‘Regional planning’ to be added to existing executive endorsed strategies;*
- *The Environment strategy should be renamed the ‘Environmental Emergency Strategy to inform and communicate that we are in a crisis situation, but there are plans to address this and also because we have declared a climate emergency at this council;*
- *The strategy and targets must be legally binding and we need new legislation to meet both. Need to be linked to human health, free from degrading pollutants and extraction, improved air quality etc; and*
- *With regards to the paragraph on ‘As 2020 approaches’: This is now a 10 year window, not 12.*

**Q2**

- *In reference to 2050 targets, this council passed a motion on a target for 2035 to be net zero in carbon emissions. For other questions where 2050 is mentioned, to be also amended to reflect the motion passed on 2035 targets set by Belfast City Council;*
- *Northern Ireland should have its own legally binding targets on long term emissions; and*
- *Paragraph 7: To highlight that Belfast City Council passed a motion on more stringent air quality testing in June 2019.*

**Q3**

- *We want a theme on environmental restoration and recovery and caution around framing of environmental prosperity. Also environmental governance needs to be addressed throughout multiple government departments.*

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**Q4**

- *for environmental education to be built into the school curriculum to teach young people. Yet with the lack of time we have in relation to 2030 to also engage parents, families' etc; and*
- *To form a Northern Ireland citizen's assembly on our climate and ecological emergency and to learn from the one formed in the Republic of Ireland.*

**Q5**

- *There is an emphasis on economic prosperity instead of environmental prosperity. We don't think that economic benefit should outweigh environmental impact. There is also no reference to a 'just transition', which should be included in Environmental prosperity.*

**Q6**

- *In relation to energy efficiency, we need legally set binding targets; and*
- *We also need reference to a 'transition towards sustainable agriculture'.*

**Q7**

- *Specific issues that should be included are air, water and marine quality; and*
- *DAERA Environmental crime team needs greater support and resource.*

**Q8**

- *Climate breakdown legislation and that the proposed outcome to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions does not go far enough and there must be net zero carbon emissions by 2035 as an interim target, in line with the motion passed by this council; and*
- *We also need an Independent Environmental Protection Agency that is properly funded, which has the ability to tackle environmental and waste crimes.*

**Q9**

- *We need legally binding targets and a clear timetable.*

**Q10**

- *Legislation for a NI Climate Act;*
- *The establishment of an Independent Environmental Protection Agency;*
- *Targets to be legally binding;*
- *All Island cooperation, we are a single island ecosystem. Governance should be under a similar framework;*
- *A Citizens Assembly which can engage the public on our climate and ecological breakdown; and*

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- *Nature Recovery Networks: restore sites and legally protect those habitats under threats.*

During further discussion, Members highlighted that further time was required for the Committee to review the additions.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to the following:

- To review the draft consultation response and proposed changes raised by Councillor Smyth;
- To submit feedback on the response and any amendments be sent to the City and Neighbourhood Services Department by Friday, 17th January for compilation in time for submission to the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee scheduled for Friday, 24th January; and
- That the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee consider and approve the Council's final consultation response at its next meeting for submission to DAERA for consideration by 5th February, 2020.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Strategic Cemeteries Working Group**

The Committee was advised that at the meeting of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Working Group, held on 20th November 2019, the following key items had been considered:

- update on New Crematorium Development;
- update on Expression of Interest on New Cemetery Land; and
- update in respect of Best Practice on Memorial for Cremated Remains.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group held on 20th November, 2019.

**Waste Collections**

The Committee noted the update which had been provided and agreed to hold a Special Meeting of the People and Communities Committee, to which Party Group Leaders also be invited, to discuss the ongoing issues with waste collections and to include engagement with Trade Unions Coordinators as part of the agenda for the meeting.

The Committee also noted that representatives from the Department for Infrastructure also be invited to attend the meeting in relation to parking implications for waste collection services.

In relation to Waste Collection Data, the Committee noted that infographics and details of future reporting mechanisms of Waste Collections would also be provided and discussed at the Special Meeting.

**Operational Items**

**Proposal for Naming the Continuation of an Existing Street**

The Committee considered a report in relation to the continuation of an existing street in the City and approved the naming in respect of Thorburn Road, off Serpentine Road, BT36.

**Proposal for Dual Language Street Signs**

The Committee approved the applications to erect a second street nameplate in Irish at Gortfin Street, Cavendish Square and Trostan Way.

**Food Standards Agency Audit of Belfast City Council's Food Law Enforcement Service**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 The Food Standards Agency as the central competent authority for food and feed regulation in the UK, is responsible in overseeing the official (food law) controls undertaken by district councils. As part of this role the FSA undertake focused audits of the standards of performance expected across the full range of district council's law enforcement activities.
- 1.2 On the 13-14 August 2019 the Food Standards Agency NI (FSANI) carried out a focused audit of Belfast City Council's implementation and operation of the Food Hygiene rating scheme under the Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.
- 1.3 The audit report (appendix 1) showed Belfast City Council to be in compliance with the requirements of the Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 and the procedures associated with it. FSA NI made no recommendations for action.
- 1.4 Members are asked to note the findings of the audit report.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to
  - Note the findings of the FSA audit report.



**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1** The Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (The Act) came into operation on 7th October 2016, and is operated by our food safety and port health officers in partnership with the Food Standard Agency.
- 3.2** The Act is designed to help consumers make an informed choice by providing information regarding the hygiene standards in restaurants, cafes, takeaways, hotels, supermarkets and other food premises.
- 3.3** The Act requires food businesses to display their food hygiene rating on a window sticker and their ratings are published online at [food.gov.uk/ratings](http://food.gov.uk/ratings). The Food hygiene ratings range between zero, indicating urgent improvement necessary and five indicating very good compliance.
- 3.4** The Act incorporates safeguards to ensure fairness to businesses. These include an appeal procedure, a ‘right to reply’ and a mechanism for requesting an inspection for re-rating purposes if improvements have been made and other conditions are met.
- 3.5** The Act requires the FSA to review the implementation and operation of The Act within the first three years of the commencement. The initial review must assess the adequacy of any time scales detailed in the Act and whether the appeals process and request for re-rating process are operating satisfactorily. As part of this review the FSA audit aimed to assess how the Act is operating in Belfast City Council. The audit included an assessment of the Councils arrangements and records for service planning, delivery and review, provision and adequacy of officer training, authorisations and internal service monitoring arrangements.

The Audit report confirmed the following findings:

- 1.** Belfast City Council had a comprehensive system in place for recording officers’ competency and training
- 2.** The Council had introduced a scheme of delegation in 2015 and had clearly delegated authority to officers for the delivery of official controls
- 3.** The council had developed and implemented a documented procedure that described how internal monitoring was carried out within the food service.

Comprehensive records were available for all of the activities covered by the procedure.

4. Belfast City Council had a comprehensive system of policies and procedures that covered the range of control procedure subject areas listed in Annex II, Chapter II of regulation (EC) No 882/2004. These procedures covered all the required aspects of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS),
  5. The auditors found very good levels of detail in the records for interventions carried out at food establishments. An examination of the activities to support the operation of the FHRS indicated the Council had implemented a FHRS which provided clear communication to FBO's regarding the scheme, their FHR scores and how FBOs could request re-ratings and appeals.
  6. The Council had a comprehensive range of procedures that addressed all aspects of the enforcement activities which covered the FHRS. In all cases examined informal and formal enforcement action had been carried out in accordance with the Council's hierarchy of enforcement policy.
- 3.6 No deficiencies were noted and no recommendations were made.
- 3.7 **Finance and Resource Implications**
- None.
- 3.8 **Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment**
- There are no equality or good relations implications, there is no requirement for rural needs assessment."

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Update on Fly-Tipping and New Legislative Powers**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the Notice of Motion that was brought to Council on the 5th March 2019 regarding the Council's approach to dealing with fly tipping throughout the city. The motion, proposed by Councillor Murphy, was as follows:

**‘This Council notes the frustration caused by fly tipping across the city and the visual impact it has on local areas.**

**Councils are responsible for the enforcement and policing of fly tipping and currently we can only enforce this by checking through what has been dumped and getting names and addresses from that. This can carry a fine of up to £2,500.**

**We are asking for Council to review its current processes for dealing with fly tipping particularly around enforcement. In order to do this, we should look at models of best practice from elsewhere.**

**This review should come back to committee for us to explore the findings and plan a new way forward that will see us tackle the issue of fly-tipping in a more efficient manner.’**

**1.2 In addressing the Notice of Motion this report includes the following elements:**

- (i) The legal powers to deal with fly-tipping;**
- (ii) Current operational practices;**
- (iii) Research on approaches by other Councils;**
- (iv) A proposed future approach to deal with fly-tipping.**
- (v) An update on pending legislative powers for Councils regarding fly-tipping**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Members are asked to;**

- note the update provided in this report.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key Issues**

**3.1 In 2003, the powers to deal with fly-tipped waste under the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 were removed from Councils and transferred to the Environmental Crime Unit of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). In the absence of the primary powers contained within the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 for which there are fines upon conviction up to £50,000 and up to 6 months imprisonment, some Councils including Belfast City Council have attempted to deal with fly-tipping through the use of The Litter (NI) Order 1994 which has limited sanctions including the**

issue of £80 fixed penalty notices and carries a sentence upon conviction up to a maximum of £2500.

- 3.2 The Environmental Crime Unit of NIEA has advised Councils that it has a limited resource to deal with illegal waste activities and has therefore concentrated its resources on the larger scale and organised crime relating to illegal waste activity. This has resulted in a void in effectively tackling and apprehending illegal dumping activity. This not only has a serious detrimental impact on the locality but allows offenders to continue without the prospect of apprehension.
- 3.3 The Council has a team of nine enforcement officers who adopt a robust approach to dealing with incidents of fly-tipping using the limited powers available under the Litter (NI) Order 1994. Enforcement officers will investigate any case of fly-tipping which includes any waste that is found in entries, streets or on any land open to the air throughout the Council area, for example, bagged waste, cardboard, packaging etc. Where there is sufficient evidence to progress such cases, a fixed penalty notice will be issued. The officers work in geographic areas and proactively monitor their assigned areas for illegal waste deposits, however, it is widely acknowledged that the detection of fly-tipping activity together with obtaining sufficient evidence is challenging as these illegal activities tend to occur in remote areas under the hours of darkness. The table below indicates the level of enforcement activity that has been undertaken by the Council's enforcement team within the past five years.

3.4 **Enforcement Activity 2014-2019**

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Investigations into Fly-tipping	2921	3120	2338	1919	2376	1967
Fixed Penalties Issued (For Fly-Tipping)	661	837	742	619	814	713

- 3.5 Models of best practice include the deployment of surveillance cameras to assist in the detection of environmental crime and the enforcement team has previously deployed covert cameras in hotspot areas in an attempt to detect offenders, however this activity ceased when there were changes to the legislation which meant that investigations were no longer compliant. The use of any cameras to undertake surveillance activities is governed by stringent rules under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA') and the Council complied with the requirements of RIPA when undertaking

covert activity and when the covert cameras were deployed. Such activities were only permissible for the more persistent fly-tipping activity and were undertaken in accordance with legal advice, which stated that we were required to comply with RIPA for this type of surveillance.

- 3.6 The Council made approximately 13 RIPA requests from 2006 to 2011 to carry out directed surveillance under RIPA for the deployment of covert cameras at hot spots for the illegal deposit of waste for short periods of time, ranging from 2 to 5 days.

The use of this technology did not provide any useful evidence at the sites when deployed and there were particular challenges in deploying such equipment in built up areas within a city environment due to possible theft or vandalism of the cameras. Visibility at night time was also reduced using the available camera technology at that time.

- 3.7 The rules governing RIPA changed with the introduction of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, which imposed more stringent conditions around the deployment of covert cameras. The Council's use of covert cameras to investigate fly tipping offences under The Litter (NI) Order 1994 was no longer permissible under the new legislation and the practice of deploying covert cameras ceased.

- 3.8 Following receipt of the above Notice of Motion, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken with eight councils in Northern Ireland to determine if they were using any technology to assist in the detection of fly-tipping activity within their respective areas. The following information was established.

- Five out of the eight councils deployed some form of CCTV surveillance within their council areas at hotspot locations to detect fly-tipping activity.
- Three out of the eight councils did not undertake CCTV surveillance due to cost constraints and the perceived lack of useful evidence to take further action.
- Three out of the five councils that did use cameras, used them in an overt way, along with signage. Out of the three councils only one council indicated that they had been able to issue fixed penalty notices as a result of the use of the cameras. The other two councils indicated that the cameras acted as a deterrent but did not yield any evidence that could be used against the perpetrators.
- Two out of the five councils used signage and covertly placed cameras which resulted in either fixed penalty notices or legal proceedings.

- 3.9 In addition to bench marking with other Councils, a legal opinion on the use of cameras was sought to clarify how cameras could be deployed to detect fly-tipping offences whilst ensuring that we complied with our legal duties under RIPA and any other associated legislation aimed at protecting the privacy of individuals.
- 3.10 The legal opinion has provided some clarity on the use of cameras to detect fly-tipping offences and the advice is sufficient for officers to consider the deployment of cameras at some hotspot locations.
- 3.11 In light of the legal opinion, officers will explore the options for deployment of cameras at sites where there is persistent fly-tipping activity with a view to undertaking some monitoring at those sites. This can be done providing adequate signage is displayed stating that cameras are deployed for the purposes of detecting fly-tipping activity.
- 3.12 Council officers have recently received notification from the NIEA that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs intends to bring forward a Commencement Order on the 20th February 2020 which will give Councils the same powers that are available to the NIEA to address illegal waste disposal under Articles 4 & 5 of the Waste and Contaminated Land Order 1997.
- 3.13 The Department previously consulted with Councils on the proposed changes to the legislation in 2009 and the new powers that will enable Councils to prosecute for the illegal disposal of waste and to prosecute for duty of care offences. A further report will be brought to Committee in the next few months to outline the new powers and sanctions available to Council. Under the new powers, Councils will have the powers to issue fixed penalty notices in respect of fly-tipping and duty of care offences. The Council will be making representation to DAERA in respect of the need for additional funding to carry out this function
- 3.14 The introduction of dual responsibilities between the Councils and the NIEA requires a partnership working arrangement to ensure that the function is managed with clear lines of responsibility and that there is a demarcation of roles between the two enforcement bodies. In advance of commencing the legislation, the Department has written to all Councils seeking each Council to commit to a 'Fly-Tipping Protocol' which sets the operational framework between the NIEA and the Councils regarding enforcement roles.

3.15 Under these arrangements, Councils will investigate illegal waste deposits less than 20 cubic metres and the NIEA will investigate waste deposits exceeding 20 cubic metres and all hazardous waste deposits. Councils will also be required to provide quarterly statistical returns to DAERA as part of this agreement; BCC would require significant additional resources to enable it to provide the necessary statistics. We are not therefore proposing to commit to the protocol. However the Council welcomes the additional powers available to it under the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 and will work within the principles of the protocol and in partnership with the NIEA to ensure that we adopt a seamless approach in our response to illegal waste disposal in the Belfast City Council area.

3.16 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The deployment of surveillance cameras to detect fly-tipping activity will require additional resources. Detailed costs will need to be established through a quotation exercise and we will keep this under review.

3.17 The enforcement of the new powers under the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 will be undertaken within existing budgets and resources.

3.18 However the additional responsibilities and the potential for an increase in complaints could have an impact on revenue budgets and representations will be made to DAERA in respect of the need for additional funding to carry out this function.

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

None.”

During discussion, in relation to the additional resources required if Councils were to accept the proposal by the Department to amend the legislation and confer additional duties to District Councils, the Director of City Services explained that this could present new financial liabilities and expenditure that Belfast City Council and the other Council's had stated the need for this to be identified and resourced by DAERA.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Football for All - Request for The use of Belfast Playing Fields (Mallusk)**

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the use of the City of the Belfast Playing Fields (Mallusk) from Tuesday, 16th to Friday, 19th June 2020 to enable the Irish Football Association (IFA) to host a Football For All Festival.

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It was reported that the event was being funded through the FA Foundation and it was anticipated that it would attract 4,500 participants. The IFA hoped that the festival would build on the success of the Super Schools Festival, which had been delivered at Mallusk over the previous six years.

During discussion, Members raised concerns in relation to the funding application process for these types of events and IFA's overall engagement with the Council and that feedback be submitted to the IFA in this regard.

After discussion, the Committee approved the IFA event at the City of Belfast Playing Fields (Mallusk) and that the event organisers be given free use of the pitches and ancillary facilities, subject to the completion of the appropriate Event Management Plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the Event Organiser:

- Resolved all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- Meets all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover and Health and Safety; and
- Consults with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary.

The Committee also agreed that officers liaise with the IFA to suggest that future requests be made through existing Council funding Programmes, subject to eligibility.

**Invite to compete in Britain in Bloom Awards 2020 and Ireland's Best Kept Awards in 2020**

The Committee was provided with an overview of the invitations for the City of Belfast to enter the annual Britain in Bloom competition in August 2020 and the Ireland Best Kept Awards Competition in June 2020.

During discussion, the Committee questioned the benefits of all the competitions and award ceremonies that the Council had recently entered and highlighted the potential of alternative schemes to recognise the Council's achievements.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin  
Seconded by Councillor Mulholland,

Resolved - That the the Committee noted that the City of Belfast enter the annual Britain in Bloom competition in August 2020 and the Ireland Best Kept Awards Competition in June 2020 and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting to provide details of the following, within in the remit of the People and Communities Committee:

- Recent Awards and Ceremonies that the Council had entered or attended;



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- Forthcoming Competitions that the Council intended to enter;
- Benefits of the entries to the City; and
- Alternative options to recognise the good work of the Council and its staff.

**Request for the use of Cregagh Green**

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the use of Cregagh Green on Tuesday 14th April, from 9.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m. to enable the Belfast Junior County Lodge (Orange Order of Belfast) to host its annual Easter Tuesday Parade.

The Committee approved the use of Cregagh Green for the above event, subject to the completion of the appropriate Event Management Plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the Event Organisers:

- Resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
- Meet all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities;
- Consult with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary;
- Enter into an appropriate legal agreement – Reinstatement Bond; and
- Process the timely payment of any agreed bond as required in the legal agreement.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing Scheme**  
**Operational and Monitoring Arrangements**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Act NI 2016 was commenced on 1st April 2019. Staff from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive transferred to BCC on 01 April, and since then the HMO Unit has been administering and delivering the new HMO Licencing Scheme function for all councils in Northern Ireland.**
- 1.2 In order to provide this service, a series of documents have been developed to formalise the working relationship with the Department for Communities and between councils.**
- 1.3 These include three Service Level Agreements (for operational roles and responsibilities, legal services, and ICT provision), data processing agreements, and a Memorandum of Understanding between the councils and the Department.**

1.4 This report provides further detail regarding these documents.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- note the operational and monitoring agreements for administrating and implementing the Northern Ireland HMO Licensing Scheme.

3.0 **Main report**

**Key Issues**

3.1 Members are reminded that the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Act NI 2016 received Royal Assent on 12th May 2016 and was commenced on 1st April 2019. This transferred responsibility for regulating HMOs from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to local district councils. The new scheme is a licensing scheme which assesses whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

3.2 The Service Level Agreements (SLAs), the data processing agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding were developed to ensure effective working in partnership between the councils and with the Department in implementing and administering the new HMO licensing scheme for NI. They have been agreed by the Department and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

**Main SLA**

3.3 The main SLA, attached as appendix 1, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the councils in satisfying the requirements of the HMO Act. The SLA is an essential document between the agreed lead delivery council (Belfast City Council), the sub-regional lead Councils that are part of the delivery model (Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council), and the other Northern Ireland councils. Key aspects of the SLA include the following:

- Provisions to assist the lead delivery Council and cluster lead councils to implement and administer the licensing scheme;
- Definition of the roles, responsibilities and obligations of those councils included and bound by the SLA;

- Provision to jointly review performance under the SLA on a regular basis with the SLA partners ensuring that necessary action agreed is taken to maintain a high level of service delivery; and
  - Details relating to the funding, financial and other resource arrangements.
- 3.4 The SLA agreement ensures that the proper elements and commitments are in place to provide a consistent HMO Licencing Scheme, support and delivery between the signatories and the service providers, and to promote positive joint working.

#### Legal Services SLA

- 3.5 This Service Level Agreement sets out the range of legal services to be delivered by Belfast City Council, and the expected performance in delivery of these services, to the other councils.
- 3.6 BCC's Legal Services will provide a comprehensive and high quality level service in respect of both contentious and non-contentious matters, together with general legal advice to the other councils.
- 3.7 A solicitor has been recruited to provide the additional legal support. The costs associated with this are included in the licensing fee. The Legal Services SLA is attached as appendix 2.

#### ICT SLA

- 3.8 The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) SLA, developed by BCC's Digital Services, establishes a regional framework to assist the councils to work collaboratively to provide an ICT support system for the HMO Licensing Scheme, and to ensure that the proper elements and commitments are in place to provide consistent ICT Support by Digital Services for the HMO Licencing service. It provides a comprehensive and high quality ICT support service in respect of general support, liaison with the supplier, software upgrades, training and contract management. The ICT SLA is attached in appendix 3.

#### Data Processing Agreement

- 3.9 This agreement provides for BCC to develop and use an electronic information system for the licensing of HMO data,

which permits the other Councils access to the HMO information relevant to their own council area.

- 3.10 BCC is the Data Controller for the processing of its own data and will act as a Data Processor for the data owned by the other 10 Northern Ireland councils. BCC will host all the information and personal data required for the licensing and associated enforcement action relating to the processing of data relating to HMOs under the provisions of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (NI) 2016. The Data Processing Agreement is attached as Appendix 4.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**

- 3.11 This document relates to the relationship between the Department for Communities (DfC) and the councils, regarding the operation of the new licensing scheme. It was developed by DfC in consultation with the councils, and sets out the key working arrangements and responsibilities for the operation of the new regulatory function. The MoU assists and provides clarity and accountability regarding the respective roles of councils and the DfC, and the procedures and activities involved in the regulation of this function.
- 3.12 As well as detailing the roles of both the Department and the councils, the MoU includes a number of key performance indicators that provide evidence of the successful delivery of the licensing function by councils, to the Department. As it is anticipated that the Department will undertake a review of the scheme in 2020/21, the MoU also establishes a monitoring programme to enable sufficient detail of the scheme's main activities and statistics to be captured. This requires the councils to report on their main activities in a quarterly return to the Department. A monitoring group, currently chaired by BCC, has been established. The Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Communities is attached in Appendix 5.
- 3.13 Decisions regarding the issue of HMO licenses in Belfast are made under the governance of the Council's Licensing Committee.
- 3.14 **Financial and Resource Implications**

The HMO licence fee was calculated based on the anticipated ongoing costs of administering and implementing the scheme.

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

**There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications associated with this report.”**

During discussion, the Committee suggested that further information regarding the HMO process be submitted to a future meeting so that the Committee could gain a better understanding of the end-to-end process including an outline of the remit of the other Committees.

The Committee noted the operational and monitoring agreements for administrating and implementing the Northern Ireland HMO Licensing Scheme and agreed that the Director of Planning and Building Control attend a future meeting to provide an overview of the HMO process.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Purple Air - Councillor O'Hara**

Councillor O'Hara provided an overview of a current pilot scheme being undertaken by Cork County Council, Cork University and Environment Protection Agency, Cork, in relation to its Air Quality. He explained that Cork had installed ten laser particle counters to provide real time measurement of PM1.0, PM2.5 and PM10 as part of the study and suggested that the Council might wish to examine the potential of undertaking a similar study in Belfast. He also suggested that an update on the Air Quality Management would be useful in consideration of such research.

During discussion, the Director of City Services highlighted that certified instruments and measurements were required to allow formal assessment of monitoring by Departments. She explained that this was an important part of the assessment, to gain support from the Department to sign up to further formal processes such as the review of the Air Quality Action Plan. She also reminded Members that an Air Quality Workshop had been scheduled for 20th January to examine the issue further.

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future Committee on the following:

- To provide an update on the Air Quality Workshop scheduled for all Members on 20th January;
- To examine the potential to engage with Cork County Council, Cork University and Environment Protection Agency, Cork, in relation to its Air Quality Pilot Scheme findings; and
- To provide an update on the process to develop a review of the Air Quality Action Plan.

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**Proposal for Pedestrian Crossing at New BCC Play Park on Upper Dunmurry Lane –  
Councillor Michael Collins**

Councillor Michael Collins outlined the requirements for a new pedestrian crossing at a new Council Play Park on the Upper Dunmurry Lane.

During discussion, Councillor Smyth also requested an update on the new pedestrian crossing at Cherryvale Playing Fields.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to write to the Department for Infrastructure in regards to an update on the Pedestrian Crossing requests for Upper Dunmurry Lane and Cherryvale.

Chairperson

## City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 15th January, 2020

### MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Kingston and Spence; and  
Councillors S. Baker, Beattie, Brooks, Donnelly,  
Ferguson, Flynn, Graham, Hanvey, Heading,  
Howard, T. Kelly, McLaughlin, O'Hara, Walsh  
and Whyte.

Also attended: The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds).

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;  
Mr. S. Dolan, Acting Director of City Regeneration  
and Development; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Lyons and McAllister.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 27th November and 4th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 6th January.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Schedule of Special Meetings 2020

The Committee approved the following schedule of special meetings for 2020 and agreed that they should commence at 5.15 p.m.:

- Wednesday, 26th February;
- Monday, 30th March;
- Wednesday, 22nd April;
- Tuesday, 30th June;

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- Tuesday, 29th September; and
- Wednesday, 21st October.

**Presentations**

**St. George's Market Development Plan**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 4th December, it had agreed to receive at this meeting a presentation on the Development Plan for St. George's Market.

The Committee was informed that Mr. M. Williamson, ASM Chartered Accountants, and Prof. T. Stevens, Stevens and Associates, were in attendance for that purpose and they were welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Williamson informed the Members that the award winning St. George's Market had opened in 1896 and that it was one of Belfast's most iconic buildings. The Market, which had been refurbished in 1999 at a cost of £5 million, now operated on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday and attracted around one million visitors annually. Approximately £1 million had been invested in the Market in 2019/20 and the introduction of live music at weekends and of a high profile restaurateur had had a positive impact.

He explained that there was now a need to build upon the Market's success to date, with an emphasis to be placed, in line with all public markets, upon bringing diverse people together, creating active spaces, linking urban and rural communities, promoting public health, providing economic opportunity and acting as a catalyst for regeneration and supporting cultural opportunities.

He drew the Members' attention to a list of recommendations which had been formulated, with a view to improving the efficiency, utilisation, quality of experience and profile/positioning of the Market, and to the associated short/medium term investment needs, and stressed that local market traders would be consulted throughout the development process.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the presentation on the future development of St. George's Market;
- ii. noted that a report would be submitted to its next monthly meeting setting out detailed proposals for the development of the Market and the associated operational and financial implications; and
- iii. agreed that a report on the current operation and potential development of Smithfield Market be submitted to a future meeting.



**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 following item 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 (NI) 2014.

**Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2020/2021**

(Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources, attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report in relation to the establishment of the District Rate and the Estimates of Revenue Expenditure for the year 2020/2021.

He outlined the budgetary pressures which the Council would face over the course of that period, together with the efficiency and growth proposals, and confirmed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had, on 17th December, agreed that the cash limit for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee should be £17,267,724. He pointed out that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would, on 24th January, be required to agree the cash limits for the various Standing Committees, along with the District Rate, and that the process was required to be completed before the legislative deadline of 15th February.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee:

- i. approve a cash limit for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of £17,267,724 for 2020/21, together with the individual service limits set out within the report;
- ii. note the next steps in the rate-setting process; and
- iii. agree that the aforementioned decisions should not be subject to call-in, on the basis that it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Tourism, Events and International Relations**

**Update on City Tourism Performance**

The Director of 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 the Committee on city tourism performance and to provide details of Visit Belfast's marketing, sales and visitor servicing activity to date.

1.2 The report also seeks authority for Visit Belfast to attend the monthly Committee meeting in March to present its business plan and a request for financial support for the financial year 2020/21.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- i. note the contents of the report and the progress to date; and
- ii. agree to receive a presentation on Visit Belfast's 2020-21 Business Plan the monthly meeting in March, including a request for Council support towards the work programme for the coming financial year.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key Issues**

3.1 Members will be aware that Visit Belfast is the city's Destination Marketing Management Organisation (DMMO) dedicated to marketing Belfast as a city break, conference, day-trip and cruise ship destination. It also, in its visitor servicing role, manages the operation of three gateway Visitor Information Centres (VICs) including Visit Belfast Welcome Centre, the Arrivals Desk at George Best Belfast City Airport and the Arrivals Desk at Belfast International Airport and a range of visitor servicing initiatives on behalf of Belfast City Council.

3.2 Visit Belfast represents over 500 tourism businesses and services across the tourism industry and its core purpose is to welcome and service visitors for Belfast and Northern

Ireland in order to generate an economic benefit for the city, creating jobs and wealth.

- 3.3 The role of Visit Belfast is to drive visitor numbers and increase visitor spend. As a public-private partnership, it provides a singular delivery mechanism for co-ordinating marketing investment and market engagement for the city. The organisation has a portfolio of marketing, sales and visitor servicing activity across both leisure and business tourism.
- 3.4 2020-21 is the third year of Visit Belfast's four-year operational strategy (2018-22). Over the course of the four year plan, the ambition is to deliver a cumulative 1.6m bed nights, welcome 953,000 cruise visitors, service 3.7m enquiries and attract £546m into the local economy. Visit Belfast is on target to achieve the key performance indicators set at this stage of the four-year strategy.
- 3.5 Visit Belfast's strategy is a key part of our commitment to grow the visitor economy in Belfast and Northern Ireland and, in particular, in achieving the Belfast Agenda commitment to increase the value of out-of-state tourism to £500million and welcome 1.9m overnight stays by 2021.
- 3.6 City tourism continues to drive tourism on a global basis and Belfast continues to increasingly lift Northern Ireland tourism, contributing up to half of the NI visitor economy. Belfast continues to receive positive media and travel industry feedback – Conference and Incentive Travel Magazine voted Belfast their Best Events Destination for 2019 whilst Cruise Critic UK Editors' Picks Awards named Belfast as their Best UK & British Isles Port of Call.
- 3.7 Tourism, and in particular out-of-state tourism, has become a key economic driver for the city region, generating revenue and contributing to job growth. Private sector investment in hotel development saw a thousand hotel rooms come online in 2018, increasing hotel room capacity by almost a third and delivering the 5-year stretch target set in the Belfast Agenda.

An overview of performance to date this year is set out below:

**Belfast Hotel Performance (January-October 2019)**

- 3.8 Between January-October, room occupancy stood at 74.1%, down 5 percentage points on the same period of 2018. It is important to note that hotel room supply was 12.3% higher than in 2018 and as a result the volume of room sales

increased by 6.7% year-on-year. August continues to be the peak month for hotel occupancy – with 85.7% of rooms occupied that month.

**Destination Interest and Visitor Servicing (January-October 2019)**

- 3.9 Interest in Belfast as a destination of choice continues to rise. This is demonstrated by figures from Visit Belfast which show that their visitor servicing team handled 802,664 enquiries and welcomed 293,554 visitors through the doors in the period January-October. The profile of these visitors is broken down as 37% from Europe, 23% from GB, 21% NI, 6% North America, 9% Rest of the World and 4% from the Republic of Ireland. Visitor service support is also provided at core events in the city and beyond, most notably the 148<sup>th</sup> Open which was held at Royal Portrush in July.

**Cruise Belfast**

- 3.10 The City welcomed unprecedented numbers of cruise ships this year. 146 ships arrived into Belfast Harbour, carrying an estimated number of 275,000 cruise visitors to the city, an increase of 46% from 2018. The economic benefit from cruise tourism is estimated to be £12.5 million. During the 2019 season, a new dedicated cruise terminal, the first in Ireland, was opened by the Lord Mayor of Belfast providing a more focussed visitor welcome facility. Planning is already underway for 2020, and it is expected that 2019 cruise visitor numbers will be surpassed.

**Conferences in Belfast 2019**

- 3.11 Conference wins from Visit Belfast brought 91 conferences to the city in the year to date, generating an estimated 68,905 bed nights. The economic benefit is estimated to be in the region of £31.5 million. Given the long lead-in times, Visit Belfast is also working on attracting future events. They have achieved conference wins for the city worth £33.1m in the year to date. These conferences will take place over the coming years, and will deliver a cumulative total of 74,000 bed nights.

**Leisure Tourism and Marketing**

- 3.12 Since April 2019, six marketing campaigns have been delivered by Visit Belfast, worth a combined investment of £743,500. These have targeted potential visitors in the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain as well as supporting the City Recovery Campaign in the domestic market. The aim of

these campaigns is to generate 255,000 leisure bed nights. Importantly, these campaigns allow Visit Belfast to lever significant partner income: £2 for every £1 of its investment in out-of-state marketing. Additionally, web and digital marketing has generated 1.8m visits to the visitbelfast.com website.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.13 There are no specific financial or resource implications attached to this report. The financial request from Visit Belfast is likely to be in the region of £1.9million for the coming financial year. This allocation will have to be approved by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, as part of the estimates and rate-setting process for 2020/21.

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

- 3.14 There are no specific equality or good relations implications. Visit Belfast also works with neighbouring councils to support tourism development and those councils are also investing in tourism development and marketing within their respective areas.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that:

- i. Visit Belfast’s presentation be circulated to Members in advance of the meeting to allow for more detailed consideration;
- ii. Visit Belfast provide any available information around the environmental impact of tourism upon the City; and
- iii. information on conferences for the current financial year, as well as future projections, be included within the presentation by Visit Belfast.

#### **Growing Businesses and the Economy**

##### **Social Enterprise and Co-operative Support**

The Committee considered 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 a range of issues discussed at the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 11th September.

The specific request included:

- an update on the motion on Small and Medium Enterprises which had been referred to the Committee by the Council on 4th July 2016;
- exploring the feasibility of establishing in the next financial year a co-operative development fund for Belfast;
- providing details of the work of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) around regeneration and community development, of officers' work with CLES to date and how the Council's membership of CLES could add value to the Council's work in this area; and
- providing information on the Council's engagement with Preston City Council and with the city of Cleveland, Ohio, which had each developed successful co-operative initiatives, and learning from these initiatives.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

### **2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- i. note the progress to date to support the social enterprise and cooperative sector;**
- ii. agree the proposed activities to take forward the key issues raised at the meeting on 11th September 2019; and**
- iii. approve an additional allocation of £15,000 to enhance the support available to support the growth of the co-operative sector in Belfast, building upon the existing delivery. It is recommended also that the budget to support the social enterprise and co-operative sector is uplifted in the next financial year, which will be brought to Committee for approval in March 2020.**

## **3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 As Members will be aware, the commitments within the Belfast Agenda are based on a fundamental principle of enabling inclusive economic growth. To deliver on this commitment, the Council has developed a Draft Inclusive Growth Strategy, currently out to public consultation, which aims to ensure that the success of the city reaches every citizen. The consultation**

closes on 24th January and an updated and final Inclusive Growth Strategy will be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee following this.

- 3.2** In order to deliver on this commitment, there is a need to focus on a review of internal processes and practices, as well as considering how we directly support and influence other stakeholders to support our inclusive growth commitments. Key levers at the Council's disposal to deliver on this strategy include its procurement, human resources, planning and wider decision-powers through which inclusive growth can be embedded as part of service delivery. We can develop targeted employability and skills interventions, utilise the planning system to generate developer contributions and support the growth of key sectors including social enterprises and co-operatives. Recognising that inclusive growth is not the job of a few but of the many, a key area of focus within the draft strategy involves working with others (including the private sector, anchor institutions, wider public sector and community and voluntary sector) to create an inclusive city, through the establishment of an inclusive growth city charter.
- 3.3** Members will be aware that the economy in Belfast is dominated by micro and small businesses. More than 95% of businesses in the city employ 50 people or less. Since 2015, the Council has had statutory responsibility for a range of functions relating to business start-up and growth and our Economic Development team leads on the delivery of support services to increase the number of new businesses and to help existing businesses to grow, become more competitive and employ more people. From a wider Council perspective, there are also opportunities to explore how we can help local businesses to provide services to the Council through our procurement opportunities and supply chain development, and we can also provide support to skill up employees and make businesses more productive.
- 3.4** At the Council meeting on 4 July 2016, former Councillor McVeigh raised a motion regarding support for small businesses, which was referred to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. The motion included four key points:
- creating a substantial citywide investment fund to incentivise start-up and growth for example, through low interest loans;
  - engaging with the Department for Finance and Land and Property Services on the potential to offer rates

incentives, such as time-limited rates holidays, to start-ups or expanding SMEs;

- engaging a number of experts e.g. dealing with legal/financial issues, who can be loaned to a start-up or expanding SME free of charge for a 12 month period. Again, the Council will engage with the Executive to see if they will match fund this particular initiative; and
- appointing a full-time Belfast Small Business/Social Economy Commissioner who will proactively work to help grow this crucial sector of our economy. This person must have extensive knowledge and direct expertise of SME creation and expansion.

- 3.5 The motion was responded to at the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 10th August 2016, the recommendations within the report were agreed, an update has been circulated to Members. Since the introduction of the motion, there have been significant changes to the operating environment in this area of work in Northern Ireland. With the transfer of start-up, social enterprise and business growth functions to councils in 2015, officers have been working to enhance the offer to new starts and existing businesses. The commitments within the Belfast Agenda to supporting 4,000 new business starts by 2021 and creating 15,000 new jobs mean that we have developed close working partnerships across the public, private and community/voluntary sector to ensure delivery of these ambitions. Progress against each of the individual points within the motion has been circulated. However, as a snapshot, members are advised that the work of the Council in this financial year in the areas of business start-up and growth will help support the promotion and creation of more than 820 jobs and more than 350 new business starts. The development of the Enterprise Framework means that there is now a shared and agreed approach to supporting business start-up and growth. This includes a commitment to share resources and undertake research to ensure that the interventions supported continue to make a positive impact on the businesses and individuals engaged.

**Exploring the Feasibility of Establishing a Co-operative Development Fund for Belfast**

- 3.6 As Members will be aware, officers have undertaken research to understand what specific support is required from co-operatives and social enterprises and to inform the support provided by the Council. At the Special City Growth and



Regeneration Committee meeting on 27th November, Members received a presentation, which outlined the support in place currently to support the growth of the sector and the future plans to enhance this provision. The breadth of the Council support has recently been externally validated as Belfast City Council won the 'Council of the Year' award at the Social Enterprise NI Awards.

- 3.7 The focus of the Council resources is on raising awareness of the social enterprise and co-operative sectors in the city, ensuring that specialist one-to-one mentoring support is in place to help new starts and growing businesses and helping businesses to explore and develop solutions to social issues through sustainable business concepts.
- 3.8 The concept of a co-operative fund to further enhance the Council's support has been raised on a number of occasions. To establish whether there is a need for such a fund in Belfast, officers have undertaken research across other cities that have implemented co-operative development initiatives in order to review their effectiveness and we have also engaged with the sector and co-operative partners locally. These have included Preston and Cleveland as well as Edinburgh and Glasgow. This research has identified that Glasgow is the only city that has operated a dedicated co-operative and enterprise fund. This fund enabled local co-operatives and social enterprises to apply for funding up to £25k to help them with their operational needs, skills, marketing, business development, governance, finance controls, service development and new markets. The delivery of this support is met with a budget of £500k per annum and a co-operative development unit based in the Council.
- 3.9 This approach has worked well in Glasgow, however, it has been enhanced by a range of other activities, such as the use of Council assets to support co-operative development, in addition to capacity building support and consistent messaging to promote the sector. Recent research undertaken by Glasgow identified that the issue for co-operatives was not in accessing finance, but in fact managing the day-to-day finances of the businesses, in addition to sales, marketing and HR support. The research has recommended that while there is good feedback on the Glasgow's fund, the Council can add more value with this type of softer support.
- 3.10 The approach that Belfast City Council has taken is to package together business advice and financial support to ensure that co-operatives get a wrap-around support service that takes account of their business growth needs while providing

access to small amounts of finance to address any growth challenges. Taking account of members' ambitions to enhance the level of support, it is proposed that an additional budget of £15,000 is added to the current programme delivery. This will enable existing support to be enhanced and will cover a number of elements that are not currently eligible for support, such as the registration fee that co-operatives have to pay (can be up to £600).

- 3.11 With regard to funding support, the Committee has recently approved a crowd funding pilot with Crowdfunder UK. This pilot will provide support for developing and running a crowdfunding campaign for up to 10 social enterprises or co-operatives in the city. Belfast City Council will offer match funding of up to £5,000 for each of the organisations that deliver a successful campaign and meet the required eligibility criteria. There is also significant support available through both UCIT and UNLTD, details of which has been circulated, and they work closely with the Council and its delivery partners to ensure that those requiring access to financial support can access it in the most effective manner.
- 3.12 In addition to this, the finalisation of the Inclusive Growth Strategy and a cross organisational approach and corporate focus to inclusive growth will lead to further improvements in the Council's approach to the social enterprise and co-operative sector.

Details of the work of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) around regeneration and community development, outlining officers' work with CLES to date and how the Council's membership of CLES could add value to the Council's work in this area

- 3.13 Belfast City Council is a member of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). Officers have worked with the team at CLES on a number of issues, particularly relating to access to procurement, maximising local spend and measuring impact of local economic interventions.
- 3.14 One of the most significant areas of engagement between Belfast City Council and CLES has been in the development of the Local Multiplier Model (LM3). The principle of this model is to measure and track the scale and impact of Council spend in a local area, taking account of spend on both goods and services (through procurement) and also on salaries and wages.

This methodology is also used in a number of other local authorities (including Preston, Manchester and Salford) and this allows for comparisons and learning across a range of comparator cities. Belfast City Council has been using the LM3 model for the last four years to track the impact of our spend in the local area. Officers have also used the findings to target activity on certain categories in which Belfast-based businesses are currently under-represented.

- 3.15 CLES has also worked with the councils listed above to develop their respective approaches to enable inclusive economic growth and community wealth building. Recently representatives from Preston City Council visited Belfast to share their experiences and their methodology drew on the work that they had developed with CLES. We will continue to learn and work with CLES to develop our approach. Council officers can now run the LM3 model independently but the links with CLES will enable us to learn from other cities and benchmark our performance with these progressive cities. We have also engaged CLES to support with the development of Council's Employability and Skills framework and in the work that we are doing with Anchor Institutions.

Information on the Council's engagement with Preston City Council and with the city of Cleveland, Ohio, which had each developed successful co-operative initiatives and learning from these initiatives

- 3.16 Belfast City Council recently hosted a visit to the city by representatives from Preston City Council, working in conjunction with our local partner Development Trusts NI (DTNI). Preston's approach is based on a principle of community wealth-building focusing on how income can be held and recirculated within a local economy. This is achieved through a number of approaches including:
- promoting a more diverse blend of ownership models within a local economy, encouraging the creation and growth of small business, social enterprises and co-operatives;
  - increasing flows of investment within local economies by harnessing the wealth that exists locally. For example, Preston are utilising local authority pension funds to redirect investment from global schemes into local, commercially viable investment projects;
  - supporting fair employment by working with anchor institutions and large to explore approaches such as targeted recruitment from lower income areas,

**commitment to pay the living wage and building progression routes; and**

- adopting progressive approaches to procurement delivering social value and promoting inclusive procurement practices such as building capacity for smaller organisations and social economy enterprises.**

**3.17 The key activities delivered through the Preston approach include;**

- an anchor institution strategy, which has large placed-based institutions in Preston and Lancashire with a combined spend of nearly £1 billion per annum increasing spending to local suppliers to benefit the community;**
- a £100m place-based investment by their local government pension fund in student flats, hotel and office space. Through their City Deal, they want to explore a potential Lancashire Wealth Fund;**
- the expansion of worker-owned co-operative businesses through an innovative partnership with Mondragon Co-operative Corporation, University of Central Lancashire and Preston Co-operative Development Network. This work is currently in its infancy;**
- working with the Living Wage Foundation to make Preston one of the UK's first Living Wage Places;**
- exploring municipal ownership of a major city centre development; and**
- using their planning policies to encourage locally-based suppliers and labour on both public and private sector developments in the wider Preston economy.**

**3.18 The approach adopted by Preston is similar to that of Cleveland, Ohio. Cleveland's initiative exists due to the unique partnership between the public sector, North-East Ohio's philanthropic community and University Circle's anchor institutions. This partnership leveraged the joint 3 billion USD of annual purchasing power of these anchor institutions in order to help catalyse and build community-based businesses that create jobs and ultimately drive economic stability for local low-wealth communities.**

**3.19** Preston City Council emphasised that it has been a long process to develop their current model, taking almost eight years. They consider that the secret to their success has been in pulling together the support and activities that are already taking place in order to achieve impact on a significant scale, as well as taking a partnership approach to this work. The BCC Inclusive Growth Strategy will also take this approach – seeking to work with partners and at scale to maximise impact.

**3.20** While the work that Preston are undertaking is very impressive, it is clear that Belfast City Council is already engaging in or exploring the majority of the elements of Preston’s approach. The ongoing implementation of the inclusive growth strategy and the development and shaping of the Council’s ambitions year-on-year will ensure that Belfast City Council develops a strong and inclusive economy. At its meeting on the 17th December the Strategic, Policy and Resources Committee agreed the Revenue Estimates and District Rate for 2020/21. This included a budget of £611,500 to support inclusive growth. Specific proposals will be brought back to the Committee relating to how this budget will be utilised.

**3.21** **Financial and Resource Implications**

The activities outlined within this report will be resourced from the 2019/20 Economic Development budget agreed by this Committee on 6th March 2019. The additional work to support the co-operatives and social enterprises will require an additional budget of £15,000. We also recommend that the budget to support the social enterprise and co-operative sector is uplifted in the next financial year, this will be brought to Committee for approval in March 2020.

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

**3.22** 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 the recommendations and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting examining the potential for replicating Glasgow’s co-operative development model in Belfast.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**York Street Interchange Project**

The Committee agreed, at the request of Councillor O'Hara, that a letter be forwarded to the Minister for Infrastructure seeking an update on the York Street Interchange project and clarification on how it fitted with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report of October 2018 on the impact of global warming and the need to transition to a carbon neutral society, based on more sustainable transport infrastructure.

**Dogs on Public Transport - Response from Translink**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 11th September, it had agreed, at the request of the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds), that a letter be forwarded to Translink, recommending that it review and amend its policy for the carriage of dogs on buses and trains, to allow for more dog owners to avail of public transport.

The Democratic Services Officer drew the Members' attention to a response which had been received from Mr. C. Conway, Group Chief Executive of Translink. Mr. Conway had explained that Translink had benchmarked its policy against those of other public transport companies in Ireland and Great Britain. That had found that its policy of allowing assistance dogs on all of its services at all times was in line with those companies, as was its policy of permitting all dogs to be carried on its services. However, in the latter instance, Translink provided staff and drivers with discretion to refuse entry in circumstances, for example, where dogs were unclean or poorly behaved or where other passengers had legitimate grounds for objecting, on account of allergies, phobias etc.

Mr. Conway had concluded by pointing out that Translink was of the view that its current policy balanced the aspiration for open access with the requirement for some mechanism to assess what was appropriate in protecting the needs of other passengers.

The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds) explained that Translink's response was at odds with paragraph 18.1 of its Conditions of Carriage policy, as publicised on the company's website, which had stated that "only small dogs or inoffensive animals" may be carried on its services. Since raising the issue, he had been contacted by numerous passengers outlining their negative experiences of travelling with their dogs on public transport, which had reinforced his concerns around the current policy. He pointed out that bars, cafés, hotels and other venues in the City were becoming increasingly dog-friendly and that Translink had an important role to play in that regard. He concluded by inviting the Committee to agree to seek a meeting with Translink representatives to discuss how the policy on the carriage of dogs could be enhanced, in light of the issues which he had raised.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the matter be added to the agenda for discussion at a forthcoming meeting to be attended by Translink representatives.

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Chairperson

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## Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 22nd January, 2020

### MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor S. Baker (Chairperson);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds;  
Alderman Sandford; and  
Councillors Bunting, Donnelly, Dorrian, Ferguson,  
Groves, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly,  
Magee, Magennis, McAteer, Smyth and Whyte.

In attendance: Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;  
Ms N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;  
Mr. J. Cunningham, Regulatory Services Manager;  
Mr. K. Bloomfield, HMO Unit Manager; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

No apologies were reported.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 6th January, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hussey declared an interest in relation to item 2.c) Objections received to an application for the renewal of a 7-Day Annual Entertainments Licence for the Hatfield Bar, in that he had been previously employed to do legal work on behalf of the applicant, and took no part in the decision-making process.

### 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.

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**Competing Street Trading Licence applications for Fountain Lane**

The Committee was advised that competing applications had been received from two persons wishing to trade from a designated site in Fountain Lane. 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 that Mr. S. Donnelly had applied to sell tour tickets, tour memorabilia and gifts. The proposed times of trading were Monday to Sunday from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and Mr. Donnelly proposed to use a stall on wheels measuring 3m by 1.5m.

He informed the Members that the second application had been submitted by Mr. M. Kerr, who had applied to sell: Souvenirs and Memorabilia, Special Day, Occasions and Celebration goods and accessories; Flowers and plants; Clothing and accessories; Jokes and Toys; Confectionery; Cold Beverages; Jewellery; Flags; Whistles; Batteries; Art work; Beauty and Cosmetics; and Football merchandise from a traditional market stall measuring 3m by 1.5m. The proposed times of trading were Monday to Sunday from 6.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

The Committee was informed that the two applicants were in attendance in order to outline their proposals for the site.

**Applicant 1**

Mr. P. Rogan, Manager of City Tours, on behalf of the applicant, informed the Committee that they had a similar provision on Fountain Street and believed that this stall would benefit their company and brand, and help grow their network of information points across the City Centre. He described the design of the stall and advised that they intended to sell bus tickets and memorabilia.

**Applicant 2**

Mr. M. Kerr and Mrs. G. Kerr indicated that they wished to sell all types of tours, souvenirs and seasonal stock, including special occasion goods and they intended the stall to be a one-stop-shop for tourists. They suggested that the stall had been in their family for over 20 years and they would like to trade at the site.

During points of clarification, Mr. Kerr clarified that he was currently unemployed and if his application was successful, the stall 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 wider mix of products, that it was minded to grant to Mr. M. Kerr, a Stationary Street Trading Licence, on a one-year trial basis, permitting him to sell tour Souvenirs and Memorabilia; Special Day, Occasions and Celebration goods and accessories; Flowers and plants; Clothing and accessories; Jokes and Toys; Confectionery; Cold Beverages; Jewellery; Flags; Whistles; Batteries; Art work; Beauty and Cosmetics; and Football merchandise on a Monday to Sunday between the hours of

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6.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m., in Fountain Lane, 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. Kerr the Committee agreed that it was minded to refuse the application which had been submitted by Mr. Donnelly, on the grounds set out in Sections 9(1) (a) (i) of the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, namely, that the location at which they wished to trade was unsuitable by virtue of the fact that there was only one designated site available. .

The Building Control Manager informed the Members that the unsuccessful applicant 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.

**Objections received to an application for the renewal of a 7-Day Annual Entertainments Licence for the Hatfield Bar**

The Building Control Manager advised that, in relation to the aforementioned renewal application received on 25th October, subsequently, 20 objections to the renewal application had been received and all of the objections had been received outside of the 28-day statutory period.

He explained that, as the objections against the application were received outside the 28-day statutory period, the Committee was required to determine if it wished to exercise its discretion to consider them and, if so, give the objectors and the applicant an opportunity of addressing the Committee.

He reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 18th January 2017, it had adopted the following criteria when considering late objections received outside the 28-day statutory period:

1. Had a reasonable explanation been provided, in writing, by the objector as to why their representation had not been made within the 28-day period;
2. Does the representation provide substantially different additional information to that already contained within representations that have been received within the 28-day period;
3. How far outside the 28-day period were the representations received;
4. The proximity of the objectors to the premises;
5. The number of other representations received outside the 28-day period; and
6. Whether there were any other material considerations which would warrant consideration of the objection.

He explained that, arising from criteria outlined above, the Service had received correspondence from 6 of the objectors outlining the reasons for their late objection

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(5 outlined in the report and an additional objection tabled at the meeting). He highlighted that, after the agenda had been published, an objection had also been received from Councillor Groogan.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor Groogan addressed the Committee and provided an overview of her objection to the application. She implied that many of the objectors had not realised that the application had been advertised or the deadline for submission of objections had passed. She stated that the area had been recently designated as a Special Action Area under community planning to assist in its regeneration. She suggested that the Committee should allow the objectors to discuss their concerns at a future Committee.

During discussion, the Committee raised concerns in relation to the lack of public notification of the newspaper advertisements and highlighted that, of the 20 objections which had been received, all had raised similar issues for consideration such as concerns about loud entertainment music, and other matters of public nuisance. The Committee discussed further the need to accept the reasons for the late objections and that the issues raised regarding the process should be escalated to the Minister for Communities and with Senior Management.

The Building Control Manager explained that the legislation regarding the public notice advertisement requirements of Entertainments Licensing Applications and advised that the concerns in relation to the requirement of advertising in only one newspaper had been raised with the Department for Communities before. It had previously been suggested that the legislation be changed to enable the Council to publish applications received online. He also advised that in the absence of a legislative change that the Service could notify Members by area of any applications that were received.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to exercise its discretion and consider the 6 late objections to allow the objectors and the applicant to address the Committee at a future meeting. The Committee noted that, at such meeting, after it had received the deputations, it would be required to consider and make a recommendation regarding the application.

The Committee also agreed to write to the Minister for Communities to highlight the necessity to review the current legislation regarding the public notice advertisement requirements of Entertainments Licensing Applications.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licenses Issued Under Delegated Authority**

The Committee noted the applications that had been issued under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

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**Application for the Renewal of a Licence to Operate a House of Multiple Occupation for 85 Dunluce Avenue;**

**Application for the Renewal of a Licence to Operate a House of Multiple Occupation for Flat 2, 15 India Street; and**

**Application for the Renewal of a Licence to Operate a House of Multiple Occupation for 22 Elaine Street**

Before presentation of the aforementioned applications commenced, the Committee agreed to consider the three applications together.

The Committee was reminded that responsibility for HMO's had been transferred to local district councils in April 2019 with the introduction of a new licensing regime. The HMO Unit Manager advised that any existing registrations under the old NIHE Registration Scheme operated were deemed to be licences at the point of transfer. He stated that licences were issued for a 5 year period with standard conditions, however, where it was considered necessary to do so, the Committee could also impose special conditions.

He explained that the purpose of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 ('the 2016 Act') was to enable better regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), by introducing a system of licensing, a fitness test for applicants and new provisions about standards of housing.

He pointed out that, following the publication of the three applications, an objection had been received in relation to the applications which raised general concerns about the overprovision of HMO's, the antisocial behaviour associated with HMO's, their effect on communities and issues around planning permission. He confirmed that none of the issues raised had concerns specific to the premises in the three application premises.

The HMO Unit Manager advised that, as a valid objection had been received, the applications must be considered by the Committee and highlighted that, pursuant to the 2016 Act, the Council may only grant a licence if it was satisfied of the following:

- a) the occupation of the living accommodation as an HMO would not constitute a breach of planning control;
- b) the owner of the living accommodation, and any managing agent of it, were fit and proper persons;
- c) the proposed management arrangements for the living accommodation were satisfactory);
- d) the granting of the licence would not result in overprovision of HMOs in the locality in which the living accommodation was situated;
- e) the living accommodation was fit for human habitation and—
  - (i) was suitable for occupation as an HMO by the number of persons to be specified in the licence, or
  - (ii) could be made so suitable by including conditions in the licence.

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He explained that the issues which could be taken into account when considering the fitness of an applicant were set out at Section 10 of the 2016 Act and included offences concerning fraud or dishonesty, violence, drugs, human trafficking, firearms, sexual offences, unlawful discrimination in, or in connection with, the carrying on of any business; or any provision of the law relating to housing or of landlord and tenant law. It also permitted the Council to take into account any other matter which the council considered to be relevant. Section 20 of the 2016 Act stated where the holder of an HMO licence made an application for renewal, the council must apply the above provisions except for (a) and (d); namely whether the use was a breach of planning control or would result in overprovision.

He pointed out that Legal Counsel had advised that councils could not take into account the absence of planning permission through the prism of fitness. On the basis of this advice, Legal Services had confirmed that this also applied to issues around overprovision.

**Representations**

The Committee received a representation from Mrs. B. Ruddy, a Holylands resident, in objection to the three applications. She suggested that there had been an overdevelopment of HMO's in South Belfast for 20 years and the situation had not got any better with the introduction of the new legislation. She highlighted that there was a negative impact from the overdevelopment of HMO's on the local community, anti-social behaviour and criminal activity, pressure on public services, such as the dumping of rubbish in alleyways, together with pressure on the water and sewerage service network. She implied that the densification of inner south Belfast was overwhelming. She suggested that overprovision should be a consideration of HMO renewals, and the change in definition under Clause 1 of the HMO policy which allowed apartments to be developed, would also lead to densification of area.

Mrs Ruddy stated that the new categorisation of the Holylands and Lower Ormeau as a Special Action Area status, to reduce the number of HMO premises was contrary to the HMO policy and Certificates of Lawful Use. She suggested that anti-social behaviour policies were also needed for HMO's and highlighted the confusion and lack of detail in the current newspaper advertisement notifications. She requested that the Committee should place a temporary halt to HMO renewal's and certificates' of lawful use and the Council should raise the need for a review of the HMO policy with the Minister for Communities.

The Committee received a representation from Mr. E. Cameron in support of the application for 15 India Street. Mr Cameron provided an overview of his families' ownership of the house and explained that, after renovations, it had been rented-out since 2009 and had complied with all NIHE housing checks. He stated that the location of the property was close to Botanic Avenue, which was a very commercial area which did not generate a community. He implied that the over-population raised by the objector was questionable, as prior to being rented, the premises had been occupied by nine people. He advised that the waste was collected regularly and the alleyway was kept clear. He suggested that parking was impacted by commuters and visitors using the spaces rather than residents. He indicated that anti-social behaviour could be attributed to

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customers of local social establishments rather than residents. He stated that there were no grounds for the Committee to refuse the application.

The Committee received a representation from Mr. N. Jordan in support of the application for 22 Elaine Street. He advised that the location of the premises in Stranmillis had been used by students for decades and standards of housing were kept high. He stated that there were only a few problematic premises and more stringent HMO legislation would help alleviate these issues. He implied that the objection was a broad generalisation and could not be used. He suggested that the application met with the criteria and the premises also had planning approval. He advised that he managed the premises with regular inspections and ensured the front entrance and alleyway were kept clean and tidy.

During points of clarification, Mrs. Ruddy confirmed that her objection was not directed at the aforementioned applications, however, implied that this was just part of the picture and the whole situation needed to be reviewed, together with the conflicting legislation.

During discussion, the Divisional Solicitor assured the Committee that when officers had written to the objectors and suggested that their objections were not considered to be relevant, these remarks were written in terms of the legislative scheme and were intended to be helpful and not dismissive of the issues which had been raised by the objectors.

She reminded the Committee that it was required to decide whether or not to grant the renewal applications and in doing so, had to assess whether the applicants were fit and proper persons and if the premises were suitable. She confirmed that assessment of the applications must be in accordance with the requirements of the legislation.

She highlighted that the People and Communities Committee had set up a Special Action Group for the broader HMO issues and the draft Local Development Plan, which included detailed HMO policies to assist in providing balanced communities, was currently going through the statutory process for approval.

After discussion, the Committee considered the three aforementioned applications:

**85 Dunluce Avenue**

The Committee approved the application for the Grant of the renewal of a Licence to Operate a House of Multiple Occupation for 85 Dunluce Avenue.

**Flat 2, 15 India Street**

The Committee approved the application for the Grant of the renewal of a Licence to Operate a House of Multiple Occupation for Flat 2, 15 India Street.

**22 Elaine Street**

The Committee approved the application for the Grant of the renewal of a Licence to Operate a House of Multiple Occupation for 22 Elaine Street.

After discussion, the Committee also agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting to provide an update on issues with the new HMO legislation with a view to engaging with the Minister for Communities on the matter.

**Non-Delegated Matters**

**Review of Amusement Permit policy**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

**1.1 This report seeks Committee endorsement to commence a process to review and update the Amusement Permit policy which was ratified at Council on 1 May 2013.**

**1.2 When formulated it was anticipated that the policy would be reviewed every three years to remain abreast of the dynamics of the gambling industry and any changes in legislation.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Members are asked to agree that Officers commence a process to review the current Amusement Permit policy and note that a future report will be brought to Committee with a revised draft Policy for consideration.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Background**

**3.1 The overall aim of the amusement permit policy is to serve as a guide for Elected Members, Council officers, applicants and the wider public on applications for amusement permits under the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 in the Belfast City Council area.**

**3.2 By outlining those matters which may be taken into account in determining an application for an amusement permit this policy was developed to introduce greater clarity, transparency and consistency to the decision making process.**



3.3 The need for the policy was highlighted by previous Court decisions on amusement permit applications.

3.4 Amusement Permit Policy

The Policy consists of two components:

1. Legal requirements under the 1985 Order, and
2. Assessment criteria for suitability of a location.

3.5 There are five interrelated criteria set out in the Policy that should typically be considered when assessing the suitability of a location for an amusement arcade:

- (a) Retail vibrancy and regeneration of Belfast:
- (b) Cumulative build-up of amusement arcades in a particular location:
- (c) Impact on the image and profile of Belfast:
- (d) Proximity to residential use:
- (e) Proximity to schools, youth centres, and residential institutions for vulnerable people:

Judicial review proceedings

3.6 Members will recall, at your meeting of 13 November 2019, reconsidering an application from Hazeldene Enterprises Limited, for the grant of an Amusement Permit which was originally granted at your meeting on 6 October 2014.

3.7 Subsequently, Oasis Retail Services Limited, an objector to the grant of the amusement permit, sought leave to apply for Judicial Review in respect of the decision of the Council to grant the permit. The Court of Appeal decision, delivered on 24 September 2018, resulted in the quashing of the decision of the Council to grant a permit to Hazeldene Enterprises Limited.

3.8 One of the key findings of the Court of Appeal related to the consideration of cumulative impact on the grant of requested permits on the character of the area.

3.9 Members are advised that review of the Policy was delayed pending the outcome of the judicial review proceedings and that these must now be taken into account in any revised policy.

Review process

3.10 When the initial policy was created a consultant with experience of policy formulation and planning matters was

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utilised and an exercise will be undertaken to procure a consultant to assist with the re-drafting of the policy.

- 3.11 This process will be undertaken in close liaison with Legal Services to enable a revised policy to be drafted for consideration by Members.
- 3.12 Following agreement on the revised policy a formal consultation will then be undertaken, in line with Council guidelines, and the findings will then inform a final revised policy for approval by Council.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

- 3.13 The financial and resource implications associated with this report will be catered for within current Service budget.

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

- 3.14 All equality and good relations issues will be taken into consideration in formulating a revised policy.”

The Committee agreed that officers commence the process to review the current Amusement Permit Policy and noted that the revised draft Policy would be submitted to a future meeting for consideration.

Chairperson

## Planning Committee

Tuesday, 21st January, 2020

### MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);  
Aldermen McCoubrey and Rodgers; and  
Councillors Brooks, Collins, Garrett,  
Groogan, Hanvey, Hussey, Maskey,  
McKeown, Murphy, Nicholl and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
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 10th and 16th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 6th January, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### Declarations of Interest

Councillor Nicholl advised that she had attended a briefing on the Royal Exchange application in 2017 but that she had not expressed an opinion.

### Planning Application

**LA04/2017/2341/O - Outline permission for demolition, redevelopment and part change of use to create a mixed use development comprising retail, offices, cafe/restaurant, residential, hotel, cultural/community space, parking, servicing, access and circulation arrangements, the creation of new streets, the configuration of Writers Square, public realm works, landscaping and associated site and road works, works to alter listed buildings, restoration of retained listed buildings and facades, and partial demolition of North Street Arcade on land bounded by Royal Avenue, York Street and Church Street to the North; North Street to the west;**

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**Rosemary Street to the south and High Street to the south;  
and Donegall Street to the east approximately 300m  
west of Laganside Bus Station 300m northeast of  
City Hall and 900m northwest of Lanyon Place Train Station**

The Senior Planning officer provided the Committee with the key details of the outline application.

She provided the Committee with a detailed presentation of the outline application for a mixed-use scheme comprising offices, 367 residential units, restaurants/cafes, a hotel, retail units on the ground floor and cultural and community space. She explained that the proposal also sought to reconfigure Writer's Square, to pedestrianise North Street, the creation of new public squares ("Central Square" and "Assembly Square" at the junction of North Street and Rosemary Street) and the creation of new pedestrian links between North Street and Donegall Street.

The Members were advised that the applicant had significantly revised the scheme. The Senior Planning officer outlined that the proposed 27 storey tower and the large anchor retail store which were in the original scheme were no longer proposed and that the revised scheme instead proposed the replacement of the North Street Arcade with a new arcade with retention and restoration of its external facades on both North Street and Donegall Street. She added that the level of demolition in the revised proposals had also been reduced.

She explained that the basement and the multi-storey car parks were no longer proposed and that the only on-site parking which would be provided were 25 disabled spaces and 6 spaces for car club vehicles. She advised that the reduction in parking would be mitigated through green transport measures including travel plans, the use of car club and the distribution of Travel cards to residents which would be secured through a Section 76 Agreement. DfI Roads had indicated that they were content, subject to conditions.

In relation to the residential units, it was proposed that 10% of the housing, approximately 37 units, would be affordable housing. The Senior Planning officer explained that the applicant also proposed to relocate the existing Choice Housing Facility (SHAC), which was within the site boundary, and to provide an additional 10% social housing within the same relocated facility in close proximity to the site.

The Committee was advised that the currently approved scheme for the site, which had been granted permission in 2012, hereafter known as the extant scheme, was for a larger site than the current proposals. She highlighted to the Committee that the extant scheme was an important material consideration in the determination of the current application and was given significant weight as it was capable of being implemented.

The Committee was advised that 454 letters of objections had been received in respect of the revised scheme along with 5 letters of support.

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The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, whereby the Historical Environment Division (HED) had provided its latest response in relation to the alignment of the proposed arcade and the proposal for the Assembly Rooms at the corner of Waring Street and North Street. The Senior Planning officer advised the Members that, contrary to HED, officers felt that the inclusion of a replacement arcade was a substantial improvement over the extant scheme.

The Council's Economic Development Unit had provided a summary of core principles and thematic areas which were expected to come forward as part of the Employability and Skills Strategy. The Senior Planning officer advised the Committee that the Strategy and Plans would be secured as part of the Section 76 Planning Agreement.

She provided the details of six additional objections which had been received since the publication of the Case officer's report raising issues which were addressed within the report.

The Committee was advised that the applicant had provided information regarding the accuracy of the daylight/sunlight modelling work which had been undertaken by Delva Patman Redler (DPR). The Members were asked to note the information.

The Urban Design Officer presented a number of detailed slides which demonstrated the urban design aspects of the scheme. He outlined that design approach, including the retention of a much higher number of facades in the proposals, would keep the historic plot widths of the area. He provided the Committee with example extracts of the Design Code for the scheme, including the materials used. The Members were also provided with the details of the permeable routes through the site.

The officers highlighted a number of the changes between the extant scheme and the proposed outline application.

The Senior Planning officer advised the Committee that an analysis of housing trends had shown that accommodation was required for smaller households, or two persons or fewer.

He also summarised the significant community benefits of the revised scheme, including the regeneration of the area, bringing Listed Buildings back into use, restoration of historic buildings, job creation, affordable housing and supporting the vitality and viability of the city centre.

The Committee was advised that, as an objection had been received from the Historic Environment Division (HED), a statutory consultee, if the Committee was to grant approval to the outline application, it would be referred to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) under the notification process.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. A. Cahoon, Director of Killycrot Estates, Dr. A. Martire, Vice Chair of Save CQ, and Mr. J. Watson, St Anne's Cathedral, to the meeting, who were representing a group of objectors.

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Mr. Cahoon advised that, while he was not against the Tribeca development, he would like to see the removal of Block 1, a five storey building, as it would be just 4 metres from the front elevation of New Cathedral Buildings, and not, as the report stated, from the gable of 60 Donegall Street. He stated that he believed that it would have a negative impact on the commercial viability of New Cathedral Buildings and for its sole tenant, the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. He proposed that the Planning Committee placed a condition on any planning permission that it would give to require the removal of Block 1.

Dr. Martire advised the Committee that the Save CQ campaign had serious concerns regarding the proposals, including that:

- it was an ill-conceived scheme which would inflate land prices;
- reducing Writer's Square from a vibrant public space, which was used for many of the City's most important festivals to an overshadowed, set-back off Donegall Street was unacceptable;
- not providing 20% social housing was unacceptable;
- demolishing over 75% of the built fabric was unacceptable; and
- given the number of statutory and non-statutory objections, that she hoped the Committee would deny permission for the proposals in its current form.

Mr. Watson explained that he was speaking on behalf of the Belfast Cathedral and that, while they were in favour of regeneration in the area, they had a number of fundamental concerns, particularly regarding the massing of Block 2, whereby the current proposals were, in fact, worse than the extant scheme in terms of its impact on the setting of St. Anne's Cathedral and in terms of a potential loss of light. He explained that he felt that the proposal did not meet all of the criteria of Policy BH11. He added that they opposed the reduction of the public space of Writer's Square and that it would negatively impact upon the Cathedral.

The Chairperson then welcomed Mr. C. O'Brien, Savills, Mr. M. Levinson, Squire and Partners Architects, and Mr. D. Stelfox, Consarc Design Group, to the meeting, representing the agent/applicant and supporters of the application.

Mr. O'Brien advised the Committee that:

- the application involved one of the largest private sector investments to date for Belfast, totalling £500million, in an area which had been earmarked for regeneration since the 1990s;
- it was a heritage-led scheme;
- it would generate around 600 jobs during construction and 1600 Full-Time jobs once operational;
- the Gross Value Added of £213million per annum, and £23million in rates generation;

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- the proposals contained 367 housing units within the city centre, including 10% affordable and 10% social housing, which would contribute towards the aims in the Belfast Agenda;
- a range of sustainable and green travel measures were included;
- it included £17.5million investment in public realm;
- the scheme would enhance the Conservation Area and was a substantial improvement on the extant consent;
- after three years of consultation, supporters included Retail NI, the Destination CQ BID and the Belfast Chamber.

Mr. Levinson advised that the design had been driven by the historic buildings within the Conservation area resulting in an eclectic variety of heights which reflected an enhanced the area. He added that new streets had been created as part of the scheme, in addition to the Arcade, which would bringing together the Cathedral Quarter, Royal Avenue and the University areas.

Mr. Stelfox advised the Committee that the proposals met all the Policy Tests and that HED was now content with the plans for the listed Assembly Rooms and for Braddells. He advised the Members that a key part of the regeneration included the creation of active frontages in addition to the new public realm. He added that he felt that the substantial investment gave the area the best chance yet to be rejuvenated and reoccupied.

In response to a Member's question regarding the Demolition in a Conservation Area Consents, Mr. Stelfox confirmed that, technically, the whole Assembly Rooms building was listed, including the modern 1950s extension. He explained that the same applied for the listed Braddells building, which had poor quality shed extensions to the rear. He advised the Committee that they were technically listed but were required to be removed in order to restore the building properly.

In response to a further Member's question, Mr O'Brien advised the Committee that NI Water had confirmed that there was adequate capacity for the proposals.

A number of Members raised concerns regarding the reduction in Writer's Square, particularly given that it was largely used for community festivals, rallies and marches. Mr. Stelfox advised that the quality of the space in an urban area was important and that the scheme created a more usable space than what existed currently. Mr. O'Brien added that the creation of Assembly Square and Long Lane would also help to create a different space or routes for people to gather on Culture Night, for example.

A further Member raised concern regarding the suggested overshadowing of St. Anne's Cathedral.

In response to a further Member's question regarding evidence of support from the local community, Mr. O'Brien advised the Committee that significant consultation had been undertaken, the last of which had shown that 88% of respondents had responded positive.

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After further discussion, the Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. B. McKervey and Ms. N. Golden, Historic Environment Division (HED), were in attendance to answer any questions from the Committee.

In response to a Member's question, Ms. Golden advised that HED was content with the proposals for the Braddells building. She advised that, with regards to the Assembly Rooms, HED would have liked to have seen further information in relation to the condition reports for the listed building, and the connections between new and old elements, and, provided that the former banking hall would remain fully accessible for members of the public, they were largely content that the proposals applied with the Policies. In relation to paragraph 6.25 of BH10, she explained that, for the proposed realigned arcade, no justification had been provided to justify deviating from the original footprint of the 1930s arcade. She added that HED felt that the proposed extensions on top of the arcade was not set back far enough and were over-dominant.

(Councillor Garrett left the meeting at this point)

After further discussion, and in response to a question from a Member, the Planning Manager confirmed to the Members that the extant scheme established the principle of demolition of certain non-listed buildings. It further established the reduction in the size of Writer's Square.

The Director of Planning and Building Control advised the Committee that the applications had been subject to long negotiations and discussions not only with the Planning Service but also with the statutory consultees. He also pointed out that the applicant had conformed to a lot of the proposals which were contained in the forthcoming Local Development Plan for the City.

The Divisional Solicitor reminded the Committee that it was not starting with 'a blank slate' and therefore had to have regard to the fact that there was an extant permission which permitted the demolition of both listed and unlisted buildings. She advised the Committee that it had an acknowledgement from HED that the proposed scheme was an improvement on the extant permission. She added that the volume of letters of either support or objection should not correlate to the weight to be attached to those representations. The issue for Committee was whether the matters raised were material and, if so, it was a matter for Members as to the weight to attach to those issues in exercising their planning judgement.

The Chairperson then put the officer's recommendation to the Committee, to approve the outline application, subject to the imposing of the conditions as outlined within the case officer's report, to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions and to agree a Section 76 Legal Agreement.

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



**Listed Building Consents**

**LA04/2019/2031/LBC - Renovation and extension of building together with the demolition of the modern structures to the rear, to facilitate a change of use to provide a hotel with associated restaurant and bar uses, former Assembly Rooms, 2 Waring Street, 7-9 North Street and the car park at Donegall Street**

The Senior Planning officer explained that the Former Assembly Rooms was a Grade B1 listed building. She explained that the original building was built in around 1769 and that a number of additions had been made in the 1800s and in the early to mid-1900s. The building was on Northern Ireland's Heritage at Risk Register.

The Members were advised that the extant scheme included partial demolition of the Former Assembly Rooms which was marginally different from the current proposals, in that it approved the demolition of internal walls within the original building which were not sought in the current proposals.

The application proposed to use the retained historic building to house communal areas such as the hotel lobby, bar/restaurant and reception area. As the proposal sought minimal interventions to the existing historic fabric, it was therefore considered that the essential character of the original Assembly Rooms would be retained. The Members were advised that HED had acknowledged that minimal interventions were proposed to the existing historic fabric and that all services, fire escapes etc. would be accommodated in the new extension. The Planning officer advised that HED was largely content with the proposal except for an issue with balustrading at first floor level.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the Listed Building Consent, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, nine Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**LA04/2019/2049/LBC - Partial demolition of North Street Arcade to retain its facades and siting of proposed new arcade 1-34 North Street Arcade, 26-30 Donegall Street and 35-37 North Street**

The Senior Planning officer outlined the details of the proposal, which included the demolition of the former North Street Arcade, which had fallen into a state of chronic disrepair, but retention of its facades onto North Street and Donegall Street. The Members were advised that the restoration of the façades would significantly enhance the streetscapes.

The Committee was advised that previous permissions, under the extant scheme, had approved demolition of the internal portion of the arcade with retention of its facades

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and end blocks on North Street and Donegall Street and development of an anchor store in its place. The Senior Planning officer advised the Committee that officers felt that the proposal to reinstate an arcade was welcomed and was a significant improvement over the extant scheme.

The Committee was advised that HED wished to see the reconstruction of the North Street Arcade rather than its replacement in a modified form.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the Listed Building Consent, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

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

**LA04/2019/2052/LBC - Alterations to building including the removal of a small single storey rear extension, the provision of a new staircase, and a replacement roof to facilitate a change of use from retail to flexible retail/café/restaurant/cultural use at ground floor and to flexible retail/café/restaurant/cultural/office use on the upper floors of J Braddell and Sons, 11 North Street**

The Senior Planning officer provided the Committee with the details of a Listed Building Consent application for works to Braddells.

The Committee was advised that the proposal included including partial demolition of a small rear extension (part single storey and part two storey), internal alterations including the insertion of a lift to improve accessibility, removal of floor area to accommodate stairs to the third floor, removal of floor boards and joists to create a double height space, previously infilled openings to be reformed and a new attic window.

The Members were advised that Listed Building Consent was previously granted for Braddells as part of "Royal Exchange" (extant) scheme. As the permission had commenced, the Members were reminded that the extant scheme could be implemented and was a material consideration of significant importance.

The Committee was advised that the Listed Building Consent application proposed less intervention than the extant scheme which was an important material consideration. The Committee was advised that HED considered that the proposal satisfied policy, subject to conditions.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the Listed Building Consent, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, twelve Members voted for the proposal and one against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**Demolition in a Conservation Area Consents**

**LA04/2017/2342/DCA - Demolition of building  
at 32-40 Donegall Street**

The Senior Planning officer provided the Committee with the details of the application for the full demolition of Nos. 32-40 Donegall Street, a non-listed building which was located within the Cathedral Conservation Area.

The Committee was advised that planning permission had previously been granted for a wider redevelopment scheme (Z/2010/1532/F & LA04/2016/2327/F) which included demolition of the building. Conservation Area Consent was also granted for the demolition of this building.

The Senior Planning officer explained that the previous permissions had established the principle of demolition of the building.

She explained that no representations had been received regarding this application. However, objections had been received to the associated outline planning application LA04/2017/2341/O regarding the amount of demolition and loss of historic fabric across the scheme. The Conservation Officer had no objections.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, ten Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**LA04/2017/2343/DCA - Demolition of buildings  
at Temple Court, St Anne's Cathedral Precinct &  
St Anne's Court, 39-65 North Street**

The Senior Planning officer provided the Committee with the details of the application for the full demolition of the non-listed buildings which were located within the Cathedral Conservation Area.

The Committee was advised that planning permission had previously been granted for a wider redevelopment scheme (Z/2010/1532/F & LA04/2016/2327/F) which included demolition of the building. Conservation Area Consent was also granted for the demolition of this building.

The Senior Planning officer explained that the previous permissions had established the principle of demolition of the building.

The Members were advised that one representation had been received regarding the application which raised concerns regarding notification of the proposed development and notification to vacate the property. The Senior Planning officer outlined that objections had been received to the associated outline planning application LA04/2017/2341/O

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regarding the amount of demolition and loss of historic fabric across the scheme. The Conservation Officer had no objections.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, ten Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**LA04/2017/2344/DCA - Demolition of building  
at 5-9 North Street**

The Senior Planning officer provided the Committee with the details of the application for the full demolition of Nos. 5-9 North Street, a non-listed building which was located within the Cathedral Conservation Area.

The Committee was advised that planning permission had previously been granted for a wider redevelopment scheme (Z/2010/1532/F & LA04/2016/2327/F) which included demolition of the building. Conservation Area Consent was also granted for the demolition of this building.

The Senior Planning officer explained that the previous permissions had established the principle of demolition of the building.

She explained that no representations had been received regarding this application. However, objections had been received to the associated outline planning application LA04/2017/2341/O regarding the amount of demolition and loss of historic fabric across the scheme. The Conservation Officer had no objections.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, ten Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**LA04/2017/2345/DCA - Demolition of buildings  
3-5 and 9-13 Rosemary Street and  
2-22 and 30-34 North Street**

The Senior Planning officer provided the Committee with the details of the application for the full demolition of the following non-listed buildings, which were located within the Belfast City Centre Conservation Area:

- Nos. 3-5 Rosemary Street;
- Nos. 9-13 Rosemary Street;
- Nos. 2-22 North Street; and
- Nos 30-34 North Street.

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The Committee was advised that planning permission had previously been granted for a wider redevelopment scheme (Z/2010/1532/F & LA04/2016/2327/F) which included the demolition of the buildings. Conservation Area Consent was also granted for the demolition of the buildings.

The Senior Planning officer explained that the previous permissions had established the principle of demolition of the building.

She advised the Members that one representation had been received regarding the application, raising concerns regarding the impact on the character of the area on the demolition of No. 2 North Street. Objections had also been received to the associated outline planning application LA04/2017/2341/O regarding the amount of demolition and loss of historic fabric across the scheme. The Conservation Officer had no objection.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, seven Members voted for the proposal and five against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**LA04/2017/2350/DCA - Demolition of buildings  
at 20-22 Donegall Street and 29a-31 North Street.  
Partial demolition of buildings with frontages retained  
at 16-18 Donegall Street, 24 Donegall Street, 13-15 North Street,  
17-23 North Street and 25-29 North Street**

The Senior Planning officer provided the Committee with the details of the application for the full demolition of the following non-listed buildings, which were located within the Belfast City Centre Conservation Area:

- Nos. 20-22 Donegall Street; and
- Nos. 29a-31 North Street.

She also explained that permission for partial demolition was sought for the following non-listed buildings, which were located within the Cathedral City Centre Conservation Area:

- Nos. 16-18 Donegall Street;
- Nos. 24 Donegall Street;
- Nos. 13-15 North Street;
- Nos. 17-23 North Street; and
- Nos. 25-29 North Street.

The Committee was advised that planning permission had previously been granted for a wider redevelopment scheme (Z/2010/1532/F & LA04/2016/2327/F) which included the demolition of the buildings. Conservation Area Consent was also granted for the demolition of the buildings.

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The Senior Planning officer explained that the previous permissions had established the principle of demolition of the buildings.

She advised the Members that no representations had been received regarding the application. However, objections had been received to the associated outline planning application LA04/2017/2341/O regarding the amount of demolition and loss of historic fabric across the scheme. The Conservation Officer had no objection.

The Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions, and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, nine Members voted for the proposal and three against and it was accordingly declared carried.

Chairperson

# Planning Committee

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## PRE DETERMINATION HEARING

Members present: Councillor Brooks (Deputy Chairperson);  
Alderman Rodgers; and  
Councillors Collins, Garrett,  
Groogan, Hanvey, Hussey, Maskey,  
Murphy and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager  
(Development Management);  
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor Brooks in the Chair)

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Carson (Chairperson) and Councillors McKeown and Nicholl.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

**Pre Determination Hearing for application LA04/2018/2470/O, LA04/2018/2464/F and LA04/2018/2445/LBC - Mixed use regeneration and development of vacant surface level car park and refurbishment of existing listed Butchers building, including construction of new fixed use buildings (heights varying between 3-9 storeys comprising basement level car parking, ground floor retail/restaurant/coffee shop/workspace uses, with Grade A and SME offices above, provision of pedestrian accesses from Gresham and Winetavern Street; associated public realm, landscaping, associated plant, and all site and access works on vacant lands at existing level Carpark bounded by Winetavern Street Gresham Street and North Street, including 108 North Street and 1 Gresham Street**

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Pre-Determination Hearing for the application.

He reminded the Members that the objective of the meeting was to focus on the material planning considerations and to facilitate the Committee in making its determination of the application. The Committee was reminded that no decision may be reached at the Hearing, as Committee Members and planners might wish to consider the

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views made prior to making a determination at the scheduled Committee meeting later that evening.

The Principal Planning officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application.

He explained that the site lay within the northern part of the city centre, which was poorly defined in terms of land use and built form. He advised the Committee that it was zoned as an opportunity site in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) and that the proposal would renovate a listed three-storey building, develop an surface level carpark with a piece of high quality architecture which drew upon the industrial heritage of the area, creating a well-defined public space and providing a landmark building on one of the main arterial routes into the city centre.

He reminded the Committee that it had initially considered the application at its meeting of 11th June, 2019 where it had resolved to approve it with conditions. The Members were reminded that, under the Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017, it had been necessary to notify the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) because the resolution to approve the application had been contrary to the views of a statutory consultee, namely, the Historic Environment Division (HED).

The Principal Planning officer explained that the DfI had written to the Council in December confirming that it did not consider it necessary for the application to be referred to it for determination and that, in such circumstances, the Council was required to hold a Pre-Determination Hearing to give the applicant and interested parties the opportunity to appear before and be heard by a Committee of the Council.

He advised the Committee that the original Committee report and the accompanying Listed Building Consent and Full reports for works to the listed Butchers Building were included in Members' packs.

The Principal Planning officer advised that HED objected to the application as it believed that the setting of the Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the site would be affected adversely by the scale and massing of the new buildings.

He advised the Members that, since the June meeting of the Committee, the Council had received no representations in relation to the application.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Mr. T. Stokes, agent, Mr. S. Tyler, architect, and Mr. A. Stewart, applicant to the meeting. Together they advised the Committee that they had undertaken extensive consultation in relation to the scheme and highlighted that no objections had been received. They advised the Members that the application comprised a high quality scheme for a vacant brownfield site, the design of which reflected the historical mill buildings of Belfast.

The Deputy Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and, as there were no questions from the Committee, they retired from the meeting.



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The Committee noted the information which had been provided and noted that no decision would be taken on the application until later that evening, at the monthly meeting.

Chairperson

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# Planning Committee

Thursday, 23rd January, 2020

## MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Brooks (Deputy Chairperson)  
Alderman Rodgers; and  
Councillors Collins, Garrett, Groogan,  
Hanvey, Hussey, Maskey,  
Murphy, Nicholl and O'Hara.
- In attendance: Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager  
(Development Management);  
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor Brooks in the Chair)

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Chairperson, Councillor Carson, and from Councillor McKeown.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Brooks, Deputy Chairperson, and Alderman Rodgers declared an interest in item 6i, namely LA04/2019/2412/F – Renewal of approval LA04/2018/0593/F for a single storey timber structure at C. S. Lewis Square, in that they were Board members of the EastSide Partnership. They both left the room for the duration of the discussion on the item and did not take part in the vote.

Councillor Groogan declared in interest in item 6c, namely LA04/2017/2745/F and LA04/2017/2689/LBC - Conversion of building to create 63 No. bed hotel with ancillary function space, bars and restaurants, including all associated works, single storey rear extension Scottish Mutual Building 15-16 Donegall Square South and 2-14 Bedford Street, in that she wished to object to the proposals and she would speak against the item. She did not take part in the vote and left the room for the duration of the discussion.

Councillor Nicholl declared an interest in item 6g, namely LA04/2017/1439/F - construction of 13 dwellings comprising 3 detached dwellings 6 semi-detached dwellings along with 4 apartments on lands opposite Ruby Cottages and St Ellen's Terrace, Edenderry Road, Edenderry Village, in that she was a member of the Lagan Valley Regional Park. She left the room for the duration of the discussion on the item and did not take part in the vote.

**Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following 3 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.

**Revenue Estimates & District Rate 2020/2021**

(The Director of Finance and Resources attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Finance and Resources advised the Committee that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 17 December, had agreed the cash limit and capital financing budget for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, and the recommended cash limits for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, the People and Communities Committee and the Planning Committee for 2020/2021 which would require a district rate increase of 1.99%.

He outlined the budgetary pressures which the Council would face over the course of that period, together with the efficiency and growth proposals, and confirmed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had, on 17th December, agreed that the cash limit for the Planning Committee should be £1,289,467. He pointed out that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would, on 24th January, be required to agree the cash limits for the various Standing Committees, along with the District Rate, and that the process was required to be completed before the legislative deadline of 15th February.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee:

- i. approve a cash limit for the Planning Committee of £1,289,467 for 2020/21, together with the individual service limits set out within the report;
- ii. note the next steps in the rate-setting process; and
- iii. agree that the aforementioned decisions should not be subject to call-in, on the basis that it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the legislative deadline.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

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**Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council - Consultation on  
LDP Draft Plan Strategy**

(Mr. D. O’Kane, Principal Planning Officer, attended in connection with the following two items)

The Principal Planning Officer reminded the Committee that Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) had published its draft Plan Strategy (dPS) for public consultation in October 2019, with a closing date for submissions of 10th January, 2020. He advised the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had granted delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to make detailed representations in respect of the key issues arising from the consideration of the LCCC dPS.

The Committee was provided with the formal response which had been submitted to LCCC on 10th January. The Principal Planning officer provided the Members with four key issues which had been highlighted in the response.

The Committee noted the update and the formal response which had been sent.

**Belfast Local Development Plan – Update**

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an update on the progress of the draft Plan Strategy (dPS) of the Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP) and on the development of a suite of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to support the plan.

He reminded the Members that the Council had received approval from the department for Infrastructure (DfI) on 5th December, 2019 to progress the Plan to Independent Examination. He added that the dPS had been formally submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) on 2nd January, 2020, for its initial consideration.

The Committee was advised that workshops with Members, to help develop the guidance, would be held in March and April.

The Deputy Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Principal Planning officer and his team for their continued hard work on the Local Development Plan.

The Committee noted the update which had been provided on the draft Plan Strategy and the Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**Changes to Council Property Certificate (CPC) fees**

The Planning Manager (Development Management) reminded the Committee that a report had been presented to the Committee on 13th June, 2019, regarding an increase to the fees for the Regional Property certificates, which were administered within the Planning Service. He explained that the Committee had agreed to a review of the CPC

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taking place and that the eleven Councils had subsequently carried out a review and consulted with the Law Society.

He explained to the Members that the CPC service assisted in the conveyancing process, providing information from internal Council services in response to an application from a solicitor. He outlined that, in 2018/2019, it had generated £395,000 for Belfast City Council.

The Committee noted that the CPC fee was currently £60 and had not been increased since 2004. The Planning Manager explained that the increases included both a rise to reflect the lack of increase since 2004 and also to account for future inflationary costs. He added that the prices would be reviewed again in 4 years.

After discussion, the Committee noted the following changes to the fees, as agreed through SOLACE and with the Law Society, which would take effect from 1st April, 2020:

	<b>Current fee</b>	<b>Revised fee</b>
Standard 10 year search	£60	£70
Search back to 1973	£85	£95
Specified 10 year search	£60	£70
Follow-up 10 year search	£25	£30

**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 3rd December, 2019 and 7th January, 2020.

**Planning Applications**

**LA04/2018/2470/O, LA04/2018/2464/F and LA04/2018/2445/LBC  
- Mixed use regeneration and development of vacant surface  
level car park and refurbishment of existing listed Butchers  
building, including construction of new fixed use buildings  
(heights varying between 3-9 storeys comprising basement  
level car parking, ground floor retail/restaurant/coffee shop/  
workspace uses, with Grade A and SME offices above, provision  
of pedestrian accesses from Gresham and Winetavern Street;  
associated public realm, landscaping, associated plant, and  
all site and access works on vacant lands at existing level**

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**Carpark bounded by Winetavern Street Gresham Street and North Street, including 108 North Street and 1 Gresham Street**

The Deputy Chairperson reminded the Committee that it had undertaken a Pre-Determination Hearing for the application before the monthly meeting had commenced. The Committee had therefore been provided with the details of the application by the Principal Planning officer, and had also heard from the agent and applicant at that Hearing.

The Principal Planning officer advised the Members that HED believed that the setting of the Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the site would be affected adversely by the scale and massing of the new buildings. He reminded the Committee that DfI had advised that it had written to the Council in December confirming that it did not consider it necessary for the application to be referred to it for determination.

The Chairperson then put the officer's recommendation to approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, to the Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, seven Members voted for the proposal and three against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**LA04/2019/1636/F - hotel comprising 276 beds, conference facilities, restaurant /café/bar uses (including roof top bar), landscaped public realm, car parking and associated site and road works on ands directly south of Titanic Belfast and North-West of Hamilton Dock located off Queens Road**

The Principal Planning officer drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items pack. He explained that the Historic Environment Division (HED) had submitted its formal response to the application. The Committee was advised that HED (Historic Buildings) had confirmed that it was content subject to conditions. HED (Historic Monuments) had also requested a Vibration Monitoring Statement and a Scheduled Monument Consent. The Principal Planning officer explained that they would be secured via condition, as stated in the Case officer's report. The Committee was also advised that the DfI had since submitted its formal response whereby it had no objection, subject to the addition of four conditions.

He provided the Committee with the details of the application on a site which was located within an established industrial/commercial area within the wider Titanic Quarter.

He advised the Members that previous permissions on the site (Z/2010/2864/O) had established the principle of development and a hotel use at the location. The site benefited from being part of the wider Phase 2 Concept Masterplan, where the Design Principles had included a range of parameters for the particular site, including gross floor space, storeys and height. The Members were advised that the proposal was approximately 2.2metre higher than the 21.5metres set out in the masterplan.

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On balance, he explained that, given the quality of the proposal and design cues which had been taken from the nearby listed Harland and Wolff Drawing Offices, accompanied by the fact that the Historic Environment Division (HED) had no objections given recent changes to the roofscape, officers considered the scale and massing of the proposal acceptable.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Ms. S. Murphy, agent, Mr. S. Miskelly, Architect, and Mr. C. O'Hara, Transport Consultant. Ms. Murphy advised the Committee that:

- the JMK group had extensive experience in investing in hotels across the UK and Ireland;
- the Titanic Quarter was home to three of Northern Ireland's top visitor attractions;
- the proposed site for the hotel was opposite the number one attraction, "Titanic Belfast", which had attracted 840,000 visitors last year, and which was a 13% increase from the previous year;
- it would be a family friendly hotel;
- the final designs were a result of collaborative discussions with planners, HED, the Urban Design officer and Titanic Foundation Ltd; and
- the application would assist in providing the necessary infrastructure to support the growth in the tourism sector.

In response to a Member's question regarding the travel arrangements for the site, Mr. O'Hara stated that, based on the evidence available, they were still below the trigger level as per the original transport masterplan for the area which had been agreed with DFI Roads service at the time, in 2008. He advised the Committee that the masterplan contained a number of trips associated with each different land use, including agreed trip rates, modal split, car occupancy, and that they were carried through each application for the site.

In response to a further transport question, the Principal Planning officer clarified to the Committee that officers had to make determinations with the evidence which was provided to them from statutory agencies.

A Member stated that they would have liked to have seen the Computer Generated Images (CGI) from a wider range of angles, including one showing the building from Queen Street.

A further Member added that the Committee had undertaken a pre-emptive site visit to the area and that it had been useful in providing context for 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.



**LA04/2017/2745/F & LA04/2017/2689/LBC - Conversion of building to create 63 No. bed hotel with ancillary function space, bars and restaurants, including all associated works. Single storey rear extension Scottish Mutual Building 15-16 Donegall Square South and 2-14 Bedford Street**

(Councillor Groogan declared an interest and advised the Committee that she wished to leave the Committee table and address the Committee, in objection to the application. After addressing the Committee, she did not participate in the discussion or the vote and left the room for the duration of the remainder of the item.)

The Principal Planning officer clarified to the Members that there was an error in the report in that it was a local application, not a major, and so it would not attract a Developers Contribution in respect of Public Realm improvements.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items report. He advised the Committee that, since the report had been published, a letter of support for the proposals to refurbish the listed building had been received from the Belfast Civic Trust.

He also explained that a set of amended plans had been received from the agent, on 17th January, after a meeting had taken place between the applicant and an objector, the owners of the Warehouse building, immediately beside the site on James Street South. The Members were advised that both neighbours and HED had been re-consulted on the updated plans. He advised that further amended plans had then been submitted, on 22nd January, to remove the secondary access to the Lounge Bar on James Street South. The amended plans also proposed that the function suite would now be on the fifth floor instead of the first floor.

The Committee was further advised that, just before the Committee meeting had commenced, a letter had been received from the owners of the Warehouse Building, withdrawing their objection to both the Full and Listed Building Consent applications.

The Committee was advised that the consultation response from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) had also been received after the report had been published. The Principal Planning officer explained that their response stated that an Event Management Plan should be required for the application, as well as secure storage for bicycles. He advised the Committee that it was the officer's view that this was an unreasonable request, given that the site's location and that there was an extant permission for a hotel on the site which did not have a requirement for an EMP.

The Principal Planning officer provided the Committee with the key details of the application for the conversion to a 63 bed hotel with function space, bars and restaurants and a single storey rear extension. The Members were advised that the Scottish Mutual Building was a red sandstone, Grade B1 Listed Building in the Linen Conservation Area. He explained that it was located within the City Centre and within the Commercial District as defined in dBMAP. He advised the Members that the applicant wished to amend the previously approved permission under LA04/2016/0688/F.

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He explained that the key issues in the consideration of the application included the principle of the proposal at the location, the impact on transport and other infrastructure, the impact on amenity and character of the area, the impact on the historical and architectural qualities of the listed building and other environmental matters.

He explained that the application had been subject to an extensive assessment and a number of re-consultations with HED, in order to address a number of concerns which they had raised. He outlined to the Committee that officers felt that the latest drawings went some way to address those concerns. He advised that, on balance, officers considered the proposed alterations to be acceptable in that they would allow the conversion of the building to a hotel, thus securing the viable re-use of the vacant listed building, and securing its long term future. He added that, if the Committee agreed to grant approval to the application, a condition would be included to incorporate DfI's recommendation regarding secure cycle parking.

The Committee was advised that an objection remained from the Historic Environment Division (HED), largely regarding the proposed use of dry-lining within the property. HED had stated that the development was contrary to PPS6, and also objected to the proposed suspended ceiling on the ground floor.

The Principal Planning officer reminded the Committee that, given the objection from a statutory consultee, if the Committee was to grant approval to the Listed Building Consent (LBC) application, it would be referred to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). He advised the Members that the full application would be held until the DfI responded in relation to the LBC application.

The Committee was advised that DAERA, NI Water, Environmental Health and the Conservation Officer had no objection to the proposals.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Councillor Groogan to address the Committee. She advised the Committee that:

- she had concerns with the application as she did not believe the scheme to be heritage-led;
- the use of dry-lining was contrary to Policy BH8 of PPS6;
- dry-lining would put the building's structural and architectural integrity at serious risk;
- it was not an acceptable way to bring the building back into use;
- that the conservation experts, HED, were against the use of dry-lining due to concerns with adequate ventilation for the building; and
- attempts by the applicant/agent to emphasise the cost of removing the dry-lining which had already been installed were wrong given that the works were unauthorised.

(Councillor Groogan left the room at this point)

The Deputy Chairperson then welcomed Mr. D. Morse, applicant, and Mr. S. Nicholson, architect, to the meeting. Mr. Morse advised the Committee that:

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- they had made a number of changes in order to reflect the historic nature of the building, including that the function suite would be on the fifth floor;
- the building had been subject to varying levels of intervention, including significant alterations to the ground floor and poor quality remodelling, which had compromised its historic significance;
- they'd undertaken a Statement of Significance at the outset of the project, a document which set the baseline for how any proposals would be conceived, it took account of the historic context, historic and architectural interest, and the condition of the building, including the modern interventions;
- the primary architectural interest was invested in its principal elevations, while its interior was conventional with a muted and underwhelming decor;
- despite its poor condition, a number of significant interior features were identified for protection and led the design rationale for the remodelling, including the entrance lobby, terrazzo floors, fireplaces, cornicing and ceramic wall tiling;
- the design had been subject to extensive consultation; and
- they were confident that any outstanding issues could be discussed with HED.

In response to questions from Members regarding the use of dry-lining and a suspended ceiling, Mr. Nicholson explained that it was important for both acoustic and fire regulation reasons. He explained that no existing cornices or skirting would be removed, as they would be behind the dry-lining.

In respect of the Service Delivery Management Plan, Mr. Morse advised that a meeting had taken place with DFI Roads whereby the issues had been largely been resolved.

The Deputy Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. B. McKervey, Historic Environment Division (HED), was in attendance to answer any questions from the Committee in relation to the application.

In response to a Member's question as to HED's current objection, Mr McKervey explained that HED felt that there were lost opportunities in the redevelopment of the heritage building, particularly with regards to the dry-lining which would cover a lot of the detail. He advised the Committee that the applicant had, slowly, gotten closer to what HED believed to be a better scheme.

In response to a number of questions about the original internal doors, Mr. McKervey stated that the doors could be upgraded to meet modern day safety standards. The agent advised the Committee that all of the original doors were on site but that a significant number were beyond repair.

The Principal Planning officer then answered a number of further questions from Members.

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In response to a Member's question regarding Health and Safety, the Divisional Solicitor advised the Committee that the Building Control Service would look at most of those issues during the consideration of the Entertainments Licence for the premises, which would go before the Licensing Committee.

Moved by Alderman Rodgers,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussey

That the Committee agrees to the officer's recommendation, to approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions and to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions and to resolve any issues arising from the neighbour notification process in relation to the most recent amended plans and Revised Delivery and Service Management Plan.

On a vote by show of hands, eight Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was accordingly declared carried.

(Councillor Maskey left the meeting at this point)

**LA04/2019/2132/F - 17.5m telecommunications column, with  
6. antenna (3 enclosed within a shroud, 3 not enclosed),  
4 equipment cabinets and associated ground works on lands  
approximately 110m North West of 518 Lisburn Road**

(Councillor Groogan re-joined the meeting at this point)

(Councillors Collins, Garrett, Hussey and Murphy left the room at this point)

The Committee was advised that the following application had been referred to it by an Elected Member.

The Principal Planning officer provided the Members with the details of the application for a 17.5metre high telecommunications column, with associated antennae and equipment cabinets.

She advised the Committee that the key considerations in the assessment of the proposals included the impact on visual amenity and the local environment, the impact on residential amenity and government support for provision of full and up to date telecommunications coverage.

The Members were advised that 18 objections had been received in response to the application, including one from an elected Member on behalf of constituents. The Case officer explained that the issues raised included that the proposal would impact on the visual amenity and character of the area, impact on pedestrian safety, land ownership, health concerns, private views and property prices.

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She explained that the planning officers felt that, while it was important to continue to support investment in high quality communications infrastructure, it needed to be balanced against policy and must not be to the detriment of residential and visual amenity. She explained that she felt that the applicant should look at a more suitable site which was less visually obtrusive. She added that the development had not been sited in order to minimise environmental impact and it would provide a cluttered and unattractive pedestrian environment.

The Committee was advised that the developer had submitted supporting information advising that a new site was required for densification reasons in order to address 4G capacity and congestion due to higher traffic volumes in the immediate area. The Members were advised that, where possible, shared sites were used but that it was not possible in this case as the only nearby site was working to optimum level and was unable to provide a suitable degree of coverage for local users.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Mr. L. Ross agent, to the meeting. Mr. Ross explained that the mast was to provide coverage for O2 and Vodafone services. He explained that infrastructure was required in the proposed area as signal was dropping towards Finaghy. In discussing the other location sites which had been outlined by Planners, he outlined that the grounds of Musgrave Park Hospital were not considered as they did not install masts in hospitals and that the private landowner of Kings Hall development had advised that it was not possible during the course of the development of that site. He explained that the Balmoral Golf Club was unsuitable due to the Landscape Policy. He added that masts were regularly erected close to residential properties and that the infrastructure was essential in order to improve signal across the City.

(Councillors Collins, Garrett and Hussey re-joined the meeting at this point.)

The Committee agreed to refuse the application and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the refusal reasons.

**LA04/2018/0856/F - Demolition of dwelling and construction of 8 apartments within one block and 8 associated car parking spaces at 134 Finaghy Road South**

The Committee was advised that the following application had been referred to it by an Elected Member.

The Principal Planning officer outlined the principal aspects of the application to the Committee. She explained that the principle of an apartment development at the site had been established in 2009 under Z/2006/2536/F (11 Apartments), which expired in February 2014, and Z/2008/1264/F (12 Apartments) which expired in September 2014.

The Members were advised that all consultees had offered no objection to the proposal. The Case officer explained that 54 letters of objection had been received, including 48 objections to the previous design proposals and 6 objections relating to the current proposal. She advised the Committee that all objections received were from 17 neighbouring properties and included an objection from an elected Member and an MLA.

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She confirmed that the objections from the elected Members were in relation to the previous scheme comprising two apartment blocks.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the proposed design was considered acceptable and would have a positive impact on the character of the area. She added that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.

During discussion in relation to the parking provision in the area, it was agreed that a letter be sent, on behalf of the Committee, to:

1. the Department for Infrastructure, seeking confirmation of what policies it applies and how it identifies whether there is sufficient on-street parking in an area when it is asked to provide its opinion in relation to a planning application; and
2. the PSNI, asking it to confirm whether vehicles are permitted to park on pavements.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

**LA04/2019/1522/F - part two storey and single storey rear extensions at 29 Casaeldona Park**

The Committee was advised that the following application had been referred to it by an Elected Member.

It was agreed that the Case officer's report for any future applications which had been referred to the Committee by a Member would include the material planning reasons so as to provide it with a better understanding of the Member's concerns.

The Principal Planning officer explained that permission was sought for a part two storey and single storey extension to the rear of the dwelling.

The Committee was advised that five representations had been received in relation to the application, raising issues including over dominance, overshadowing/loss of light, scale and massing and boundary issues.

The Principal Planning officer outlined that the proposal had been amended and reduced during the processing of the application, the most recent amendment having been received on 6th January, 2020. She explained that neighbours had been re-notified with the most recent proposals.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, where five further objections had been received. The Principal Planning officer provided the case officer's response to the points raised and confirmed to the Members that it was considered that there would be no harmful overlooking, loss of privacy or loss of daylight to the properties, given the separation distances.

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The Principal Planning officer explained to the Committee that the proposed extension would not adversely impact the character and appearance of the surrounding area and that it was considered to be sympathetic in its built form, scale and massing. The Members were advised that the 45 degree angle test had shown that the proposal would not raise any issues in relation to overshadowing or loss of light to neighbouring dwellings.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. W. Crowe, a neighbour, to the meeting. He explained that he had concerns with the proposals as he felt that it would impact on the view from his kitchen window. He also advised the Committee that he felt that the measurement for the 45 degree angle test in the Case officer's report was incorrect, as he did not believe that they had been taken from the mid-point of his window.

In response to queries from Members, the Principal Planning officer explained that the 45 degree angle test was a guide for Planners and was not a policy test.

After discussion, the Planning Manager advised the Committee that it could agree to grant approval the application, subject to the officers verifying that the measurement in relation to the 45 degree angle test was correct. He explained that, in the event that the figure was incorrect upon re-measuring, the application would be submitted for the Committee's consideration the following month, as the Committee was required to have the correct information in order to make a decision.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to checking of the measurement of the 45 degree angle test, and 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.

**LA04/2017/1439/F - construction of 13 dwellings comprising 3 detached dwellings 6 semi-detached dwellings along with 4 apartments on lands opposite Ruby Cottages and St Ellen's Terrace, Edenderry Road, Edenderry Village**

(Councillor Nicholl declared an interest in the item, in that she was a Member of the Lagan Valley Regional Park, and she left the meeting at this point.)

The Principal Planning officer provided the Committee with the details of the application for 3 detached dwellings, 6 semi-detached dwellings and 4 apartments.

She outlined the key issues which had been considered in the assessment of the proposals, which included the impact on the character of the village and on Lagan Valley Regional Park, the impact on flooding and on traffic, as well as trees and the natural environment.

The Committee was advised that the site was located outside the settlement limit according to the Lisburn Area Plan 2001 and 2004 version of dBMAP. She explained that, at the BMAP inquiry, the PAC had recommended that the site be included within the development limit due to the planning history of the site. The Members noted that the site was subsequently located within the settlement limit of Edenderry in the 2015 version

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of draft BMAP, which, as Members were aware, had subsequently been declared unlawful.

The Principal Planning officer advised the Committee that an outline application for a mixed use development had been approved in 2006, with the reserved matters application subsequently having been approved in 2015, for a “mixed use development in five blocks, including offices/craft workshops, restaurant ancillary works and retaining walls”. She highlighted to the Members that the scheme was significant taller and bulkier than the current proposal but appeared to represent a potential fall-back position for the developer as the development had commenced at the site.

The Members were advised that 36 neighbours had been notified of the proposals and that 13 objections had been received in addition to one letter of support and 1 non-committal representation.

The Principal Planning officer explained that two consultees, namely Rivers Agency and Lagan Valley Regional Park, had also objected to the development.

The Committee was advised that significant supporting information had been submitted with regards to the proposal, covering issues such as contaminated land, waste water, odour, noise, landscaping and the natural environment.

She explained that the proposed felling of one TPO protected tree was considered acceptable by the Tree Officer as a number of the trees on the site were not in good condition, and that 27 additional trees would be planted within the site.

She outlined that it was considered that the elevational design and appearance of the dwellings was respectful of the adjacent Ruby Cottages and, on balance, officers felt that the current proposal respected the surrounding context and was appropriate to the character and topography of the site in terms of its layout, scale, proportions, massing and appearance.

On balance, she therefore advised the Committee that the proposals were acceptable, given the planning history on the site, and that it was considered a significant improvement to the extant proposal.

The Principal Planning officer provided clarity to a Member on the issue of overlooking and explained that no habitable rooms would be impacted within the development.

The Deputy Chairperson advised the Committee that the agent, Mr. G. Smyth, was in attendance to answer any questions from Members.

A number of Members requested clarity from the agent regarding the risk of flooding at the site, given the objection from the Rivers Agency. Mr. Smyth drew the Committee’s attention to the Case officer’s report which indicated that the Rivers Agency had stated that the proposed development was outside the 1% AEP floodplain and that there was also an existing 600mm freeboard as a result of infill levels which formed part of a previous approval. He added that the report also advised that the Rivers Agency had



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recently contacted the Planning department to clarify that the proposed development would not exacerbate potential flood impact on the adjacent lands.

The Principal Planning officer provided the Committee with additional clarity in relation to the fact that the Rivers Agency still technically considered the site to be within the floodplain despite infill development which had taken place to raise the site up out of it. She explained that Rivers Agency would only remove a site from the floodplain once it had gathered evidence over a very long period of time.

In response to a further Member's question regarding the pumping station, the agent explained that it was necessary in order to pump effluent up and out of the site in order to reach the main water treatment works, and that it was not because of the density of the site. The Principal Planning officer advised that it was hoped that the pumping station would be temporary until a longer term improvement to the infrastructure could be made. She explained that a condition would be included stating that the pumping station was to be adopted by NI Water after construction, and that, if any issue arose with it, it would be dealt with in the usual manner for a breach of 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.

**LA04/2019/2157/F - floodlights and ancillary equipment at Paisley Park, West Circular Road**

The Committee was apprised of the key aspects of the application which had been lodged by Belfast City Council.

The Case officer explained that it was considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.

She explained that Environmental Health had requested further information including a light spill assessment and proposed hours of operation. The information had subsequently been submitted and Environmental Health had since advised that it was satisfied that the predicted level of light would not be obtrusive.

The Members were advised that, in principle, there was no objection to the erection of floodlights. The Case officer pointed out that it would provide greater visibility or the local community using the park allowing for a safe and secure site.

The Committee was advised that no representations 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 and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

**Planning Committee,  
Thursday, 23rd January, 2020**

**LA04/2019/2412/F - Renewal of planning approval  
LA04/2018/0593/F for single storey timber structure  
at C.S. Lewis Square, Newtownards Road**

(Councillor Brooks and Alderman Rodgers declared an interest in the item and left the meeting at this point)

(Councillor Garrett in the Chair)

The Case officer explained that the following application was in front of the Committee as the landowner was Belfast City Council.

She explained that it sought permission for the renewal of a previous approval, LA04/2019/0593/F, for a single storey timber structure at C. S. Lewis Square for a temporary period of 18 months.

She provided the Committee with the main issues which had been considered, including the principle of development, the impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, access and flooding. She advised the Members that the proposal would continue to provide an addition to the visitor attraction area at the Hub and offered shelter to users of C. S. Lewis Square.

The Committee was advised that Environmental Health and Rivers Agency had been consulted in relation to the proposal and had no objections. The members were advised that the application had also been neighbour notified and advertised in the press and that no representations 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 and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

Chairperson

## **Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee**

Monday, 20th January, 2020

### **MEETING OF BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE**

Members present: Councillor Mulholland (Chairperson); and  
Alderman Haire; and  
Councillors Collins, Flynn, Groves,  
Kelly, Magee and McAteer.

In attendance: Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;  
Ms. C. Toolan, Chief Executive, Belfast Waterfront  
and Ulster Hall Ltd.;  
Mr. I. Bell, Business Support Director, Belfast Waterfront  
and Ulster Hall Ltd.;  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were received from Alderman Copeland and Sandford and from Councillors Canavan and Cobain.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 18th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2nd December.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

#### **Welcome**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Patrick McClughan, Board Member of BWUH Ltd, who was attending his first meeting of the Shareholders' Committee.

#### **RESTRICTED ITEM**

**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.**

**Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders Committee**  
**Monday, 20th January, 2020**

**BWUH Ltd. Annual Business Plan, 2020/2021**

The Chief Executive of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. (BWUH Ltd.) presented the 2020/2021 Business Plan to the Shareholders' Committee.

She provided the Committee with an update of the strategic goals for the company, which included:

- attracting 50,000 annual conference delegate days (per annum) to the City;
- attracting 35,000 (of the 50,000) out-of-state conference delegate days;
- contributing £100million of economic return to the City by 2020; and
- meeting the requirements of the MOU Table and Letter of Offer.

She highlighted to the Members that the business had already exceeded its economic impact target, of £100million, one year earlier than planned.

She explained the importance of Business Tourism to the venue, in both the national and international markets, and reminded the Members of the two C&IT Awards which the company had recently won. In addition, she advised the Members that Marie Claire Caldwell, Head of Sales and Marketing, had been named as one of the "20 in their twenties" to watch at the Professional Convention Management Association in November 2019.

The Committee was advised of the importance to the Company of the new catering contract which had been agreed.

The Business Support Director then provided the Committee with a detailed overview of the Financial Plan for 2020/2021. He also updated the Members on the sales pipeline and the five year revenue and management fee.

The Committee noted a number of challenges which 2020/2021 would bring, including the continued uncertainty around Brexit and increased competition with other new conference venues across the UK and Ireland.

The Chief Executive stated that she was keen to see Belfast join the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDSI), which had been created specifically to help destinations, event planners and suppliers to evaluate the sustainability strategies of destinations and their events industry.

The Members were advised that the recent Conditions Survey had been completed and that the Council and BWUH Ltd were working on identifying a costed priority list.

**Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders Committee**  
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The Committee was provided with a PESTEL impact map, which outlined the key Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal factors which the company should be conscious of.

The Members were also given an overview of the work which the company was undertaking as part of its health and wellness, corporate social responsibility and community outreach plans.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Economic Development advised the Committee that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on the future work of the International Relations Unit in light of Brexit.

After a number of further questions from Members, the Chief Executive reminded the Members that all Members of the BWUH Board had been invited to attend the February meeting of the Shareholders' Committee, and that it would take place in the ICC Belfast.

The Committee noted the update which had been provided and agreed the 2020/2021 Business Plan.

Chairperson

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## Brexit Committee

Thursday, 9th January, 2020

### MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor de Faoite (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Rodgers and Haire; and  
Councillors Brooks, Canavan, Flynn, Hutchinson,  
Long, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McKeown,  
McLaughlin, McMullan and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mr. D. Connolly, City Protection Manager;  
Mrs. C. Sullivan, Policy and Business Development  
Officer; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Newton.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 6th January.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Deputation

#### Utility Regulator – Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive of the Utility Regulator.

Mrs Pyper provided an overview of the work of the Utility Regulator as the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries. She advised that the Utility Regulator promoted the short and long-term interests of consumers. She explained the all-island Single Electricity Market and its benefits for consumers and the importance of the development of efficient renewable sources such as wind and solar.

She highlighted that the Utility Regulator was also preparing for Brexit and emergency situations had been planned for. She informed the Committee that they

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continued to engage with key stakeholders to ensure that prices and supply were regulated, together with protecting the most vulnerable.

Mrs. Pyper stated that, in relation to the energy transition, Northern Ireland should take advantage of the changes and progress new policies, to ensure that consumers were not left behind. She praised the work of the Belfast Commissioner for Resilience and highlighted that data was key in the advancement of consumers using utilities in a smarter way.

She stated that issues for concern in the future included sustainability, the clean energy package, the risk of policy divergence and inefficiency, together with the necessity for investment and advised that smarter networks were required and the development of a new energy strategy.

During discussion, Mrs. Pyper answered a range of questions in relation to the transformation of the electricity network, government energy targets, solar energy, electric vehicles, self-generation of energy models, the 'buy back' of supply, technology and investment and the energy strategy.

She highlighted the importance of renewable energy and the potential to expand and increase capacity of other types of energy such as geo-thermal, off-shore wind farms and tidal energy.

The Chairperson thanked Mrs. Pyper for attending and she retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Day 1 Preparedness**

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised that planning for a 'no deal' Brexit had been formally halted and the focus was now on preparing within the context of the Withdrawal Agreement. He confirmed that officers continued to engage with central government departments, including the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs and the Department for Communities. He advised that the Council would shortly commence a review of the Business Continuity Management templates for the Council's critical services and these would be updated in the context of the Withdrawal Agreement. He stated that Members would be kept updated on the process.

The City Protection Manager provided an update in relation to the implications of the NI Protocol on Food Safety and Port Health. He reminded the Committee of the Council's regulatory function responsibility of canned, chilled and non-prepacked and Fish and highlighted that DAERA was responsible for the following produce:

- Canned, chilled and non-prepacked products of animal origin (excluding fish);
- Equines;
- Pets;



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- Commercial pets;
- Germplasm;
- Animal By Products;
- Live fish; and
- Plant health e.g. timber

He advised that the following assumptions were being made in relation to further checks at the Port, post Brexit:

- Foods from Great Britain to be subject to EU checks on entry to Belfast;
- A vast increase in the volume of foods subject to import controls;
- A wider range of product types than the Belfast Council Port was currently approved to handle;
- 'Roll on Roll off' freight would be subject to checks for the first time;
- The need to provide service on disembarkation with minimum delays;
- New facilities required and improved technology and processes; and
- More staff resources and shift working.

The City Protection Manager presented an overview of the new Brexit infrastructure that had been built in Dublin for the 'Roll on Roll Off' checks and inspection facilities.

He concluded that data collection and verification was needed to establish volumetrics and inform infrastructure requirements, together with analysis and the redesign of processes to remove delays. He also highlighted the need to support trader readiness to avoid any disruption.

During discussion, the City Protection Manager answered a range of questions in relation to the impact on the Belfast Port and confirmed that it was a matter for DAERA to decide if further infrastructure was required in Belfast, however, it might be put in place to futureproof the risk of divergence of products over time. He reiterated that there would be a transition period until the end of December to implement new processes.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,  
Seconded by Councillor McAteer and

Resolved – The Committee agrees to undertake a study visit to the Port Health Unit Facilities in Belfast and Dublin.

The Committee noted that, if possible, both visits should be undertaken on the same day, subject to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee budget approval.

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After discussion, the Committee also agreed that information in relation to goods, products and services being exported from Northern Ireland would be reported at a future meeting.

**Brexit Committee Workplan**

The Committee was provided with an overview of its activities which had taken place since August, 2018 to date, including the presentations it had received, workshops and visits which had taken place, together with emergency planning exercises.

The Policy and Business Development Officer highlighted the range of topics and reports which had been considered by the Committee:

- Potential impact of increased controls on the Port Health Unit (a site visit was undertaken to the Port);
- Technical notices issued by the UK government;
- Updates on the EU Settlement Scheme;
- Possible scenarios for the Belfast services industry ;
- North South Collaboration Mapping Exercise;
- Shared Prosperity Fund;
- Status of EU retained law; and
- Belfast Dublin Corridor.

She advised that Mr. A. Connolly, Director of Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, would present to the Committee in February.

She confirmed that Democratic Services were awaiting date confirmation from various organisations to present to Committee and the following approved organisations would also be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee to discuss the impact of the Withdrawal Agreement on their services:

- NI Water;
- DfI Roads;
- PSNI;
- Invest NI; and
- Belfast Chamber.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and the future Workplan and agreed that David Phinnemore from Queen's University Belfast be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the current Withdrawal Agreement.

**Update on the EU Settlement Scheme - Advice session for applicants**

The Policy and Business Development Officer provided an update on the EU Settlement Scheme and a request for a future information session for potentially affected residents to learn more about the scheme.

She advised that, following on from the two Home Office information sessions, held in the City Hall on 3rd October, 2019, Advice NI had now approached the Council to

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request the facilitation of a further session for applicants in the City Hall. The purpose of this event would be to provide specific information and advice to those potentially affected and there would also be the option to apply online for the Scheme with the assistance of advisors. Council officers had approached STEP and they had also agreed to participate in the session.

It was suggested that the session would take place on Wednesday, 12th February in City Hall from 6-9pm. Advice NI and STEP would disseminate information on the session through their networks and information would also be disseminated through the Migrant Forum and the Council's usual communications channels. If attendance at the session was high, the Council planned to work with both organisations to facilitate further sessions across the City.

The Policy and Business Development Officer also advised that, in relation to Government updates on the scheme, the next Home Office teleconference for local authorities across the UK had been organised for mid-January and officers would provide an update in due course.

The Committee agreed to the information and advice session scheduled for Wednesday, 12th February, City Hall, and noted that an update on the next Home Office Teleconference in relation to the EU Settlement Scheme would be provided at the next meeting.

Chairperson

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