

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 remotely via Teams on Tuesday, 1st September, 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 to receive a deputation in relation to the motion on Alleygating

7. Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies
8. Minutes
 - a) Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 7 - 30)
 - b) People and Communities Committee (Pages 31 - 52)
 - c) City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 53 - 78)
 - d) Licensing Committee (Pages 79 - 92)
 - e) Planning Committee (Pages 93 - 116)
 - f) Brexit Committee (Pages 117 - 124)
9. Motions
 - a) Universal Basic Income for Northern Ireland (Pages 125 - 126)
 - b) Review of Housing Fitness Standard (Pages 127 - 128)

- c) Free Car Parking for Health Workers, Patients and Visitors (Pages 129 - 130)
- d) Climate Change Act (Pages 131 - 132)
- e) Residents' Parking Schemes (Pages 133 - 134)
- f) National Armed Forces Day 2022 (Pages 135 - 136)
- g) Procurement Policy - Living Wage (Pages 137 - 138)
- h) Summer Youth Employment Programme (Pages 139 - 140)
- i) Alleygating Programme (Pages 141 - 142)
- j) Needle Exchange Facilities (Pages 143 - 144)
- k) Addressing Hate and Intolerance across all our Communities (Pages 145 - 146)

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne Wylie', with a small dot at the end.

Chief Executive

Council

SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held Remotely via Microsoft Teams on Monday, 10th August, 2020
at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

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

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McCusker) and Councillors Michael Collins, Ferguson, McDonough-Brown, Nicholl and Whyte.

Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared an interest in relation to the item contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 31st July, under the heading "Micro Grants", in so far as they either worked for or were associated with Groups which had applied for funding, as follows:

- The High Sheriff (Councillor Verner) as a staff member of the Great Shankill Partnership;
- Alderman Kingston as a staff member of the Forward South Partnership;
- Alderman Sandford as he was associated with the Cregagh Wanderers Football;
- Councillor Black as a staff member of the Roden Street Development Group (Grosvenor Community Centre);
- Councillor Bunting as secretary of the Belvoir Area Residents Group;
- Councillor Gormley as a Board Member of the Lower Ormeau Resident's Action Group (LORAG);
- Councillor Maskey as a staff member of Intercomm;
- Councillor McKeown as a Board member of the Forward South Partnership; and

**Special Meeting of Council
Monday, 10th August, 2020**

- Councillor Murphy as Board member of the Ligoneil Improvement Association.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Alderman McCoubrey),
Seconded by Councillor Beattie and,

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly Council meeting of 1st July and special meetings of 1st and 10th July, 2020 be approved and adopted.

Official Announcements

At the request of Councillor Mulholland, the Lord Mayor agreed to invite Glentoran Football Club, in recognition for winning the Irish Cup, to the Mayor's Parlour in line with Covid restrictions.

Councillor McMullan expressed sympathy and condolences with the people of Beirut in light of the recent explosion in the City.

Councillor Flynn thanked the people who had supported Pride in the city and who had contributed to its success despite the current Covid restrictions.

Councillor Lyons extended condolences to the family of the late John Hume on his recent passing and praised his commitment to Peace. He thanked the representatives from the other Political Parties for their kind words and tributes.

Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Democratic Unionist Party of the following changes:

- The High Sheriff, Councillor Verner to replace the Lord Mayor, Alderman McCoubrey with on the West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership;
- Councillor Spratt to replace Councillor Bunting on the Lagan Valley Regional Park; and
- Councillor McCullough to replace Alderman Dorrian on Groundwork NI.

The Council approved the changes.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Omission of Declarations of Interest – 31st July, 2020

The Council was advised that the following declarations had been made at the meeting on 31st July but omitted from the minutes:

**Special Meeting of Council
Monday, 10th August, 2020**

- Alderman Sandford had declared an interest in agenda item 3b – Micro Grant Funding, in that he was associated with the Cregagh Wanderers Football Club who had applied for funding,
- Alderman Kingston had declared an interest in the same agenda item, in that he worked part-time for the Forward South Partnership, who had applied for funding and noted that he had left the meeting whilst this item was under consideration.

Moved by Councillor Black,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the special meetings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 9th July, 31st July and 5th August, subject to the forgoing additions in relation to Declaration of Interest at the meeting of 31st July, were approved and adopted.

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Hussey,
Seconded by Councillor Carson and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Planning Committee of 21st July and the minutes of the proceedings of the Pre-Determination Hearing and special meeting of the Planning Committee of 28th July, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Lord Mayor

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Council

SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held Remotely via Microsoft Teams on Monday, 10th August, 2020
immediately following the special meeting which commenced at 6.00p.m.,
pursuant to notice.

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

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McCusker) and Councillors Michael Collins, Ferguson, McDonough-Brown, Nicholl and Whyte.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Motion

Establishment of an Independent Commission

In accordance with notice on the agenda, it was

Moved by Councillor Beattie.

Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

"In recent months our Party have received complaints from staff relating to harassment and bullying from Councillors and Political Parties. We recognise that all staff are owed a duty of care and that operating in a

**Special Meeting of Council,
Monday, 10th August, 2020**

political environment does not change that fundamental legal requirement. We recognise that staff may be more fearful raising concerns because of the environment in which they work. There is no place for this behaviour in democratic society in which people's dignity and human rights should be protected. With this in mind, we call upon the Council to establish an independent commission to examine this issue and report the findings and make recommendations to ensure the protection of our staff."

Amendment

Moved by Alderman Kingston,
Seconded by Alderman Dorrian,

"This Council agrees that any incident of harassment, bullying or intimidation of staff by any member of Council, or a party group on the Council, is a serious matter and is unacceptable conduct; agrees to remind staff of the procedures which exist for the reporting of any such incident; and agrees to remind Councillors of their responsibility to ensure that they behave appropriately towards staff at all times and act within The Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors."

The Council voted on the amendment, when 31 Members voted for and 18 against, with 4 no votes and it was declared carried.

The amendment was put as the substantive motion and agreed.

Chairperson

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 21st August, 2020

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Black (Chairperson);
Aldermen Dorrian, Haire, Kingston and Sandford;
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Carson, Garrett,
Heading, Long, Lyons, McAllister,
McDonough-Brown, McLaughlin, Murphy,
Nicholl, Spratt and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillors M. Kelly, McReynolds and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director Place and Economy;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational
Strategy;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology was reported from Councillor Groogan.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 6 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 (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

Finance Update

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 31st July, an update was provided on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council's financial position and a strategy to address the forecast deficit and the mitigation measures which had and would be taken as the situation evolved. It was agreed to continue to provide Members with a monthly update on the financial position and specifically for the August Committee to provide further information on ongoing work in the following areas:

1. Updated forecasts
2. The financial impact of recovery plans
3. The financial impact of the member agreed decision to invoice rents for all tenants from Quarter 2
4. Employee savings arising from the review of vacant posts

The Committee agreed at the July Committee meeting to receive the Quarter 1 financial report in August. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the quarterly finance reports to Committee incorporated both the quarterly financial performance and the year end forecasts. With the requirement for monthly forecast updates as part of the financial strategy agreed with Members in June, the Quarter 1 finance report has been included as an appendix to this report rather than a separate report, providing a comprehensive overview of the overall financial position in one report.

The Committee:

1. noted the contents of the report, including the August forecast update and the attached Quarter 1 finance report at Appendix 1; and
2. agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of Finance seeking a meeting in relation to the Council's rates income for the next 2 years.

Operational Recovery of Council Services

The Committee considered a report in relation to the operational recovery of Council Services. The Chief Executive reported that, while many key services such as Waste Collection and Bereavement Services had maintained a service throughout the Covid 19 Pandemic, the restoration of services, which had been suspended due to lockdown restrictions, are being phased back in despite significant challenges and the requirement for significant modifications. She informed the Committee that 97/120 services were now operational, albeit with some restrictions and that in many cases the operating model had changed given the need to protect staff and maintain social distancing.

She indicated that these controls were likely to be with us for a considerable time and therefore were operating in a new normal way. The changed operating environment was also impacting on our revenue budgets and contributing to the budget deficit we are operating in.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

There were also challenging resource management issues behind the new operating models that had impacts on other services.

The report outlined the guiding principles for recovery and the readiness assessments to restore services in a managed and phased way, as quickly yet safely as possible. The Chief Executive then provided an update on those services which would next re-open, including more public toilets and community centres over the next number of weeks.

The Chief Executive conclude by reviewing the proposals for a phased return of the Council's Working Groups.

The Committee:

- noted the current position, the challenges of recovery of services and the indicative dates for the recovery, albeit in a new norm, of the remaining Council services; and
- approved the phased return over the next number of months of the holding of remote meetings of the Working Groups where decisions were critical as outlined by the Chief Executive.

Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission
Thinkpiece on Economic Stimulus

The Committee considered a report which provided a briefing for Members on a 'thinkpiece' from the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission, aimed at making the case for investment in several jobs-led programmes, to drive an inclusive economic recovery.

The Committee noted:

- the report and the intention for the Commission to engage in further discussion at ministerial level; and
- that ongoing discussion between the Commission and elected members would continue on broader areas of an inclusive economic strategy.

Bryson Recycling - Kerbside Recycling Contract

The Committee was reminded that the Council had a contractual arrangement with Bryson Recycling for the provision of a kerbside collection service to approximately 58,000 households in primarily the inner city areas. This service was a weekly collection of segregated, dry recyclables and food waste.

The contract commenced in August 2013, with the initial contract period and subsequent extensions ending in July 2020.

At the Committee meeting on 19th June 2020, officers had requested that a Single Tender Action (STA) be awarded for fifteen months to ensure service continuity until strategic decisions were taken regarding the waste collection and procurement arrangements for this service. The Committee agreed to an STA for six months, with a further report to be brought back to the Committee explaining the implications of this decision and also any changes to

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

the service after such a short timeframe. Accordingly, the Committee considered a report in this regard.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. to rescind its decision of 19th June to award a Single Tender Action (STA) for six months to Bryson Recycling for the Kerbside Recycling Contract and agreed, instead, to award the STA for a period of 12 months; (with the possibility of extension)
2. to the commissioning of an options appraisal on the arrangements for future waste collections as soon as possible, to be completed and submitted to the Committee for consideration within 2 months;
3. that a monthly update be submitted to the Committee on progress; and
4. that Bryson Recycling be asked to attend a future meeting of the Committee with a view to improving performance.

The Committee also noted that a workshop on waste management would be arranged to help inform this piece of work.

Minutes of Meeting of Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 14th August, 2020.

Department for Communities COVID-19 Recovery: Revitalisation Fund update

The Committee considered report which provided an update for Members on the status of the Department for Communities (DfC) COVID 19 Recovery: Revitalisation funding; additional detail on the proposed business grants scheme and seeking approval to open the scheme and proposals for an Autumn and Christmas animation programmes and campaign and seeking approval also to proceed with the plans as outlined.

The Committee:

- noted the update on the DfC COVID 19 Recovery: Revitalisation funding;
- approved the process and approach for the business grants strand of the funding; and
- noted the proposals for an Autumn and Christmas animation campaign to run alongside safety enhancements and granted approval to ring fence a proportion of the second tranche of the DfC Revitalisation Fund for this purpose.

Matters referred back from Council/Motions

Motion - Suicide Awareness Training

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st July, had referred, in accordance with Standing Order 13 (f), the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor M. Kelly and seconded by Councillor Long, to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council recognises the Covid-19 pandemic will exacerbate the current mental health crisis in our City.

The Council previously agreed to work with others to make Belfast a Zero Suicide City to include challenging the taboos of mental health and suicide and ensuring that there is adequate training and resources for all the citizens so that Belfast can react positively to assist those in need.

All of us need to be aware of the signs and understand the questions to ask someone we are worried about and what help they can get. Therefore, Council agrees:

- 1. That Training in mental health and suicide intervention is crucial; therefore Council will investigate resourcing further SafeTALK and Mental Health First Aid training programmes for staff.**
- 2. To appoint mental health champions in each Council Department in to act as a point of contact for an employee who is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress, helping the person get appropriate help, and also provide early intervention for someone who may be developing a mental health issue.**
- 3. As a practical first step, to encourage Councillors and staff to undertake a short, free online course in Suicide Awareness training (developed by Mersey Care Foundation Trust and widely used across the NI Health and Social Care Trusts) – this teaches people how to recognise the warning signs and safeguard someone who could be contemplating suicide, talking openly to them and then directing them to appropriate services.”**

The Committee agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be brought back to a future meeting.

Motion - Opening our Streets for Everyone

The Committee was advised that the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McKeown and seconded by Councillor Whyte, had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), been referred to the Committee for consideration.

“The coronavirus pandemic has shown that there is a real appetite among the people of Belfast to walk and cycle more, which is

benefitting their physical and mental wellbeing. This energy and enthusiasm needs to be supported so it can be sustained.

While potentially transformative work is being undertaken by the Department for Infrastructure to install pop-up cycle lanes, pedestrianise streets and widen footpaths, there is a significant opportunity for Belfast City Council also to play its role in the recovery and the enhancement of our city by taking the car out of many of our streets.

The Council therefore agrees that a programme of temporary road closures be rolled out across the city on specific days, such as at weekends, in consultation with local communities, disability organisations and businesses. This will help in the recovery – socially, economically and environmentally – by making room for people to get around in a socially-distanced way, affording local businesses extra space to operate more safely, and supporting the move towards reduced car use and a cleaner, greener, healthier city for all.

To facilitate this in a managed way, the Area Working Groups will be reconvened remotely at the earliest opportunity to help identify potential sites in each part of the city. Any closures must not adversely impact residents, businesses, or people with a disability or accessibility issues. Closures must also take account of public and road safety.”

The Committee agreed that a report on the contents of the motion be brought to the Committee, highlighting how some the work outlined was being undertaken as part of the city recovery programme.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

Inclusive Growth - Update on the Development of the City Charter and Inclusive Growth Network Launch Event

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 In March 2020 the council’s commitments to Inclusive Growth document was published. One key commitment was the development and implementation of an Inclusive Growth City Charter for Belfast. Since then a cross council team led by Strategy, Policy and Partnerships has been progressing the development of this charter. The purpose of this paper is to provide a short update on progress to date and proposed key activities going forward.
- 1.2 In addition we would like to inform Elected Members that the Chair of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,

Councillor Christina Black and the Deputy Chair, Councillor Sarah Bunting, have been extended an invitation to attend the virtual launch event of the Inclusive Growth Network (IGN), of which Belfast City Council is a member, on Thursday 17 September from 3-4pm.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the progress to date in relation to the development of the charter and agree to an elected members workshop / engagement following the initial developmental stages.
- b) Note the proposed key stages of work going forward to shape the council's future ambitions with regard to the development and implementation of a city charter for Belfast.
- c) Note the proposed attendance of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at the IGN virtual launch event.

3.0 Main report

Inclusive Growth City Charter

3.1 Members will be aware that in 2019 they tasked officers with the production of a cross council 'strategy' to reflect their growing ambitions in relation to inclusive growth. The result of this process was the production of the councils 'Commitment to Inclusive Growth'. This document sets out a clearly defined list of ambitions and linked actions as to how the council, in its capacity as a corporate body and as a city leader, will deliver against its commitment in the next two years.

3.2 The document contained commitments that Belfast City Council would progress over the next two years, including the development of an Inclusive Growth City Charter for employers across the city – setting a city wide standard in relation to procurement, employment and civic / neighbourhood engagement.

Inclusive Growth City Charter Working Group

3.3 An initial employer workshop was held in partnership with Allstate NI in Jan 2020, with over 70 employers from a wide range of sectors represented. It was agreed that a small working group would be convened with broad representation from this group, to help council shape and co-design the charter (nominees were received but the work was paused until May 2020 due to COVID).

- 3.4 The first working group virtual meeting was held on 21 July 2020 with almost all members in attendance. The meeting aims and outcomes were to:
- Bring working group members together to co-design the charter
 - Discuss and test emerging ideas, building on the January workshop, to scope the charter
 - Agree the purpose and role of the working group
 - Agree high level actions and responsibilities for the next 3 months
- 3.5 Initial feedback from the working group was very positive in terms of support for the charter. They felt that that given the unfolding COVID-19 crisis and the significant impact on the economy, the charter could be an opportunity to demonstrate a collective commitment to an inclusive recovery, creating a stronger, more resilient, and fairer city economy and society. The need to be ambitious in our thinking and to work in collaboration were highlighted as key design principles going forward.
- 3.6 This work is being completed in partnership with officers from Place and Economy and Finance and Resources to ensure the charter, when developed, fully reflects corporate priorities and ambition associated with, amongst other things, employment, procurement, young people and skills progression.

Proposed Next Steps

- 3.7 Over the coming months the cross council team will complete the following steps:
- Draft scoping note – draw up an initial scoping document (reflecting members ambitions and best practice from elsewhere) of a what a charter for Belfast could potentially look like by end August 2020.

This scoping document will set out in draft form options of, what the charter could be, who it's for, it's principles, focus, and suggestions as to how it could be developed and implemented for Belfast. This document will be used to guide the discussions as part of our further engagement with stakeholders.

- Extensive engagement – engage with wide range of stakeholders to co-design the charter and seek their views on its design, during September to November 2020.

We recognise that for us to achieve our aim of a fit for purpose charter that is for all of Belfast and not just a council initiative,

we must ensure our engagement is broad and has appropriate representation from key sectors. This stage is vital if we are to design a charter that that will meet the collective aspirations of the working group of being ambitious and making a tangible difference to the lives of citizens.

We will carry out meaningful engagement with a range of stakeholders including anchor institutions and other employers; community and voluntary sector; other public sector partners; communities; trade unions; those individuals that the strategy would focus on supporting (i.e. our four target groups) and representative bodies.

We have identified the purpose of the engagement as:

- Helping businesses and organisations understand what inclusive growth and a charter are;**
- Testing the emerging ideas in the scoping note to co-develop and refine the Inclusive Growth City Charter;**
- Achieving buy-in and ownership of the Inclusive Growth City Charter;**
- Encouraging early adopters of the Inclusive Growth City Charter.**

We will use the feedback already gathered from the consultation on the Inclusive Growth Commitments to inform our discussions and we will ensure we engage with those hard to reach groups who often face additional barriers to economic growth eg. those with a disability, those with dependants, those from a migrant community.

We will also carry out engagement through the strong sectoral partnership relationships in Place & Economy and will drive development of the structure through the Community Planning Partnership.

- Members Workshop – following the above we will host a development workshop with elected members. (December 2020)**

Following our engagement we will summarise key findings and refine key principles and areas of focus to arrive at a final draft charter, including how it should be implemented and monitored.

- Public consultation - Hold a focused public consultation on the draft charter.**

We will carry out a focused public consultation on the draft charter using our on-line platform and some further focused sessions and make any final changes/amendments

- Charter launch - Plan pilot and launch of the charter.

We will design a delivery plan and materials and agree a communications strategy and identify partners to launch the charter and carry out a pilot.

Inclusive Growth Network

- 3.8 The purpose of the IGN is to support areas at the forefront of the inclusive growth agenda with the practical evidence, knowledge and expertise to advance local ambitions for more inclusive, green and sustainable economies. The IGN is hosted by the Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP) and funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF).

As an IGN member Belfast has access to a facilitated peer network and a package of support designed to inform and advance our local activity. Other IGN member organisations include Barking and Dagenham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Greater Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool City Region, North Ayrshire, North of Tyne, Sheffield City Region and West Midlands.

IGN Launch Event – Thursday 17 September, 3pm- 4pm

- 3.9 The Chair of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, Councillor Christina Black and the Deputy Chair, Councillor Sarah Bunting, have been invited to attend a closed online roundtable discussion on Thursday 17 September from 3-4pm. Confirmed speakers include Lord Jim O'Neill and Meghan Harte, Director of LISC in Chicago and former Deputy Chief of Staff to Mayor Rahm Emmanuel.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 There are no additional financial or resource implications.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.11 As agreed within the initial Inclusive Growth Commitments equality screening, a separate screening will be undertaken as part of the draft charter design process. The findings from the initial screening are already being utilised to inform the engagement design and content.”

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Partnership Panel

The Committee was advised that The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 provided for the establishment of the Partnership Panel for NI. The Act provided also for all Executive Ministers (including Junior Ministers) to be members of the Partnership Panel. Local government representation on the Panel comprises one nominated elected Member from each of the 11 councils (designated as a position of responsibility), with Belfast City council being represented by Councillor McAteer, and cross-party representation from NILGA.

The Partnership Panel provided a structured, political relationship between central and local government, creating opportunities for innovative working between Ministers and Councillors, and the formation of joint policies which will ultimately improve co-ordination and help deliver better outcomes for local people. It had not met since 2016.

Minister Ní Chuilín has indicated that reconvening the Partnership Panel would provide an opportunity to discuss how we could continue to work together for the benefit of everyone, particularly in the social and economic recovery from Covid-19. It would provide an opportunity to consider joint policy design on key issues of public concern and improve coordination between departments and councils.

It was therefore anticipated that the next meeting of the Panel would explore how both tiers of government could continue to work together in leading recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. Recognising the importance of the financial and organisational sustainability of local government for progressing this recovery within their local areas and communities. The meeting would also be asked to agree Standing Orders and Terms of Reference for the Partnership Panel.

As a position of responsibility, Councillor McAteer's role would be to provide a corporate voice for the Council, alongside working with other local government representatives to promote wider local government sector positions, on key areas which require closer engagement and action from relevant Executive Ministers and their departments.

Councillor McAteer would be supported in this role by officers in the Strategic Hub. Briefings would be provided reflecting the current priorities of the Council and the wider local government sector through continued involvement and engagement with local government bodies such as SOLACE NI and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA). It was understood that agenda items for the September Meeting of the Panel would include Finance, Recovery Plan and City Deals.

The Committee agreed:

- a) that proposed agenda items for Partnership Panel meetings be reported through the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, or to the Party Group Leaders Forum when committee timings were not viable to ensure political oversight; and
- b) that, in future, the minutes and outcomes of the Partnership Panel be reported back to the Committee for information and consideration.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

Invitation to join COP26 UK Mayors Advisory Council

The Committee was informed that Glasgow would be hosting the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) at the Scottish Event Campus (SEC) on 1st till 12th November, 2021. The climate talks would be the biggest international summit the UK had ever hosted, bringing together over 30,000 delegates, including heads of state, climate experts and campaigners to agree coordinated action to tackle climate change.

The COP26 President Designate and UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Alok Sharma, had written to invite the Lord Mayor, or appropriate nominee, to join the COP26 UK Mayors Advisory Council. The group would meet quarterly and would be focused on the COP campaigns, communications and events in the lead-up to, and at, COP26; including engagement with all communities and sectors across the UK as part of the goal to make this an 'All of Society' COP.

Fully committed to the principles of the UN, the COP26 would focus on promoting tangible action that brings to life the transformational change required to unleash the full potential of the Paris Agreement with key ambitions including: phase out coal power by 2025; pledge to net zero emissions by 2050; and speed up the transition to low emission vehicles.

The Secretary of State Alok Sharma had held meetings in Belfast during the week commencing 10th August and, during meetings with Belfast City Council and city partners (the Belfast Climate Commission), had stressed the importance of city involvement in preparation for COP. He restated his encouragement that Belfast would play an active role in a UK Mayors Advisory Council.

The Committee approved Belfast City Council's membership of the Mayors Advisory Council, and agreed that the Lord Mayor represents the Council, with the Chairperson of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to deputise if required.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Assets Management

The Committee approved:

I. Brooke Drive NIE Substation – Lease

the disposal of c. 0.007 acres of land. along with a cable easement and right of way, at Brooke Drive to Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) Networks Ltd for the purposes of an electricity substation. Disposal to be by way of a 950 year lease from 1 January 2020, subject to a premium of £2,350.

II. Cromac Street, Station Street and Kent Street Car Parks – Licence Agreements

a new one year licence for Cromac Street Car Park from Northern Ireland Housing Executive from 1 April 2020 and a new fee structure for payment of licence fees due under a current licence at Kent Street car park and the terms

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

already agreed for a new licence at Station Street Car Park, both of which are held from the Department for Communities.

III. Blanchflower Playing Fields - Lease of land for an NIE Networks sub-station

the lease to NIE Networks Ltd of c.29.45 square metres of land at Blanchflower Playing Fields for a term of 99 years from the date of the agreement at a peppercorn rent of £1 per annum. The Lease would also grant NIE Networks a right of way to carry out installation, repairs and maintenance works at the sub-station.

**Provision of temporary office accommodation –
Community Rescue Service**

The Committee was advised that the Community Rescue Service was a charitable search and rescue organisation operated by volunteers from communities across Northern Ireland. They operated from an office in Apollo Road but had been notified by their landlord that their premises had to be vacated as it was earmarked for new development by a commercial partner.

The Council had been able to identify suitable premises which the Community Rescue Service could use on a temporary basis. This would be under a license arrangement for up to 3 months initially but with discretion on the part of the Council to extend on a month to month basis.

Officers from the Estates Unit, Facilities Management and Legal Services had been working on the identification of premises in Dunbar Link, which was currently the Council's Disaster Recovery Suite. The Emergency Planning Team would obviously take priority if that suite was required by the Council. The suite is located on the second floor and offers two large offices, kitchen and toilet facilities. In addition, the Cleansing dinette on the 1st floor would be used one night per week as a training facility for the 54 volunteers. A closed garage had been identified at the Charlotte Street Cleansing depot for secure parking, plus a small office would be available for the community rescue team within the depot. Their three additional vehicles would use three spaces in the neighbouring Belfast City Council car park on Ormeau Avenue (on Apsley Street) on a temporary basis, however, priority would be given to Council staff if they were required in the future.

Legal Services would draw up a licence which would need consent from the Department for Communities as it represented a technical disposal at a nil rent if the Council was minded to approve this arrangement.

This would allow the Community Rescue Service to continue to provide a service while they sourced permanent office accommodation.

The Committee agreed that temporary accommodation be provided to the Community Rescue Service as set out.

Finance, Resources and Procurement

**Audit and Risk Panel Annual Report to Strategic
Policy and Resources Committee, including draft
Annual Governance Statement**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The Audit and Risk Panel is constituted as a working group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. The purpose of the Panel is to provide an independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council’s risk management framework and associated control environment. The Panel also oversees the Council’s financial reporting process.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary to Committee of the key issues that have been considered and discussed by the Panel during the 2019/20 financial year, the assurances received and the areas requiring attention. This report also summarises the process by which the year-end reports are to be considered by the members of the Audit and Risk Panel.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the summary of the work of the Audit and Risk Panel during 2019/20 as set out at Section 3 below.
- Note the process by which the year-end reports are to be considered by members of the Audit and Risk Panel.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Summary of the work of the Audit and Risk Panel in 2019/20

3.1 During 2019/20, the Panel met four times (including a training session at Belfast Castle). The Audit and Risk Panel did not meet in June 2019, following the elections in May, as the composition of the Panel had to be agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee on 21st June and ratified by Council on 1st July, with nominations to the Panel sought from each of the eight parties thereafter.

3.2 In the absence of an Audit and Risk Panel and in order to ensure that there was proper consideration of the year-end papers, the

Audit Assurance Board met on 3rd June 2019 to review these reports. In addition, an annual report was submitted to SP&R committee in June 2019 providing a summary of the key issues that had been considered and discussed by the Panel during the 2018/19 financial year, the assurances received and the areas requiring attention.

3.3 During 2019/20, the Panel has considered audit plans and issues arising from audit activity, such as the findings, assurance levels and recommendations arising from audit work and the progress being made to implement audit recommendations. It also received regular updates on:

- the Council's financial position, as set out in its financial statements
- reports from the Council's external auditors
- risk management
- business continuity
- fraud, financial irregularity and whistleblowing investigations
- governance related matters
- financial control
- health and safety
- performance management
- staff attendance.

3.4 The key assurances that the Panel has received on are as follows:

- the Council's financial statements and annual governance statement 2018/19, as prepared by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources and his team; this provided a management assurance on the Council's financial position
- the audited accounts and the associated external audit annual letters for 2018/19 (providing an opinion on the accounts) and report to those charged with governance (setting out control issues arising from the annual external audit), as prepared and presented by the Northern Ireland Audit Office. This provided an external assurance on the Council's financial position for 2018/19. (The accounts for 2019/20 are in the process of being prepared for the new deadline of 31 August 2020)
- NIAO assurance on the Council's performance management arrangements, specifically in reference to the Improvement Duty placed upon the Council by relevant legislation. The NIAO's audit of this area provided an unqualified opinion

- the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Service's annual assurance statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's risk management, control and governance arrangements, based on the findings of audit work completed throughout the year.
- 3.5 Where areas for improvement have been identified, these have been reported and implementation of agreed recommendations is actively monitored and reported back to the Panel. The Panel has, on occasions, raised issues where either audit reports have identified significant issues or progress against recommendations has not been satisfactory, with Directors asked, where necessary, to attend the Panel and provide further explanation. The key areas considered during 2019/20 have included waste collection, safeguarding, IT asset management, IT project management, budgetary control and financial reporting, organisational culture and the implementation of the new HR / payroll system.
- 3.6 The Audit and Risk Panel have also received updates during the year on the Council's risk management arrangements, including reports on the management of the Council's key corporate risks.

June 2020 meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel / year-end reports

- 3.7 In line with the changes to the Councils decision making processes in response to the impact of Covid-19 and related to this, the extension of the deadline for preparation of the financial accounts to 31st August 2020, the usual meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel in June 2020 did not take place. However the usual reports, including the draft Annual Governance Statement and other important year-end papers, were considered by the Audit Assurance Board on 28th July 2020 and circulated to Audit and Risk Panel members for review, comment and agreement during August 2020. Subsequently a request was received to convene a meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel to discuss these year-end papers. This will be going ahead with a virtual meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel that was originally scheduled for 8th September. In line with usual protocol, the minutes of the Audit and Risk Panel meeting would be presented to the following Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.8 None.

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

- 3.9 None."

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Contracts Update

The Committee:

- Approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a as detailed in Table 1
- Approved the award of STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Table 2

Table 1 – Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	Senior Responsible Officer	Short description of goods/ services
Tender for the procurement of laptops and docking stations	Up to 8 months	£200,000	R Cregan	Laptops and docking stations to facilitate homeworking
Replacement Financial System (T2051)	Up to 10 years	£3.5m - £800K upfront Capital; £300K per annum	R Cregan	Procurement of a new corporate financial system
Provision of a Roma Support Project PEACE IV Programme Services (T2111)	Up to 20 months	£169,676	N Grimshaw	Delivery of a project to support the Roma and settled community as part of the Peace IV programme of work
Tender for the provision of delivery of events as part of Wider Work plan Peace IV Programme Services(T2018)	Up to 2 years	£80,000	N Grimshaw	Delivery of events as part of the Peace IV programme of work Seeking re approved as value has increased
Provision of a Shared Spaces and Services Volunteer Training PEACE IV Programme Services (T2085)	Up to 18 months	£124,000	N Grimshaw	Delivery of volunteer training as part of the Peace IV programme of work Seeking re approved as duration has increased

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

Provision of 'Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Interpretative Panels on Shared Space Greenway' PEACE IV Programme Services (T2084)	Up to 19 months	£80,000	N Grimshaw	Delivery of interpretative panels on Shared Space Greenway as part of the Peace IV programme of work Seeking re approved as duration has increased
Music Strategy	Up to 10 months	£60,000	A Reid	Music strategy and implementation plan to feed in to Council's application for UNESCO City of Music 2021
Virtual server licensing	Up to 3 years	£47,877	R Cregan	Licensing and support for the council's virtual server infrastructure
Uninterruptible power supply (UPS) equipment	Up to 1 year	£134,354	R Cregan	Uninterruptible power supply (UPS) equipment across the BCC IT estate
Corporate digital backup environment	Up to 1 year	£88,838	R Cregan	Implementation of a new corporate backup environment

Table 2- Direct Award Contracts (Single Tender Action)

Title of Tender	Supplier	Total Value
Supply and Delivery of Fruit and Vegetables to Belfast Zoo (T1498)	Arnott's Fruit Limited and First4fruit	£35,000
Supply of Alcohol based sanitiser	Antrim Supplier trading as Workwear	£47,850

Equality and Good Relations

Equality and Rural Needs Screening Outcome Q1

The Committee noted the contents of the Equality and Rural Needs Screening Outcome Quarter 1 report.

Dual Language Street Signs Policy

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to consider the Notice of Motion in relation to the Dual Language Street Signs Policy.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the Notice of Motion in relation to the Dual Language Street Signs Policy.
- If Members are minded to adopt the policy position as set out in the notice of motion, you are asked to consider a minimum response threshold in respect of the survey requirement.
- Following discussions at Party Group Leader’s Consultative Forum a protocol for managing engagement with consultees will be developed for consideration by members at a subsequent meeting.
- In the event that Members wish to adopt an alternative threshold to the current policy position of 2/3 supporting as being the trigger for erecting a second name plate, it is open to Members to do this.
- If Members are minded to change the policy, a revised policy will be drafted in accordance with your decision and presented for adoption with an equality screening carried out. Committee to note that other revisions could be made to the current policy to address issues which have arisen since it was first adopted, for example new streets or streets which have no occupiers, and accordingly these revisions could be incorporated within any new policy should you choose to adopt one.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

The Council adopted a Street Naming and Buildings Numbering Policy in February 2009 which incorporates a Dual Language Street Signs Policy. At Council on 3 February 2020, Councillor Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“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."*

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

Key Issues

- 3.2 The motion sets out a proposal to move from the current arrangements ($\frac{1}{3}$ expressing an interest by petition and $\frac{2}{3}$ indicating a preference in a subsequent survey to erect a dual language street sign) to a simple majority of respondents. The

proposal would mean that non-respondents are not considered in the context of any final decision on dual street naming. The proposal retains the current trigger through a petition to initiate the process. Given that no minimum response threshold is established Members may wish to consider that if you support the motion to change the current policy, whether a minimum threshold of those on the electoral register responding should be met through the survey before the matter is referred to committees for consideration. For example that the respondents to the survey would equate to a minimum of $\frac{1}{3}$ (or such other figure as you may agree) to those on the electoral register in that street.

- 3.3 Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995 requires the Council to take into account the views of the occupiers in a street.
- 3.4 The current Council policy was subject to a legal challenge which was successfully defended. A copy of the judgement is attached for information. This does not affect the ability of the Council to adopt a different policy should it choose to do so.
- 3.5 Some political concern has been expressed as to how the process is undertaken in terms of engagement relating to the consultation required to inform the decision. A protocol to sit alongside the policy could establish principles underpinning that process. The rationale for this approach, in terms of the political view expressed, is to ensure the integrity of the process.
- 3.6 Conradh na Gaeilge obtained and provided the briefing attached at Appendix 2. This suggests that in the context of treaty obligations, specifically the European Charter for Minority Languages, that the suggested minimum response threshold could be construed as unreasonable in that it operates as a barrier to the erection of a name plate in another language. It suggests that this could be unlawful as being contrary to treaty obligations.
- 3.7 Counsel's opinion has been obtained and is attached at Appendix 3. The opinion confirms that a 50+1 rule for responses, ignoring non-responses is likely to be susceptible to legal challenge, particularly in cases where there is a very low response to the consultation. It further confirms that the adoption of a minimum response threshold for the consultation, mirroring the trigger required through the petition ($\frac{1}{3}$ of residents) addresses any potential legal frailty in the context of the formal requirements of the 1995 Order. Counsel is also of the opinion that establishing such a threshold is not contrary to treaty obligations. The opinion recommends all decisions in

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

which the response threshold is not met are referred to Committee for consideration to address any special or particular circumstances that might arise.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.8 Any change to the policy to the extent suggested is likely to result in a greater number of applications and a greater number of signs to be erected.**

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

- 3.9 This change of policy will need to be equality screened.”**

Moved by Councillor Beattie,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the Committee agrees that Belfast City Council will install bilingual signage in all of its streets, subject to the occupants in each street (who are on the electoral register) being contacted by the means of a letter survey and if the threshold of 33% is returned and 50% plus 1 are in opposition to the plans then the signage will not be installed.

Amendment

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

That the Committee agrees that the policy be amended to provide that 10% of residents in any given street would initiate the process, with at least 50% plus one of the people in the street being in favour to erect a second street sign.

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

The original proposal sanding in the name of Councillor Beattie was put to the meeting, when nine Members voted for and ten against and it was declared lost.

The Committee agreed that a further report on the Dual Language Street Signs Policy be submitted to the Party Group Leaders Forum.

Operational Issues

Use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality

The Committee approved the recommendations made in respect of applications received up to 7th August, 2020 as set out below:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st August, 2020**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2021 EVENTS						
Malaysia Students Society of Northern Ireland	6 March 2021	Malaysian Night 2020 – Annual cultural celebration and dinner for the Malaysian community in Belfast. Numbers attending – 300 <i>Numbers and room layout will be reviewed and revised in line with COVID19 social distancing guidelines at the time of this event.</i>	C&D	No (Charity)	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Video and web streaming of Council Committee meetings - Councillor McReynolds

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor McReynolds addressed the Committee in relation to the video recording and web streaming of Council Committee meetings.

The Committee agreed, in principle, to keep in place the current procedure (or a similar alternative) of the live web streaming of Council Committee meetings after the city emerges from the coronavirus pandemic, with a report on how this could be undertaken and associated costs being submitted to a future meeting.

Lighting up City Hall for World Suicide Awareness Day on 10th September - Councillor Long

At the request of Councillor Long, the Committee agreed to the lighting up of the City Hall on 10th September to mark World Suicide Awareness Day.

Chairperson

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor D. Baker (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff, Councillor Verner;
Alderman Rodgers;
Councillors Black, Bunting, Cobain, de Faoite, Flynn,
Garrett, M. Kelly, Magee, McAteer, McReynolds, Mulholland,
Newton, Pankhurst and Smyth.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McCusker and Councillors Michael Collins and Corr.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Restricted

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.

Installation of Panoramic Wheel in Botanic Gardens

The Committee considered a report which considered a request from G Force Amusements Ltd seeking to amend the date of its plans to install, promote and operate a 33 metre Panoramic Wheel in the lawn area adjacent to the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens to a four week period from 2nd September 2020.

The Committee:

- agreed to the change of date for the previously agreed request from G Force Amusements Ltd to install, promote and operate a 33 metre

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

Panoramic Wheel in the lawn area adjacent to the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens during the period 2nd - 29th September 2020;

- noted that the promoters would continue to be bound by all the original conditions attached to the previous committee decision; and
- agreed that any future requests to change the planned dates of events, which had previously been agreed by the committee, would be approved under the delegated authority of the Director of Neighbourhood Services providing the re-scheduled event remained largely the same as the agreed event other than the proposed change of date.

Micro Grant Funding and Reopening of Community Centres

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report, which provided an update for Members in respect of the current position concerning the £150,000 micro funding programme that had opened on 6th July.

The Committee was advised that, at its meeting on 31st July, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, had agreed to approve the current applications and to extend the programme until the end of October. The Committee had further agreed to delegate authority, under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, to the Director (Operational) of City and Neighbourhood Services for future authorisation of funding allocations and extensions to the proposed October deadline under this scheme, and that any future DfC funding through the Community Support Programme, in support of COVID recovery, could be allocated to this programme.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services also provided an update for the Members in respect of the planned phased reopening of BCC Community Centres that was anticipated would commence from 1st September 2020.

He outlined that the approach taken would be subject to the following key guiding principles:

- progress on re-opening would be dependent on controlling the rate of transmission;
- social distancing measures must be strictly adhered to;
- employers would have a duty to assess and manage risks in respect of safety in the workplace; and
- to be aware of the concerns of staff returning to work.

He advised that to ensure the protection of both staff and customers, each venue would have significant Covid-19 Health and Safety measures in place.

It was anticipated that centre staff would start to return to site from 10th August 2020 in a phased way to thoroughly prepare each venue, staff would assess and determine if and when centres could reopen their doors as part of the phased plan based on safety and health of the building for the users and the staff. Health and safety measures would be implemented which would include essential signage being assembled, one way systems identified and put in place where necessary, hand sanitizing stations installed, deep

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

cleaning being carried out and all other arrangements as identified to ensure a suitable and safe reopening.

The Committee:

- noted the update provided in respect of the Micro Grant Funding; and
- noted that a further report on organisational recovery would be being submitted to the August meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, where more detail would be provided in respect of the phased approach and timelines for the reopening of the Community Centres.

Request for the hire of Boucher Road Playing Fields

The Committee considered a report which detailed a request from UP Productions who were seeking approval to hire the Boucher Playing Fields for the AVA Music Festival. The AVA Musical Festival was an Audio Visual Arts 2-day event with multi-stage electronic music, visual art installations which also included an outdoor art exhibition.

The Committee approved the request for the hire of Boucher Road Playing Fields from 22nd May – 2nd June 2021, subject to the following:

- the appropriate legal agreements including bond arrangements being prepared to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;
- the Director (Operational) of City and Neighbourhood Services to negotiate an appropriate fee for use of the facility taking into account costs to the Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the city economy;
- the event organisers to meet all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, Food Safety and entertainment licensing responsibilities;
- the timely payment of the bond as required in the legal agreements;
- the event organisers to liaise with Council officers and meet all statutory, legal and Health and safety requirements;
- the event organisers to reinstate all Council property to its original condition after use. The organisers are to be reminded that the current ground conditions and location of the event might have to change due to adverse weather conditions which shall cover all aspects of management including health and safety, access and to ensure compliance with the current events policy.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Motion – Littering

The Committee was reminded that at the Council meeting on 1st July, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor Smyth, had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f) been referred to the Committee for consideration:

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

“This Council recognises the blight that littering across our city presents and the significant cost to the Council in dealing with it.

We commit to doing all in our power to reduce the instances of littering, to ensure adequate resourcing is put into enforcement and to enhance opportunities for people to properly dispose of waste whether on street, in our parks or public spaces. This council will commit to providing recycling bins in parks and public spaces and where appropriate, provide additional general waste bins in communities.”

The seconder of the motion Councillor Smyth addressed the Committee and outlined the context of the motion and he made a number of suggestions and requests with a view to progressing the motion:

Following consideration, it was agreed that:

- a report would be submitted to the January 2020 committee which would detail how much the Council currently spends each year on cleansing, enforcement, marketing and landfill tax and include options for improved recycling bins on streets and in parks. It should also investigate the effectiveness of current enforcement procedures and staffing tactics and look at this within the context of international models of best practice;
- the Council proceed to investigate ways in which it could help facilitate the reduction of littering throughout the city; and
- that the Council write to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) seeking it to establish a Litter Strategy for Northern Ireland which would look at how it would work with communities and businesses in order to reduce litter.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Belfast Youth Forum Update

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:

- **Provide an update on the ongoing work of Belfast City Council’s Youth Forum (BYF) and the success of the campaigns;**
- **Seek agreement on the next date for the joint Committee and Youth Forum meeting;**
- **Seek permission to extend the term of the current Youth Forum membership for 1 year due to the impact of Covid-19 on the recruitment process.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the content of the report relating to the ongoing work and development of the Youth Forum;
- agree the date of the next joint Committee and Youth Forum meeting;
- agree to extend the current term of the 2018-20 cohort membership for 1 year.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Belfast Youth Forum

BYF is the main youth participation structure of BCC and acts as the voice of young people within local government in Belfast. BYF is made up of 40 young people aged 13-18 recruited from each of the DEA's across Belfast; members serve a two year term with the current cohort serving from September 2018-September 2020. Our BYF model is rights based and youth led, and every two years young people select campaign areas to work on and bring forward to decision makers within local and regional government.

3.2 Youth Forum Campaigns

- BYF members are currently working on the following campaigns:
- Mental Health (Elephant in the Room campaign);
- Relationship and sexual health education (Any Use campaign);
- Racism and diversity (HOME campaign).

Updates on each of the campaigns will follow in this paper.

3.3 Elephant in the Room (EITR)

The BYF continue to work on the two main strands of their EITR campaign:

3.4 Engaging and lobbying decision makers

In October 2018 young people from BYF and NI Youth Forum presented their report, its findings and its recommendations in Stormont. A number of senior officials from the departments, the Public Health Agency, the Health Trust and the Education

Authority were also in attendance. At the meeting, young people led a discussion with officials on how they could work together to progress the recommendations. The report and work of our young people was well received and highly praised.

This research and subsequent lobbying by the Youth Forum has had significant impact on Government Departments. Chris Lyttle MLA, chair of the All Party Group on Children & Young People has asked the NI Executive to adopt the recommendations contained in the Youth Forum's research report. The young people involved in this research have been invited to present the findings to the full Assembly in late July 2020.

3.5 Mental Health Advocacy - Awareness raising campaign with young people:

Building on this work the BYF, NI Youth Forum and the Children's Commissioners Youth have been working together to create a mental health advocacy toolkit for young people titled 'Heads Up'. Work in this area has been ongoing and the toolkit was due to launch in March 2020, however due to COVID19 has been delayed slightly. It is hoped the toolkit will be published and launched in the very near future.

3.6 Relationship and sexual health education (RSE) – Any Use? Campaign

This campaign is a joint partnership between Belfast Youth Forum, Queens University Centre for Children's Rights and Common Youth to create a youth-led research project exploring young people's views on the standard of their current RSE in school which resulted in a report titled

'Any Use? Young people's opinions on relationship and sexuality education in Belfast 2019.'

The report launched in City Hall in November 2019.

A total of 771 young people from Belfast completed the survey and a number of recommendations were made as set out below:

i. Young people's recommendations

BYF members have analysed the findings and created the following RSE recommendations for Government:

- a) Adopt a right-based proactive approach to relationship and sexuality education.

- b) Work with young people to co-produce an RSE curriculum programme for schools.
- c) A curriculum programme should be taught by specialised, qualified and trained staff.

ii. Next Steps

Now that the report has launched, work will begin in three areas:

1. Awareness raising with young people: The BYF had planned to hold a number of young people's RSE vents throughout 2020 with the first expected to take place in City Hall in Spring 2020, however due to COVID19, these have had to be postponed. It is hoped that these can begin to take place in the latter part of 2020.
2. The BYF hope to present the findings of this report to the Education Committee in Stormont and present their recommendations to Ministers.
3. The South Eastern HSCT have expressed interest in replicating this research in the other parts on NI. This would include an identical questionnaire for young people in these other Council areas so that the results can be compared to establish how RSE differs in different parts of NI. Work with the Health Development Specialist – Sexual Health & Disability from the SE Trust and the Project Coordinator from CCEA has begun to establish the best way to engage young people in these areas.

3.7 Racism and diversity

BYF members have been working with Dr Jonny Byrne from Ulster University on a piece of research titled HOME which explores BAME young people's experiences of living in Belfast. Young people from the BYF will be conducting focus groups with 6 different ethnic youth groups across Belfast. These will take place in September 2020 either socially distanced (preferred option) or via Zoom.

Findings from these focus groups will then be analysed, a report presented and recommendations made on how Belfast can be a more culturally diverse city.

A short film will also be produced focusing more in-depth on some of the BAME young people's experiences.

3.8 COVID19 Youth Press Conference

NI Executive have invited BYF to be represented at a youth press conference focusing on COVID19. At this press conference, young people from a variety of youth organisations will have an opportunity to pose questions to the Ministers on a variety of issues which have affected young people during this time. This press conference is scheduled to take place in July/August 2020.

3.9 Formalising our youth participation structures

At committee in June 2019, Members agreed to establish a joint engagement between the BYF and P&C Committee by holding formalised meetings three times per annum. These meetings are to be recorded and ratified at Full Council. This is part of Councils work to build on and strengthen our current youth participation offer.

Permission is sought to approve the next meeting date of Tuesday 20th October 2020 at 5pm.

3.10 NI Youth Assembly

BYF received correspondence from the Speaker of the NI Assembly, Alex Maskey MLA, thanking the young people as stakeholders for their involvement in helping to shape the proposal for the NI Youth Assembly. The letter notes that the Youth Assembly will be forming shortly and will mirror the structure of the NI Assembly. This will be a great opportunity for our Youth Forum members to put themselves forward with our support to become members of the Youth Assembly. A further report will be brought to Committee when we know detail of the nomination and selection process.

3.11 Extending current Youth Forum membership

Recruitment and selection to our Youth Forum takes place every two years with members serving the full term. The process is robust involving the following elements and timeline:

- Engagement with young people, youth workers and community workers from February-March;
- Applications open via an 'expression of interest' form in April;
- April time online social media campaign to encourage applications;
- Letters are also be sent to all Belfast schools;

- Applications close in May and young people are invited to BYF taster sessions in City Hall;
- Interviews take place in June and 40 young people will be awarded places.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 we were not in a position to actively engage with young people, schools, and service providers during this time. As we move in to the recovery phase and more opportunities for engagement are developing, it is essential that we continue the valuable work being conducted by the Youth Forum members and the existing partnerships.

We are seeking approval to extend the current cohort of members' term for 1 year. This will enable us to;

- recruit and induct new members over a longer timeline incorporating a range of new methodologies that meet Covid-19 mitigation protocols.
- continue the high standard research, lobbying, development and capacity building of the Youth Forum as a collective voice of young people in the city.

3.12 Finance and Resource Implications

Financial Implications

All costs associated with the Youth Forum have been agreed in the budget setting process. This is subject to revision and Departmental priorities

Human Resource Implications

A dedicated Community Development Officer has been assigned to facilitate the Youth Forum

3.13 Equality Impact or Good Relations/ Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

A number of the Members commended the work of the Youth Forum and the contribution that it made as the collective voice of young people within local government in Belfast.

A Member referred to the requested delay in recruiting new members due to the impact of the Covid pandemic and she stated that, whilst she appreciated the need for the delay, she would like to see the recruitment process expanded further to encourage recruitment and to ensure a balanced membership of young people throughout all areas of the city going forward.

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

A further Member advised that she would like to see the profile of the Youth Forum being more prominent and visible on the Council's website.

The Committee agreed:

- that the next joint Committee and Youth Forum meeting would be held on Tuesday, 20th October at 5.15 p.m. and that this would be a remote meeting via teams;
- to extend the current term of the 2018-20 cohort membership for one year as a result of the current pandemic but agreed to also investigate expanding the recruitment process to ensure a balance membership going forward; and
- that officers would liaise with the Council's Corporate Communications section to develop and better showcase the work of the Youth Forum on the Council's website.

**Request to place a memorial bench
In Shankill Cemetery**

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from a Trustee of the Greater Shankill Community Council seeking approval to install a memorial bench in Shankill Cemetery as a focal point for individuals and families who had experienced pregnancy and baby loss. The Committee noted that there was existing memorials for babies in both the City and Roselawn Cemeteries.

Baby Loss Awareness Week was held annually from 9th -15th October, it aimed to raise awareness about the key issues affecting those who had experienced pregnancy or baby loss. Now in its 16th year, Baby Loss Awareness Week sought tangible improvements in research, care and policy around bereavement support and highlighted the need for bereavement support and services being available for anyone affected by the death of a baby at any stage.

The bench would be designed, fabricated and installed in a fitting location in the cemetery, to be agreed by the Open Space and Streetscene Manager for the area. The total cost of the bench, fitting and installation would be paid for by members of the 1st Shankill Golf Society and it would be manufactured and fitted by Belfast Metalworks.

The Committee approved the installation of a memorial bench in Shankill Cemetery during Baby Loss Awareness Week in October.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Notice of Intention - Traffic Regulation Order 2020

The Committee was reminded that the Council had previously made available £700,000 from the Capital Programme to install alleygates across the City. The Members were advised that Phase 4 had been divided into 3 sub-phases, with Phase 4(a) having been completed in March 2018 and Phase 4(b) in October 2018 and 4(c) in October 2019.

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

The Committee noted that, at the end of this current phase, the Council had been approached by the Public Health Agency, Department for Communities and Department of Justice who had sought assistance with restricting access to challenging areas through the provision of gates, for which they would fund. At that late stage it had not been possible to include them within phase 4(c) and it had been explained to those agencies that the requests would take further time to progress. Following the necessary legal consultation process, legal services were now content that these additional gates could be advertised.

The Committee was advised that the required statutory and community consultation had been undertaken and formal approval was now being sought to proceed to advertise the Notice of Intention to enact the Traffic Regulation Order 2020 to enable gates to be installed in the following areas:

- To the rear of Nos. 371 – 393 Shankill Road
- To the rear of Nos. 14 - 34 Botanic Avenue and to the side of No. 34 Botanic Avenue.
- To the rear of Nos. 7 – 35 Cromwell Road, Nos. 1 – 5 Wolseley Street, Nos. 2 – 24 Ireton Street, Nos. 62 – 84 Botanic Ave and to the sides of No. 7 Cromwell Road, No.2 Ireton Street and No. 24 Ireton Street.

A number of Members referred to the success of the previous/current schemes and stated that they would like to see additional funding for additional schemes, however, it was noted that funding for any future Alleygating scheme would be determined by the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as part of the Council's capital budget setting process.

Following a further query in respect of future schemes and those streets that had previously been referred and were on a waiting list, it was noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would provide an update in respect of the scheme and also include detail in respect of unadopted alleyways. It was also agreed that this would include clarity in respect of the existing criteria.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that it pass a resolution to make the Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation Order 2020 for the locations as set out above, to be advertised as required by law.

Operational Issues

Horizon 2020

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 Members on a funding application which has been submitted to the EU Horizon 2020 fund and has successfully passed stage one of the application process. The project is called Upsurge and focuses on testing**

nature based solutions in EU cities, with the aim of sharing learning and good practice. A detailed application is being developed for submission in stage 2 by the University of Maribor, Slovenia, on behalf of a consortium of EU cities with, a final submission date of 3rd September 2020. The project, if successful, would commence in 2021 with a 48-month duration. Belfast has been included as one of a number of partner cities within the proposal.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Approve the inclusion of Lower Botanic Gardens as the primary location for activity in the EU Horizon 2020 Upsurge project proposal, with an update to follow regarding the status of the application.
- Authorise the project team to scan additional BCC sites with the aim of identifying satellite sites that could be incorporated into the project.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The specific Horizon 2020 call focuses on nature-based solutions. The proposal is that Belfast will test nature-based solutions developed in the city of Maribor, Slovenia, to assess if they can be implemented successfully in another city. It is proposed that Belfast will develop a site into a community garden and learning facility, where soil enhancement, food production and testing can be undertaken. Belfast City Council officers and Queens University of Belfast staff are working on the detail of the Belfast contribution and have identified a proposed primary site with the potential for linked satellite sites across the city and in the city centre.

3.2 The preferred primary site is Lower Botanic Gardens, in the area between QUB PEC car park, and Ridgeway Street, bounded by Stranmillis Embankment (see image attached). The site has been selected due to the following: size requirement (5,000m²), proximity to partner assets (QUB), and proximity to a range of socio-economic stakeholders (QUB/UU students, minorities, Botanic Primary School, and neighbouring communities including Lower Ormeau, Ballynafeigh, and Holyland). The site facilitates vehicular access via Stranmillis Embankment and pedestrian access at Ridgeway Street. In addition, the site is in close proximity to BCC assets including the Bowling Pavilion and Botanic Gardens, with potential to utilise the project to enhance their use. Furthermore, this project is likely to support

the ambitions of the local Friends of Botanic Gardens Group in developing this location.

- 3.3 The project will form a learning base with opportunities for digital testing of nature-based solutions, food production opportunities and educational programmes for schools, community, staff and university students.
- 3.4 While the focus is on the primary site at Botanic Gardens, we propose to examine the potential for satellite sites on BCC land across the city and in the city centre. This will support local community involvement in using nature-based solutions to improve local biodiversity, rewilding, and local food production.
- 3.5 The project aligns with the Belfast City Council aims of improving city and community resilience and aligns with the draft Belfast Resilience Strategy, emerging city and Council Climate Plans, Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan, Belfast Open Spaces Strategy, and Belfast Smart City goals.
- 3.6 Key Issues

The Upsurge project presents an opportunity to develop an underused area of land under Belfast City Council ownership, through a partnership with QUB, EU partners, and local community organisations. A project team has been established which includes Belfast City Council's Resilience Unit, Innovation Unit, City and Neighbourhood Services, Planning, in addition to QUB representatives. The project, if successful, will act as a hub, with the potential to support rewilding, enhanced local food production, stimulation of local circular economy, and to develop community education programmes in relation to climate, digital innovation, and community resilience.

3.7 Financial and Resource Implications

Up to 1 million euro of the project budget would be allocated to Belfast, subject to a successful application, from an overall project budget of up to 30 million euro. The funding would cover 100% project costs and overheads for project infrastructure, revenue and project management. No match funding is required. The project team will form a steering group to oversee, monitor and update on progress.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessments

None."

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

Following a query from a Member the Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed that the progression of the initiative was being considered on a local level and within the context of the previous motion 'Rewilding our Wards' which had been agreed at the September 2019 meeting of the People and Communities Committee.

The Committee:

- approved the inclusion of Lower Botanic Gardens as the primary location for activity in the EU Horizon 2020 Upsurge project proposal, with an update to follow regarding the status of the application; and
- authorised the project team to scan additional Belfast City Council sites with the aim of identifying satellite sites that could be incorporated into the project and noted that this was being considered on a local level and within the context of the previous motion 'Rewilding our Wards' which had been agreed at the September 2019 meeting of the Committee.

Healthy Places - 'All the Colours' Initiative

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To bring members up to speed on the 'All the Colours' lamppost wrapping initiative that has been developed as a result of the work of the Healthy Places project led by Public Health Agency focussed on North Belfast. As outlined within the body of the report both Government departments and local community organisations and residents have been involved in developing the project, however in order for it to progress the Department for Infrastructure have requested that Council must request permission/licence as a 'competent authority'. Thus, PHA has approached us for our support in taking this forward.**
- 1.2 Council officers have since followed up with DfI for clarity who have explained their rationale as; 'in order to ensure any artwork on the Department's property has the full support of the local community, the only organisations we will consider granting permission to attach any materials to our property are local councils. In this way we are able to ensure that local councillors, who are the best contacts within local communities to manage any concerns from residents who may object to the materials, are involved.'**
- 1.3 Legal services have advised that whilst we can indicate our support for the project overall that Council shouldn't take on the role of 'competent authority' as requested by DfI given that we have no function or responsibility in relation to lampposts – they are the property of, and are maintained by the Department.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of this report by way of update.
- Discuss and decide whether they are supportive of the project.
- Consider Council support for the project and, if so, request Council officers to go back to relevant partners (namely DfI, PHA and USI) informing them that Council is supportive of the project but cannot act as the competent authority (as requested by DfI) given that we are not responsible for street lampposts.

3.0 Background

3.1 Bright Ideas is a programme developed through community engagement as part of the Healthy Places Project within the Ardoyne and Ballysillan areas of North Belfast. Healthy Places is a place based approach which aims to improve health, reduce inequalities and improved wellbeing and wider social outcomes (led by Public Health Agency, BCC is a partner in the initiative).

Despite being surrounded by large green spaces such as Clarendon Park and with great views of the surrounding hills, communities such as Ardoyne and Ballysillan often complain of a lack of access to green spaces. Whilst considerable investment has gone into improving active travel networks and development of parks, there remains a number of invisible barriers that prevent certain communities from feeling they belong in green spaces. There is an abundance of evidence to suggest that regular use of green spaces improves physical fitness and reduces depression, enhancing the health and wellbeing of people living and working in cities. Having more accessible, shared green spaces could also help to address anti-social behaviour by providing a space for diversionary activities.

To address this issue Public Health Agency have been working with local communities through Urban Scale Interventions to improve and promote the use of green spaces and engage communities within the Ardoyne and Ballysillan areas to come up with innovative and creative solutions to local issues.

Under the banner of 'Bright Ideas North Belfast' a series of community conversations, workshops and public events have taken place. These have helped to identify issues in the local area and develop possible solutions.

One of the key recurring themes was the need to brighten up the streets with colourful messaging and artwork as part of a place based approach to improving public spaces in North Belfast.

3.2 All the Colours initiative (lamppost wrapping)

A number of interventions have been co-designed with local community groups and residents, including a 'Bright Ideas Bird Box' for people to personalise and put up in their gardens to brighten them up and connect to nature, as well as an intergenerational shared meals programme. An additional project aims to bring colour to the streets by wrapping lampposts with artwork created by local illustrators and artists focused on the positive stories and themes that have been developed by the communities themselves as part of the project.

3.3 Implementation plan

1. USI have delivered 200 engagement kits through the collaboration of local representatives in order to be able to collect positive stories and ideas around the project themes.
2. 'Usfolk' will illustrate the engagement by citizens of the area into three themed artworks which will be used as lamp post wrappings (designs will be taken back to participants to approve for feedback)
3. Technical approval in principle by DFI has been approved providing the project is approved by Belfast City Council and their relevant procedures.

Subject to:

1. Full access to panels
2. Markings easily identifiable
3. Specifications, Rams and insurances provided
4. Content signed off (no commercial promotion in media)
4. The project will be installed for implementation (September 2020 - Date TBC subject to approvals)
5. Budget has been set aside for the removal of graphics if required however the materials used have a seven year life expectancy and are graded for outdoor application.

3.4 Locations

Approximately 60 lampposts are have been identified on streets across North Belfast, with a particular focus on Ardoyne and Ballysillan wards. Community groups have helped to create the

idea and community leaders are supportive of the programme delivery. More than 30 community groups have been involved in the bright ideas process, with 250 online and offline conversations covering an inclusive age range (7 to 80 years old).

3.5 Art work

The artwork has been created by local Belfast illustrators 'UsFolk' focusing on themes of inclusion, intergenerational exchange and green space. Their previous artwork has been used on a range of public realm infrastructure including service boxes and telephone boxes.

Estimated date of installation: week commencing 14th September 2020 (covering 100 lampposts).

No road closures will be required as part of installation and all relevant insurances are in place.

Installer to ensure no interruption of access to lamp post cover, no markings will be wrapped. Material meets external environment standards, with a product lifespan of at least 7 years. The durability of material reduces anti-social behaviour, the product is removed professionally which reduces vandalism and requires no-maintenance.

3.6 Part of a wider approach

The lampposts will form a key part of a wider implementation to deliver the intervention in North Belfast which will include the material being applied to other city infrastructure objects we see in the area subject to additional approvals.

The approach is being seen as highly innovative and opportunities are arising in which lampposts could be reimagined in the City Centre (subject to approvals) as part of the COVID recovery process to support wayfinding, crowd flow and storytelling opportunities with Belfast City Council.

3.7 Outputs

Studies have shown that improving aesthetics of an area and adding colour to neighbourhoods can increase overall community wellbeing, demonstrate a sense of value to residents and reduce antisocial behaviour and crime. In a time of pandemic this project offers an opportunity to provide local responses in line with NI COVID regulations to improve the places we live, work and play.

The project has already been applying such methods through the use of pop ups with citizens and organisations.

This is a truly co-designed project with local community groups and provides the opportunity to increase community cohesion and public value through a simple action that can have significant neighbourhood benefits. Public perception research will be carried out before and after to show the value such a simple action can have in improving neighbourhood feel.

3.8 Key Departments involved in developing the project (project board reps)

- Public Health Agency
- Department of Justice
- Department of Health
- Department for Communities
- Department for Infrastructure
- PSNI Neighbourhood Policing team North & West Belfast

3.9 Community groups consulted in the project and in co-design as part of bright ideas North Belfast

- Artsekta
- Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership
- Ardoyne Youth Enterprise
- Ardoyne Youth Club
- Ashton Centre
- Ballysillan Primary School
- Bradley Manor Care Home
- Carezone
- Flax Trust Arts
- Belfast Healthy Cities
- Little explorers - Ardoyne Community Centre
- NBWISP - North Belfast Women's Initiative & Support Project
- North Belfast Friendship Club
- North Belfast Health Forum
- North Belfast Men's shed
- Our Lady of Mercy Primary School
- R City Belfast
- ROC - Redeem Our Community
- Twaddell and Woodvale Resident Association
- Urban Villages Initiative (supported the project)
- Women's tech
- YEHA

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

There are additional financial or resource implications contained within this report. Funding is in place (via PHA) to cover both implementation and de-installation costs.

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

There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained within this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

Departmental Priorities during Covid Recovery - Verbal Update

Both the Director of Neighbourhood and Director of City Services provided the Committee with a comprehensive overview of the Department’s priorities during the Covid pandemic and on the department’s areas of focus moving towards recovery.

The Committee was advised that during the Covid Pandemic the City and Neighbourhood Services Department had remained central in the delivery of critical Council services, including bereavement services, waste collection, parks and street cleansing and lead on the development and implementation of the community response hub. The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that maintaining these services during the response period had required the Council to amend some working practices, this had included the re-deployment of some staff in order to ensure service delivery, some functions had moved to working from home and some had to be stood down with some staff having to be placed on the government’s Furlough scheme.

The officer advised that, in line with the easing of restrictions from the Northern Ireland Executive, the Council was now working towards the recovery of its services. As a result it had been necessary to refocus the department’s priorities to enable officers to adequately resource the required work.

The Committee was advised that during the period of recovery the department priority areas of focus for the City and Neighbourhood Services Department were as follows:

- maintaining the delivery of the key critical services – bereavement services, waste management, parks and street cleansing and Community (Area) support;
- returning services to a new normal – which would include the creation of secure working environments in line with health and safety requirements and also taking into consideration the overall financial position of the Council;
- Brexit – temporary staff (externally funded) to be recruited to ensure the delivery of official controls on imported foods that might be required under the NI Protocol from 1st January 2020. These staff will be essential to meet

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

the Council and UK Government's legal responsibilities under the NI protocol, domestic and EU legislation;

- Community Recovery – building on the foundation of community response activity with the Council's community partners, the focus would involve engaging with communities, along with city partners on a co-design and inclusive process to develop area recovery priorities, build capacity and align resources and to maximise outcomes, and to improve community support infrastructure, community wealth and assets;
- Implementation of Open Space and Street Service – to continue to implement this service structure, as agreed pre Covid, to ensure stable area teams in the management of Council parks and open spaces and public streets in a more collaborative way;
- Supporting Governance – to ensure that decision making continued to be facilitated through the relevant committees and working groups; and
- Planning for a potential second wave.

A Member commended the hard work and dedication of all officers shown over the pandemic and requested that senior officers would e-mail or communicate via other internal communication mechanisms with all staff from the City and Neighbourhood Services Department thanking them for their hard work and contribution in maintaining the delivery of essential Council services during the Covid pandemic.

Several Members referred to the difficulties experienced over waste collection services during the pandemic. The Director of City Services outlined the practical and financial pressures that this service had and continued to face and it was agreed a report would be submitted to a future meeting detailing the ongoing challenges in respect of the waste collection service during the pandemic and which would give consideration as to how these could be addressed.

Several Members sought guidance and clarification as to when certain Council services, in particular household visits might be reinstated, the Director advised that recovery of Council services was being considered at the August meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and again reiterated the current pressures on the Department.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Cherryvale Playing Fields - Councillor de Faoite

The Member referred to the ongoing work at Cherryvale Playing Fields in respect of the update of the carpark, the removal of the one-way system and the possible addition of a second pedestrian entrance.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- agreed that a site visit would be undertaken to the location in order to enable the Members and officers to better acquaint themselves with the various user groups issues within the context of the park;

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

- noted that consultation was due to commence in respect of establishing an additional pedestrian entrance but that no funding had been secured for the proposal; and
- noted the ongoing implementation of the area allocations of parks and open spaces and agreed that Officers would seek further detail on any issues and, if necessary, seek advice and guidance from the Council's Human Resources Section.

Cemeteries - Alderman Rodgers

The Member commended and thanked all the Council's cemetery staff for their hard work and dedication in maintaining the service during the Covid pandemic.

He also suggested to officers that the Council should look at implementing a rolling maintenance programme throughout the city's cemeteries as many of them were falling into a state of disrepair.

The Committee noted the current financial pressures that the Council faced and noted the suggestion.

Alleyway Transformation - Councillor Kelly

Following a request from the Member it was agreed that, following the success of initiatives such as Wildflower Alley and similar projects across the city, that the Committee would write the Department for Communities, Department of Justice and Department for Infrastructure with a view to co-ordinating support and assistance for residents and groups who would like to transform and regenerate communal and open spaces throughout the city.

Pest Control Issues – Councillor Kelly

The Member outlined the difficulties that home owners were experiencing with pest control issues and sought clarity as to when domestic house calls might be able to resume.

The Committee was updated by the Director of City Services that, in line with the Council's health and safety responsibilities and creating COVID secure working environments and services, household pest control visits, were still unable to take place but that advice was being given to constituents via the telephone and sewer baiting had resumed to support communities. It was further noted that an update on organisational recovery and the reintroduction of services would be considered corporately by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Future Use of former Horticultural Training Site – Councillor Garrett

In response to a suggestion from the Member that the former Horticultural Training Site at Groveland's/Musgrave Park could potentially be regenerated and used for community outreach programmes, it was agreed that this would be considered further

People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 11th August, 2020

within the context of the Council's Open Spaces Strategy action plan development and further agreed that a site visit would be arranged in due course.

Odour Colin Area – Councillor Baker

In response to the Member's request, the Committee agreed to write to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) reiterating the need for it to further investigate and address the bad odour that members of the public who lived in the Colin area, around Dunmurry, Twinbrook and Lagmore had been subjected to for a number of years.

Chairperson

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 12th August, 2020

REMOTE MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Brooks (Chairperson);
Alderman Kingston; and
Councillors Beattie, Donnelly, Dorrian, Ferguson,
Gormley, Hanvey, Heading, Lyons, Maskey,
McAllister, McMullan, Murphy, O'Hara, Spratt and Whyte.

Also attended: Councillors de Faoite and Flynn.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Ms. L. Toland, Senior Manager - Economy;
Ms. E. Henry, Senior Manager - Culture and Tourism;
Mrs. C. Taggart, Neighbourhood Services Manager (East);
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Howard, T. Kelly and McLaughlin.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Beattie, Lyons and O'Hara declared an interest in relation to item 3(b) UKRI Strength in Places Funding, in that they were members of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners.

Request to Present

Translink - Central Area Track Renewal

The Committee agreed to receive a written presentation from Translink in relation to the Central Area Track Renewal project, in the first instance, with a follow-up presentation at a future remote meeting, if necessary.

Growing Business and the Economy

Belfast Castle and Malone House

Potential Re-opening date

The Committee was reminded that Belfast Castle and Malone House were currently closed as a result of Covid 19 regulations and all staff had been furloughed with

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 12th August, 2020**

the exception of the operations managers for each building who returned to working part time hours from 6th July in order to manage customer enquiries and bookings.

The Neighbourhood Services Manager (East) advised that management had reviewed the diary bookings for use of the two venues. She explained that officers had considered a range of options for the reopening of Belfast Castle and Malone House taking into account the number of staff currently on furlough, the small number of diary bookings which could be honoured either on grounds of capacity or as a result of the embargo on conference events, the impact of wedding cancellations on the customer and the resulting financial modelling. She concluded that the full reopening of the buildings at this time for normal business was not financially viable.

In liaison with the catering provider, French Village, Neighbourhood Services Manager recommended that a phased reopening of both venues for pre-existing bookings for weddings and catering and to accommodate new permissible bookings focusing on Friday, Saturday and Sundays only, during September and October 2020, and were currently working with the catering provider to put in place a new retail offering in the current context.

She explained that, to ensure the protection of both staff and customers, each venue would have significant Covid-19 Health and Safety measures in place. There would be changes to the numbers of people that can be accommodated in each venue and staff would engage with customers over the coming weeks to support customer understanding of the impact of the Covid risk assessment on their event planning. She confirmed that health and safety measures would be implemented, which included essential signage, one way systems established where necessary, hand sanitising stations, deep cleaning and other necessary arrangements.

She informed the Committee that the situation would be kept under review as circumstances of furlough and NI Executive restrictions on events and gatherings change and it was anticipated that the reopening of the venues would increase the overall deficit by £100k approximately depending on the uptake of new bookings and the success of the retail offering.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and the reopening plan for Belfast Castle and Malone House from 1st September, 2020 on a phased basis, subject to business demand.

UKRI Strength in Places Funding

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 provide an update to Members on a successful collaborative bid by the Belfast Maritime Consortium which has been awarded £33m from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under their ‘Strength in Places’ funding initiative. The report seeks approval for Belfast City Council to**

formally engage in the consortium to bring the project to fruition.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the work undertaken to date as part of the Belfast Maritime Consortium to secure £33m from UKRI's Strength in Places Funding and the potential impact the project will have in the Belfast City Council area
- Note Belfast City Council's engagement on the project to date as part of the consortium and agree to the commitment required to support the delivery of the project to bring it to fruition.

3.0 Main report

3.1 UK Research and Innovation's Strength in Places Fund is a competitive funding scheme that takes a place-based approach to research and innovation funding to support significant regional growth. It works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities, and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish. Since 2017, Belfast City Council has been engaging with Artemis Technologies on their work to bring forward a funding proposal to UKRI. This support has included providing a letter of support for a NI consortium bid (Belfast Maritime Consortium) to develop zero emission maritime transport in Belfast.

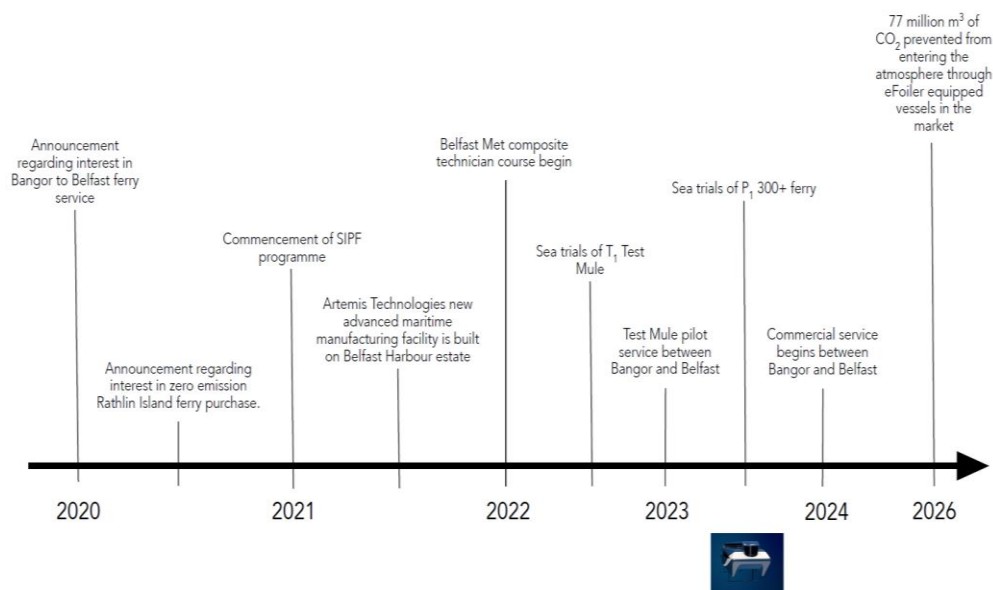
3.2 The Belfast Maritime Consortium, which is led by Artemis Technologies (ATL), consists of a number of industry, academia and local government members including Bombardier, Stena Line, Harland and Wolff, Belfast Harbour, Creative Composites, Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University, NIACE, Belfast Metropolitan College, Belfast City Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Catalyst Inc and Invest NI.

3.3 The project has successfully secured £33m from UKRI for development and delivery work over the next 4 years. It aims to exploit and develop Belfast's expertise in advanced composites to help reinvigorate past maritime leadership in innovative shipbuilding technologies. It will develop an education programme and a route to highly skilled jobs in the Belfast area and will enhance Belfast's environmental credentials with developing niche specialisms in zero carbon maritime transport. The project will ultimately deliver a new

class of zero emission maritime transport vessel design and build capability that has numerous commercial applications. All of this work will combine to establish, in Belfast, a world class maritime capability and deliver a high value product for export.

- 3.4 The Belfast Maritime Consortium will work with the local supply chain to produce the world's first autonomously controlled 'fully submerged' electric hydrofoiling vessel, and develop the technical and operational requirements for a maritime transport system of the future. The project will not only create new commercial opportunities, but also help tackle major environmental challenges in line with wider government policy, which calls for all new vessels to be designed with zero-emissions capable technologies by 2025.

- 3.5 The key stages project milestones are as follows:



- 3.6 To enable the project to commence, Belfast City Council along with each of the other consortium members, is required to enter into a formal collaboration agreement. This agreement outlines the commitment of each of the parties to the project and the terms of engagement. For the council, this includes:

- Contributing to the project working groups when they are established to inform and shape the project
- Supporting the development of a pilot scheme between Belfast and Bangor by establishing, upgrading and otherwise ensuring that all or any infrastructure owned or controlled by the council is available for use.

This element of the project may require a financial commitment from the council of up to £250,000. However this will be subject to future scoping of the requirement, availability of funding and approval from this committee at a later date and will be a commitment in principle only at this point

- Providing marketing support for the pilot scheme when it is live including engaging with customers to undertake research and insights into customer preferences.

3.7 This project has the potential to realise a range of economic benefits across the city including the creation of one of the UK's most advanced composite design and manufacturing facilities, in the heart of Belfast Harbour. The project will also have a significant impact on achieving the council's inclusive growth ambitions by undertaking school engagement projects, delivering apprenticeship schemes, and implementing new courses in advanced composites at Belfast Metropolitan College as well as creating employment opportunities in the city, estimated at 165 highly skilled jobs initially, increasing to 400 as it develops.

3.8 Financial & Resource Implications

At this stage of the project, Belfast City Council is not required to make a financial contribution. As the project develops any funding requirements will subject to approval of this Committee and available budget.

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

Equality and good relations implications will be considered as the project progresses. Partners beyond the Belfast City Council area are involved in the project."

During discussion, Members raised the importance of the long-term sustainability of the project, the potential use of apprenticeships, community opportunities and the involvement of local supply chains.

After discussion the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Tourism Update

The Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 At a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in April 2020 the work programme to support tourism development was agreed. Given the current circumstances and the specific ongoing challenges for tourism, the purpose of this report is to update Members on:

- The current status of the work programme relating to tourism development in the city.
- The early forecast relating to the short, medium and longer term impacts of Covid-19 on tourism.
- The initial response and emerging priorities to help stabilise and grow tourism in the city.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of this report and the contribution that the work programme for 2020/21 will make to supporting the recovery of the tourism sector.
- Approve the development of a ten year tourism plan for Belfast and agree to receive a draft of this plan in November 2020.
- Approve participation in the Global Destination Sustainability Index led by Council in partnership with Visit Belfast.

3.0 **Main report**

3.1 Members will be aware that at a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2019 the new ten year cultural strategy for Belfast, *A City Imagining 2020-30* was agreed. This was further supported by implementation plans for the period 2020-23 and a work programme for 2020-21. Included in each of these documents was a series of priority actions relating to tourism support and development. The intention was that this would be developed out into a specific tourism action plan. It is now necessary to re-examine these priorities in light of Covid-19.

Tourism Growth Pre Covid-19

3.2 In August 2019 Belfast City Council agreed a new ten year cultural strategy, *A City Imagining 2020-2030*, to drive transformation in the city. For the first time, the scope of this strategy brought together under one compelling vision a number of areas including tourism, culture, heritage, arts, events and festivals.

- 3.3 *A City Imagining* acknowledges that whilst Belfast has enjoyed relative growth in tourism over recent years that in turn has supported regional development, it is necessary for the city to push the development of tourism on to the next level. Belfast's first community plan, the *Belfast Agenda*, also articulates the importance of delivering a culturally vibrant city both for residents and visitors as well as acting as an attractive driver for inward investment. It is anticipated that citywide investment in a culturally vibrant place will support changing perspectives of Belfast as a place to visit, live, work and invest. In order to continue to build on the value of out-of-state tourism and welcome more overnight stays in our visitor accommodation it is essential that we collaborate with our tourism sector to evolve, broaden, deepen and expand the tourism offer currently available in Belfast.
- 3.4 Despite significant growth and the success of flagship projects such as Titanic Belfast there is still a gap in scale and maturity of the local industry when compared with other regions. Notably, Northern Ireland lags behind UK regions and Republic of Ireland with respect to tourism as a driver for Gross Value Added. However the positive trajectory in place before Covid-19 had identified tourism growth as both feasible and a necessary part of inclusive economic growth.
- 3.5 It was in this context that Tourism NI set the ambitious target of doubling the value of the tourism industry to £2 billion by 2030. A key element of opportunity further reinforced by ambitions of the Belfast Region City Deal was getting a bigger share of the international visitors coming to the island of Ireland to travel to Belfast and the Belfast region.

Impact of Covid-19

- 3.6 While the full impact of Covid-19 is as yet unknown what is clear is that recovery will require new and innovative approaches in an increasingly competitive market. As the regional driver, Belfast will be hugely significant to this growth ambition, both in terms of visitor spend and the creation of new jobs. It is therefore imperative that our city break destination is developed in a strategic way which maximises the economic benefits which can be derived from tourism for local industries, businesses and communities, as well as increasing visitor numbers and spend and improving overall satisfaction levels.
- 3.7 An initial report on the impact of Covid-19 on Belfast has been commissioned from EY which has made a number of key observations as summarised below. These are important to

consider when seeking to understand the potential level of impact on the city and how the response should be a strategic and sustainable approach to recovery.

Belfast's role in regional tourism

- Belfast is an important attractor for international, high value tourists to the region.
- Belfast's share of out of state tourism spend has been significantly higher than the NI-wide share (83% v 72%).
- Spending by tourists in Belfast has outpaced the NI average, growing by 20% year on year compared to 4.5% regionally.
- Belfast has grown at a faster rate than the rest of NI mainly because of its attractiveness in two high value markets – city breaks and business tourism.

Covid Impact

3.8 As a result of the dominance of these two high value markets, Covid could have a stronger impact on the tourism and hospitality sectors in Belfast for 4 reasons:

1. Belfast tourism relies more heavily on overseas tourism than on domestic staycations.
2. City breaks are less attractive than rural tourism during a sanitary crisis.
3. Cruise tourism is likely to be very adversely affected by Covid.
4. Business tourism is a key driver for Belfast and likely to take longer to recover.

3.9 The recovery forecast for tourism is based on 3 scenarios:

1. **Slow and steady:** Under this scenario, Covid is considered primarily as a health crisis with underlying economic implications. A phased reopening with restriction measures in place until early 2021. By this date the hospitality industry would be in a position to be fully operational. International travel restrictions would mean reliance on RoI and GB markets. Even in this optimistic scenario, Belfast's tourism market is significantly affected due to the reliance on the international market for growth in recent years.

2. **Extended health crisis:** Under this scenario restrictions on the hospitality sector continue for longer than in scenario 1. By virtue of restrictions, there is even more focus on an all-island and domestic market. Under this scenario the all-island spend is predicted to rise from 26% (2019) to 37% (2020). In this scenario GB tourism is not predicted to recover its 2019 level until 2022 with spending falling by 41% in 2020.
 3. **Structural health, economic and tourism crisis:** This scenario considers a continued health crisis with a second wave in the pandemic. This would result in a period of further closure of tourism and hospitality industries. Travel by plane or cruise ships would not be permitted. This represents a year on year loss of over £31M to the tourism industry in Belfast. This scenario would disproportionately affect Belfast which is more dependent on out of state tourism than the wider region. The UK and RoI markets would be a key driver of demand for the foreseeable future. The crisis will have led to behavioural changes with consumers opting for safer staycations which align to their values (sustainability, authenticity, local values).
- 3.10 Regardless of which of these scenarios play out, what is clear is that the response must be phased recognising short, medium and longer term priorities within an overall recovery plan. A multi-layered approach will be required that builds on the city's strengths and successful growth in recent years whilst recognising the need to adapt existing models where required as well as introducing new innovative and at times disruptive solutions.
- 3.11 The report sets out a number of recommendations and next steps including the need to target the right market at the right time in order to support tourism demand placing a short term focus on domestic tourism.

Immediate steps

- 3.12 What is emerging is a clear need to support the stabilisation of tourism up to 2022 with a need to then plan for longer term sustainable growth including the recovery of the two priority markets for Belfast, business tourism and city breaks. Council will be working in partnership with TNI and VB to develop and implement a new hybrid business tourism model to secure Belfast's future in a competitive market through combining digital capability with onsite offer.

- 3.13 Work to develop local tourism continues as a priority and is critical to supporting inclusive growth. This includes a significant programme of capacity building and information sharing to improve the quality of existing products, bringing forward new products and helping develop coherent packages and experiences that are aligned to visitor needs.
- 3.14 It is proposed that the focus of activity for 2020-21 continues as:
- Use of local conduits where possible to increase engagement and promote the benefits of participation as well as identifying new and emerging partners.
 - Capacity building and development work on cluster approach, in conjunction with Tourism NI - involvement of industry experts and practitioners who have first-hand experience of this activity.
 - Supporting and commissioning robust evidence base to increase understanding of the market.
- 3.15 As well as these immediate steps it is also necessary to plan for the future. It is therefore recommended that two longer term pieces of work are initiated. These are:
- Ten year tourism recovery plan
 - Global Sustainability Index

10 year tourism recovery plan

- 3.16 Following the completion of the ten year cultural strategy a detailed tourism action plan was due to be developed. It is recommended that this work proceeds with a focus on tourism recovery through identifying key actions that will support stabilisation, innovation and sustainable growth. This plan will be developed in partnership with key stakeholders including the establishment of a strategic oversight group. A draft plan will be presented to Committee in November 2020.

Global Destination Sustainability Index

- 3.17 The Global Destination Sustainability Index is the world's leading benchmarking and performance Index for cities, their events and their visitor economy. Its purpose is to engage, enable and inspire cities to become more sustainable places to visit, meet and thrive in. In addition to benchmarking a city's environmental strategy and social sustainability performance, the GDS-Index assess criteria that are industry specific: industry supplier support (restaurants, hotels, conference centres) and convention bureau strategy and initiatives.

Alongside benchmarking it helps destination management organisations, convention bureaus, key industry associations suppliers and clients to develop effective strategies and practices in support of sustainability goals.

3.18 Since 2019, over 60 cities have started the process of benchmarking and assessment. The goal is to have 300 cities collaborating by 2023. The Index is based on 69 Indicators broken down into four categories:

- City Environmental Performance
- City Social Performance
- Supplier Performance
- Destination Management Performance

3.19 Once the initial benchmarking is complete – Belfast will receive a detailed report with performance improvement recommendations as well as a ranking; however, it should be noted that the first year's ranking will not be publicly released, giving the city a full year to review and implement initial recommendations.

3.20 It is also recommended that Belfast develops a tourism supply to foster a sustainable economic model creating jobs and improving local quality of life with specific actions including:

- Launch a wide consultation with key stakeholders and locals regarding the role tourism can play in a city like Belfast (e.g. urban regeneration, housing, sustainability, jobs, social inclusion, international attractiveness)
- Focus on the development of resilient tourism attractions (e.g. mix of outdoor and indoor spaces, online content, attractive to locals)
- Identify ways for Belfast or some specific attractions within the City to be distinguished internationally in order to remind domestic tourist about the attractiveness of the region (e.g. awards, UNESCO, travel guides)

3.21 Given the need to differentiate the Belfast offer it is also important to consider key strategic opportunities that could bolster investment in the sector in order to support recovery and future growth. These will be given full consideration as part of the ten year plan and could include:

Strategic Initiatives and Campaigns

3.22 Commitment to long-term initiatives contained in cultural strategy with additional consideration including 2023 and UNESCO City of Music.

Infrastructure

3.23 Delivering tourism pillar of the Belfast Regional City Deal including Destination Hub focusing on:

- Commitment to inclusive growth, ensuring the economic benefit of the Belfast Destination Hub development is spread across and connected into the rest of the city.
- Commitment to the creation of secure and sustainable employment and skills development.
- Commitment to local engagement and participation to ensure that Belfast residents are actively engaged and supported to access opportunities throughout the development and realisation of the project.

Integration and connectivity

3.24 Delivering a long-term fully integrated tourism development model for the city that includes:

- Adopting a place-based approach to the development of our neighbourhoods through local tourism framework and investment that supports product development, jobs creation and destination management.
- Enhancing civic pride and cultural vibrancy to attract locals and visitors.
- Developing a marketing and communications approach that recognises the breadth and authenticity of the city's tourism offer.

3.25 The success of tourism in the city is interdependent on the resilience of the city's culture, arts, heritage and events. A report will be presented to Committee in September to update Members on the impact of Covid-19 on these sectors with proposals on how Council can work with other funders and stakeholders to support recovery.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.26 There are no new financial implications. The activities outlined in this report will be resourced from the 2020/21 budget for the Culture and Tourism section of the Economic Development division of the Place and Economy Departmental budget in line with existing approvals.

All existing programmes are subject to ongoing review with cost savings identified where projects cannot proceed due to Covid-19.

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

- 3.27 The cultural strategy, *A City Imagining* has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA). Any further investment or significant programmes will include equality screening as appropriate including a new tourism recovery plan and the recommendations set out in the Global Destination Sustainability Index.”**

In response to Members questions regarding local and neighbourhood tourism, the Senior Manager – Culture and Tourism highlighted the multi-layered and phased approach to market recovery, and explained further the short, medium and longer term priorities within the overall recovery plan.

The Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that a report would be submitted to a future Committee in relation to how Belfast’s tourism offer was being represented in city and regional campaigns.

**Economic Recovery Work - Collaboration
with other Local Authorities (SOLACE)**

The Committee was provided with an update on the recent establishment of a working group to support economic recovery, involving partners from all councils, and to set out the high level work programme for the group.

The Senior Manager – Economy advised that, as part of the local government response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly its impact on local economies, SOLACE had agreed to establish a number of working groups to take forward collaborative thinking and actions on areas of mutual and collective interest.

She pointed out that two working groups would be established to focus on distinct areas of work: Council Recovery (internal) and Regional Recovery (external). She highlighted that the Regional Recovery working group would be chaired by Mrs. S. Wylie, and comprises economic development representatives from across the 11 Councils.

The Senior Manager explained that the purpose of the group and the work that it would undertake was to:

- Build an understanding of the scale of the recovery challenge in local council areas across Northern Ireland as well as the impact of global economic changes, including the impact of the EU’s exit from the European Union;
- Identify a series of key short, medium and long term interventions that could contribute to economic and social recovery, thereby stabilising local economies and building local resilience;

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 12th August, 2020**

- Act as a conduit for engagement with relevant statutory agencies and key decision makers within relevant government departments in order to ensure a collaborative approach to working and to secure additional support for relevant interventions;
- Further the position of local government as a key delivery partner and support the ongoing dialogue around further devolution of powers to local level and the need for place-based responses to support inclusive and sustainable economic growth; and
- Position Local Government as a key player in co-design of a new economic strategy for NI where place based approaches and sub-regional economies were recognised.

She informed the Committee that, since its establishment in May 2020, the group had met on a number of occasions and the work to date had focused on a number of key issues including:

- Sharing information on town and city centre re-opening and recovery plans;
- Identifying key tactical and strategic engagement opportunities to ensure that local government was represented in and able to influence significant investment decisions relating to economic recovery; and
- Engaging with Invest NI to explore opportunities for accessing additional ERDF resources to support business recovery.

She explained that some of the emerging priority areas of work included securing council-level input into regional recovery plans, leveraging access to additional government resources to support recovery work and building a case to argue for additional ED and regeneration powers for councils – with associated core funding models (evolving from the City Deal approach).

She confirmed that as these work packages emerge, officers would report back to the Committee as appropriate, identifying the specific impact and opportunity for the Council.

The Committee noted:

- the establishment of the SOLACE District/Regional Recovery Group; and
- the key areas of collaborative work as agreed with all council partners.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

Update on Future City Centre Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- Advise Members on the pending review of the Future City Centre Programme in light of the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Update Members on the progression of a number of key projects within the ‘Physical Regeneration and Environmental Improvements’ work stream of the Future City Programme.
- Note that scheme design options are being developed for the Frederick St /York St junction,
- Update Members in relation to the adoption of the Inner North West Masterplan.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are requested to:

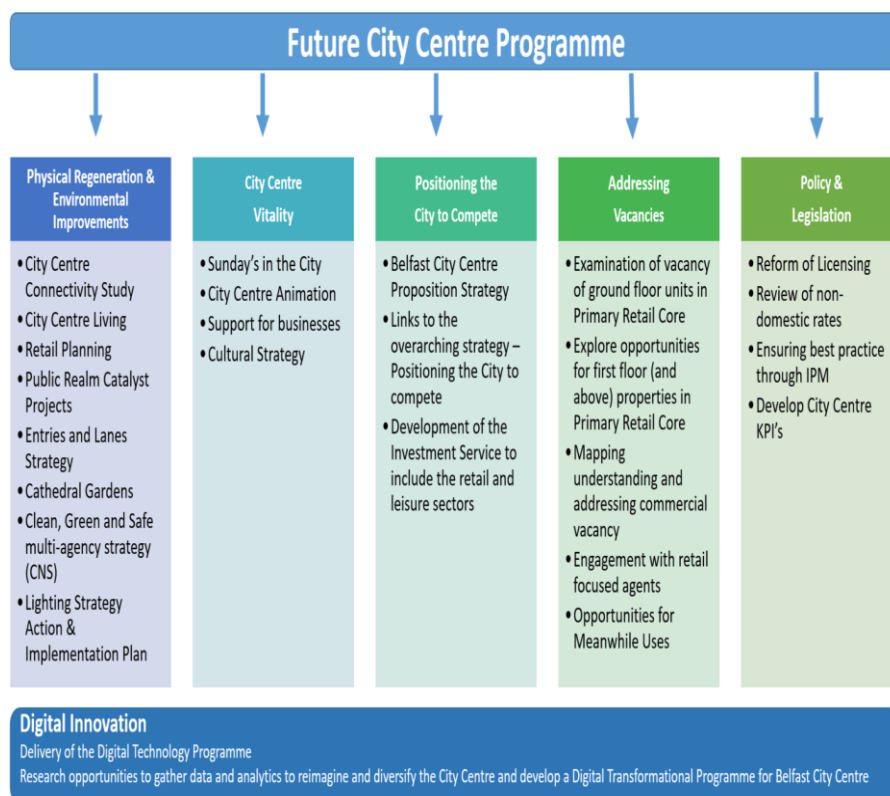
- i. Note that the Future City Centre Programme is being reviewed in light of the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the economy, businesses and the City Centre,
- ii. Note the progress of key projects within the ‘Physical Regeneration and Environmental Improvements’ work stream of the Future City Centre Programme, notably the Entries and Lanes Initiative; the Public Realm Catalyst Projects; the pop-up park at Cathedral Gardens, and pilot lighting projects developed alongside the emerging Lighting Strategy for Belfast.
- iii. Note the development of design options, in collaboration with DfC and DfI, for the Frederick St /York St junction and adjacent streets, with proposals to be brought to a future meeting of this Committee.
- iv. Note that the DfC Minister has approved the adoption of the Inner North West Masterplan.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

At the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in February 2020, Members received the Executive Summary of the Belfast City Centre Retail Analysis as developed by Pragma Consulting Limited. The Retail Analysis identified the challenges facing Belfast’s retail sector and provided recommendations on how best to address these challenges to ensure the City offers a dynamic and experiential destination.

- 3.2 At the same meeting, Members were also informed of the emerging 'Future City Centre Programme' (FCC), which builds on the key findings and recommendations outlined in the Pragma report. The FCC Programme has been developed in line with the Belfast Agenda, the Local Development Plan, the Inclusive Growth Strategy and the Cultural Strategy (A City Imagining), and has been informed by the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy.
- 3.3 While many of the priorities set out in the February report remain valid, there is a need to recast the focus of the Programme in the context of COVID-19 and the significant adverse impact on the City Centre. It is difficult to predict the future trends and challenges that will be faced as the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the City Centre emerges but it is critical that the FCC Programme remains agile in order to respond to rapidly shifting local, national and international factors that will continue to shape the role and performance of the City Centre.
- 3.4 As previously reported to Committee, within the current FCC Programme, the key areas of work fall into five priority pillars and with a further cross-cutting theme of 'Digital Innovation' underpinning these pillars, as set out below. The project elements within each of the pillars are not exhaustive.



- 3.5 Members will be aware that the Council recently obtained partner membership with the Institute of Place Management (IPM). The IPM is an international professional body that supports those committed to developing, managing and making places better. IPM have been appointed by the UK Government to lead the High Streets Task Force in England and deliver support to local authorities and communities working to transform their high streets. They have also developed a COVID-19 Recovery Framework to guide recovery for town and city centres. Officers are currently working with IPM to arrange an independent review of the FCC Programme to ensure its focus is relevant, particularly during these challenging times, and to incorporate best practice and identify priority actions to help address the challenges of the City Centre.
- 3.6 'Addressing Vacancies' is one of the priority work streams within the FCC Programme and will be a key component of short and longer term recovery in light of growing pressures on numerous sectors occupying space within the City Centre. A number of recent high profile closure announcements including Easons and Tesco Metro highlight the challenges faced by city centre businesses including, but not limited to, the retail sector. In this context, the review of the FCC Programme will place particular emphasis on developing a range of options for intervention to tackle the issue of vacant premises in the City Centre. Given the complex range of factors that can lead to vacancy ongoing engagement with a range of City Centre stakeholders will be particularly important.
- 3.7 FCC Programme: Physical Regeneration and Environmental Improvements
- A number of physical projects are currently underway within the City Centre, and while delivery timescales have been impacted by Covid-19, significant progress has been made in recent months. Clearly these initiatives were developed pre-Covid, but are very much in line with short term reopening and longer term recovery measures aimed at improving sustainable movement and connectivity, enhancing streets and spaces, creating multi-functional places of interest, and growing the recreation function of the City Centre for residents and visitors. A brief progress update is noted below with images included at Appendix 1.
- 3.8 Public Realm Catalyst Projects

Historic developer contributions have been aligned with DfC funding to develop and deliver a programme of public realm improvements in 5 City Centre streets: Chichester St; Callendar St; College Ct; College St and College Avenue. The '5C's' scheme has an estimated value in the region of £2m, with c£750K from developer contributions and remainder DfC funding, and will include resurfacing, lighting, street furniture and soft landscaping. The design team have commenced engagement with key stakeholders, and will be facilitating further consultation with Elected Members in relation to emerging concept designs during August, prior to public consultation planned for September.

- 3.9 Other potential public realm catalyst projects are being developed in a number of locations, including the Fredrick Street /York Street Junction to address the lack of cycling and walking provision at this key node. Officers have met with DfC and DfI officials who have engaged consultants to develop high level design options for this junction. Further collaborative work between Belfast City Council, DfC and DfI will be required to fully develop design information for both the junction and adjacent streets, which will define the scope of improvements that can be delivered using historic developer contributions in this area, alongside potential DfC and DfI contributions. Details of this scheme will be brought to a future meeting of Committee.

3.10 Belfast Entries and Lanes

Work is continuing to transform a number of City Centre pedestrian links. Phase 1 of the Entries and Lanes scheme includes seven entries: Castle Arcade; Winecellar Entry; Crown Entry; Wilson's Court; Joy's Entry; Pottinger's Entry and Cole's Alley. The project involves general repair work, repainting, enhanced lighting, new signage, planting and bespoke artwork. Initial works commenced on-site in July (photographs attached at Appendix 1).

- 3.11 The scheme applies a bespoke place-making approach to transform each entry, making them more welcoming and vibrant as pedestrian links that provide enhanced permeability and connectivity, and act as places of interest and activity in their own right. There is also potential to accommodate the use of external space by businesses in line with wider recovery initiatives. Through increased footfall, a further aim is to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour.
- 3.12 Included at Appendix 1 are some of the painted murals installed to date. Also included is a visualisation of the scheme proposed in Castle Arcade. A hand painted mural will accompany a large

lighting feature that is programmable with music for special events. Officers are working to secure permissions for these elements, with installation planned during early September. While the design response in each entry is bespoke and reflects unique spatial and historical characteristics, a consistent design ethos has been applied across the scheme as a whole, with unifying elements such as signage and interpretation.

- 3.13 Officers have received positive feedback in relation to Phase 1 and have received requests from property owners, business tenants and residents for similar work in additional entries and lanes. Early engagement has shown that there is significant potential to develop a further phase of work, and officers have developed design concepts and are exploring potential funding opportunities. A further report will be brought to Committee as the first phase of work concludes, setting out options for additional work pending any future funding opportunities.

3.14 Cathedral Gardens Pop-Up Park

Work commenced in March 2020 and while there have been programme delays due to Covid-19 restrictions, the expected completion date is now mid-August 2020. The project will deliver a multi-functional family-friendly space that is expected to be in place for approximately 2 years, while a permanent park and public realm scheme for Cathedral Gardens is developed.

- 3.15 The scheme includes resurfacing and installation of play / parkour equipment, electricity points to facilitate events, and enhanced lighting. Fitting of artificial grass (at play equipment), painting of hard surfaces, additional street furniture installation and soft landscaping / planting will also be carried out during August. Appendix 1 includes photographs of work on site as of 27th July.

3.16 Lighting Strategy- Pilot Project

Following on from earlier lighting pilot projects (a temporary neon artwork installation at Castle Arcade and a large scale Xmas 2019 animation (images at Appendix 1), a further lighting installation has been completed in Castle Street. This pilot consists of a series of interactive projector units, installed along a stretch of hoarding to create an image controlled and manipulated by pedestrian movement. The technology has been developed specifically for this project and is designed to provide reflected light while dealing with the issue of dead or closed frontages through visual and audio animation. The creative content for the projectors has been developed by a local visual artist and the two 'animations' are themed on the

rivers that run beneath the city, and the starling murmurations that are seen over the River Lagan. Three units have been installed in Castle Street, with a further six to be located elsewhere in the city centre during September/October 2020. The units are a platform which can be used to upload new content in the future themed to city events, festivals etc. Images are included at Appendix 1.

- 3.17 The learnings from the pilot projects have shaped the considerations and guidance within 'Luminous City, A Lighting Strategy for Belfast', which is currently being drafted. An action plan detailing future short and longer term lighting projects is currently being developed and it is proposed that a full report, with presentation, will be brought to September's CGR Committee.

3.18 Masterplan Adoption

Members will recall that the delivery of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy includes the development of a number of more detailed Masterplans to help support and shape city centre developments. The Inner North West (INW) Masterplan comprises a critical part of the city centre and is intended to guide the development of a mixed use, city centre neighbourhood including residential, commercial, retail and leisure functions, fully connected by high quality public realm. Following a 12 week public consultation the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the updated INW Masterplan in December 2018.

- 3.19 There is a significant amount of publicly owned land in the area which provides the opportunity for the public sector to influence and drive development in a co-ordinated manner. The Masterplan was produced in consultation with the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) with a view to close collaboration to support delivery. Council and DfC have subsequently worked jointly to develop the INW Action Plan which provides further detail on the initial proposals set out in the INW Masterplan, and identifies a number of short, medium and long term priorities and projects.
- 3.20 In June 2020, DfC confirmed Ministerial approval of the Inner Northwest Masterplan. This is a significant step in establishing a joint BCC/DfC delivery framework for the regeneration of this part of the City and provides certainty in terms of statutory commitment to the Masterplan, which supports associated work including the ongoing Strategic Site Assessments.

3.21 Finance and Resource Implications

Any costs associated with the development of the Future City Centre Programme and progression of design options for the Frederick St / York St junction will be brought forward within existing CRD budgets.

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

The Future City Centre Programme is a high level regeneration plan. The significant projects taken forward within the plan will be screened in their own right by the lead delivery division.

All emerging work strands will be individually screened for Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment.”

During discussion, one Member raised some concerns in relation to the walking and cycling connectivity of the proposed Shankill Gateway Public Realm Scheme.

Members also raised concerns in relation to the provision of Public Convenience Provision in the City and requested an update on the matter.

In response to Members questions, the Director of City Regeneration and Development provided further information on art work and the Belfast Entries Project. In response to a query raised by a Member, she also advised that further updates would be submitted to the Committee regarding City Centre Living.

The Committee:

- i. Noted that the Future City Centre Programme was being reviewed in light of the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the economy, businesses and the City Centre;
- ii. Noted the progress of key projects within the ‘Physical Regeneration and Environmental Improvements’ work stream of the Future City Centre Programme, notably the Entries and Lanes Initiative; the Public Realm Catalyst Projects; the pop-up park at Cathedral Gardens, and pilot lighting projects developed alongside the emerging Lighting Strategy for Belfast;
- iii. Noted the development of design options, in collaboration with DfC and DfI, for the Frederick St /York St junction and adjacent streets, with proposals to be brought to a future meeting of this Committee;
- iv. Noted that the DfC Minister had approved the adoption of the Inner North West Masterplan;
- v. Following an issue raised by a Member regarding the enhancement of junctions and improving walking and cycling connectivity as part of the Shankill Gateway Public Realm Scheme, it was agreed that Officers

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 12th August, 2020**

- would engage with the Department for Communities and the Department for Infrastructure on these matters; and
- vi. Following issues raised by Members in relation to the provision of Public Conveniences in the city centre, it was agreed that officers would liaise with Community and Neighbourhood Services and an update report would be brought back to Committee in the near future.

Connectivity and Access

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the current status of the 'Bolder Vision Connectivity Study for Belfast', together with an update on the York St Interchange review and proposals for a framework for community consultation on planning decisions.

A Bolder Vision for Belfast

The Director of City Regeneration and Development reminded the Committee that in August 2019, Council, the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) agreed to jointly commission a three-phased City Centre Connectivity Study, a 'Bolder Vision for Belfast'.

She advised that Phase 1 had been completed and 'A Bolder Vision for Belfast' was ratified by Council in March 2020. In June 2020 the Committee had noted that the Ministers for DfI and DfC had been asked to endorse the Bolder Vision and commit to progressing the future phases and seek to embed the Framework in the Programme for Government.

She informed the Committee that, for the next phases, the intention was to develop an action plan to outline scenarios, projects and delivery options based on the Future Vision. This would be used to inform further discussion with key civic partners, businesses, communities, Third Sector organisations, interest groups, statutory authorities and city leaders.

She recommended that the Committee noted that the Bolder Vision for Belfast had now been formally endorsed by both the Ministers for DfC and DfI, along with a commitment to working together collaboratively to consult widely with the public and other stakeholders to agree on a final Vision which would help guide future infrastructure investment decisions. She highlighted that it was proposed to formally launch the Vision jointly with DfI and DfC in the near future and discussions were ongoing with DfI and DfC in terms of progressing with the next phases.

She reported that, as the City begins its recovery post-Covid, and with the challenges that would remain in the coming months, there was renewed emphasis on how we use our City Centre spaces safely, whilst also promoting active travel. Some of the interventions coming forward to help address these challenges align with the ethos of the Bolder Vision and there was an opportunity to build on these, subject to stakeholder support and resources.

York St Interchange

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 12th August, 2020**

The Director of City Regeneration and Development advised that the DfI Minister had announced that an external review would take place to future proof the York Street Interchange Project in advance of moving to the procurement phase of the project through discussions with specialists and stakeholders. She recommended that the Chairman of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee formally writes to the Minister to welcome the proposed review, and to offer an opportunity for the Committee to engage with the process during the external review.

Ulster University Partnership Project

The Director of City Regeneration and Development reported that Ulster University had been selected to be a part of the UK wide Connecting Communities for Quality of Life Project, which would develop a framework for community consultation on planning decisions, supporting the development of community empowerment and paving the way for more resilient developments in the future. She advised that, as a key city stakeholder, the Council had the opportunity to partner with the Ulster University on this 30 month project. The Project would offer a framework to gain an improved understanding of what communities want, and how best to gain this information through the planning consultation process whilst enhancing social value and an improved process for joined up, long term consultation with communities on planning issues. She highlighted that it was proposed that new formats would be developed based on a review of best practice in community consultation in collaboration with CaCHE - the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (www.housingevidence.ac.uk). As part of the Project the emerging framework would be tested and refined through pilot consultations which would take place in Reading, Cardiff, Belfast and Edinburgh. She confirmed that further details would be brought back to Committee as the work progressed.

The Committee:

- Noted the DfC and DfI Ministerial endorsement of the Bolder Vision for Belfast;
- Agreed to write to the DfI Minister to support the external review of the York Street Interchange, and to offer an opportunity to engage with the review process; and
- Agreed to support a partnership project with Ulster University and other stakeholders in relation to a UK-wide planning community consultation research project.

**Department for Communities Access
and Inclusion Programme 2020-2021**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 Belfast City Council is invited to administer the Department for Communities’ (DfC) Access and Inclusion Programme 2020/21 on behalf of Belfast based arts, cultural and active recreation**

venues. This Programme supports small-scale capital investments of up to £30,000 and aims to improve access to arts and cultural activities and active recreation facilities, by people with disabilities. Council departments can also apply to this Programme.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- Agree to Council's role in promoting, assessing and managing DfC's Access and Inclusion Programme 2020/21 and supporting organisations and Council departments to access the funding.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Department for Communities are inviting all local councils to administer their Access and Inclusion Programme 2020/21 within their respective local council areas.

The Council managed the 18/19 and 19/20 Access and Inclusion Programme within Belfast and received support for 24 projects with total value of £412,554, of which five were Council projects. These have included improved access to City Hall and the Tropical Ravine, and specialised playground facilities.

DfC will formally launch the programme as a competitive process on 3 August 2020 with a closing date of Friday 11th September 2020.

3.2 The Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme aims to:

- i. Improve access to arts, culture and active recreation venues across NI for people with disabilities;
- ii. Make arts, cultural and active recreation venues more inclusive across society;
- iii. Increase participation in arts, culture and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.

3.3 Council owned venues and facilities are eligible to apply for support as well as relevant independent organisations. The Council oversees the assessment and recommendation of projects via an open call, and is responsible for delivery of all projects in receipt of funding.

Active recreation projects can include public walkways, cycle paths, forest trails, children's playparks and similar outdoor recreation sites. The programme is not designed to support the development of sports grounds, but where sports grounds can demonstrate that an application to develop infrastructure is aimed at increasing participation in active recreation by people with a disability, it may be considered.

- 3.4 Capital works and equipment costs are eligible under this programme but funding will not be provided to part fund larger projects. Applicants must confirm that projects will complete on or before 31 March 2021.**

3.5 Financial and Resource Implications

Council funding is not a requirement this year but DfC has indicated that a contribution from Council will be required in order to participate in the Programme in future years.

TCHA unit have experienced staff resources available to oversee this Programme.

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

TCHA will work closely with the Council's Equality Unit and DfC to ensure positive equality implications which is the central component of the Programme.

There are no rural needs or good relations implications."

The Committee agreed to the Council's role in promoting, assessing and managing the Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Programme 2020/21, and supporting organisations and Council departments to access the funding. Following a suggestion from a Member, it also noted that the Council's Disability Advisory Panel would be included in the consultation process.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Update on Motion - EuroPride (Councillor O'Hara to raise)

Councillor O'Hara provided an update in relation to his engagement with Belfast Pride and their bid to host EuroPride in 2023.

During discussion, Members raised concerns in relation to communication issues they had experienced with Belfast Pride, together with the potential for capacity building and support for the Bid.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 12th August, 2020**

After discussion, the Committee agreed to invite Belfast Pride to its meeting in September to discuss the EuroPride bid.

The Committee also noted that an update report would be submitted to a future Committee in relation to funding opportunities for culture and arts in addition to cultural multi annual grants (CMAG).

Economic Impact of Retail Unit Closures and Job Losses
(Councillor Heading to raise)

Councillor Heading outlined his concerns in relation to the economic impact of Covid-19 on retail unit closures, redundancies and job losses in the City. He suggested that analysis of what the City might look like in the next one to five years would be helpful to progress the recovery of the City.

The Committee noted that analysis was being undertaken in relation to retail unit closures and vacant buildings in the city and an update would be brought to a future Committee.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 19th August, 2020

MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Donnelly (Chairperson);
Alderman Sandford; and
Councillors Baker, Bunting, Michael Collins,
Groves, Hussey, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee,
Magennis, McAteer, McCullough, McKeown
and McReynolds.

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

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Copeland and Councillors Howard, Hutchinson and Whyte.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Delegated Matters

THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO IT UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(d)

Application for the Grant of a 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for Pug Uglys, 21 Bedford Street

The Committee considered the following application:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To consider an application for the grant of a 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence and for permission to provide entertainment after 11.00 pm in respect of Pug

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

Uglys based on the Council's standard conditions to provide outdoor musical entertainment.

Area and Location	Ref. No.	Applicant
Pug Uglys Car park to the rear of 29 Bedford Street Belfast BT2 7EJ	WK/202000697	Mr Paul Langsford Bedford Taverns Limited, 21 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7EJ

- 1.2 A location map is available on the Council's Website.**
- 1.3 Members are reminded that all applications for the grant of Outdoor Entertainments Licences must be brought before Committee for consideration.**
- 2.0 Recommendations**
- 2.1 The Committee is requested, having heard from the applicant, to:**
- a) Approve the application for the grant of the 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence and for permission to provide entertainment to the hours after 11.00 pm requested, or**
 - b) Approve the application for the grant with special conditions, or**
 - c) Refuse the application for the grant of the 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence and for permission to provide entertainment after 11.00 pm.**
- 2.2 If an application is refused, or special conditions are attached to the licence to which the applicant does not consent, then the applicant may appeal the Council's decision within 21 days of notification of that decision to the County Court. In the case that the applicant subsequently decides to appeal, outdoor entertainment may not be provided until any such appeal is determined.**
- 3.0 Main Report**
- Key Issues**
- 3.1 The applicant has applied to provide outdoor entertainment within a carpark to the rear of 29 Bedford Street.**
- 3.2 The applicant has also proposed to provide entertainment within the new outdoor area beyond 11.00pm. The day and hours proposed are:**

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

- **Monday to Saturday: 12.00pm to 01.00am the following morning, and**
 - **Sunday: 12.30pm to midnight**
- 3.3** Members are reminded that applications to provide outdoor entertainment beyond 11.00pm are subject to consideration by Committee.
- 3.4** The days and hours during which entertainment may be provided under the terms of the indoor Entertainments Licence are:
- **Monday to Saturday 11.30am to 3.00am, and**
 - **Sunday 12.30pm to 3.00am.**
- 3.5** The applicant proposes to provide entertainment within the new outdoor area in the form of DJs and live bands. Due to restrictions on licensed premises arising from Covid 19 the outdoor area will be used to increase capacity for the venue whilst adhering to social distancing requirements.
- 3.6** Layout plans of the new outdoor area are available on the Council's Website.

Representations

- 3.7** Public notice of the application has been placed and no written representation has been lodged as a result of the advertisement.

PSNI

- 3.8** The Police Service of Northern Ireland has been consulted and has confirmed that they have no objection to the application. A copy of their response are available on the Council's Website.

NIFRS

- 3.9** The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service have been consulted in relation to the outdoor application. We are currently awaiting their comments on the proposals.

Health, safety and welfare

- 3.10** The outdoor area (to be known as the Bone Yard) has been designed to allow patrons to socially distance. The applicant has created an event management plan outlining how the area will be managed to ensure the health and

safety of their patrons and staff. Included within this are policies on customer social distancing, staff social distancing, PPE, hand washing and waiter service.

- 3.11 The Building Control Service has provided a copy of the applicant's proposals to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to the Health and Safety section of City and Neighbourhood Services for their consideration.
- 3.12 The site has been inspected during the build of the event space and following its completion. No health and safety concerns were found to exist.

Noise

- 3.13 No noise complaints have been received in relation to the premises in the last 12 month period.
- 3.14 The applicant has been requested to provide the Service with an acoustic report for the outdoor area. This is being developed and will be provided to our Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) for evaluation.
- 3.15 Members are reminded that the Clean Neighbourhood And Environment Act 2011 gives the council additional powers in relation to the control of entertainment noise after 11.00 pm.

Applicant

- 3.16 The applicant, and/or their representatives, will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to the application.

A supplementary letter from the applicant outlining their reasons for applying for an outdoor licence is available on the Council's Website.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.17 None.

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

- 3.18 There are no issues associated with this report."

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

The Building Control Manager advised that, since the report had been published, an Acoustic Report had been received and sent to the Environmental Protection Unit for consideration. He also advised that the NIFRS have confirmed they had no objection to the application.

The Committee received a representation from the applicant Mr. P. Langsford. He explained that the requirement to provide outdoor entertainment within a carpark to the rear of 29 Bedford Street was due to the impact of Covid-19 on the business and it was not viable to open the premises with only the inside space in use. He highlighted that the lease had been agreed with the landlord in the short-term and an investment had been made to develop the car park. He stated that an Entertainments Licence was required to ensure staff were retained and remained off furlough, to compete with other city centre venues, together with providing entertainment for local and tourist customers. In response to a comment made by a Member, he clarified that he was no longer involved with Filthy McNastys Bar, but reported that it also had an outdoor Entertainment's License for its beer garden.

During Members questions in relation to noise levels impacting residential amenities, the Building Control Manager confirmed that the applicant's Acoustic Report stated that the music would be monitored and the appropriate levels set, and if there were complaints regarding noise disturbance, they could be adjusted as appropriate.

The Committee agreed to grant the Seven-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for Pug Uglys, 21 Bedford Street, thereby permitting entertainment to take place from Monday to Saturday: 12.00 pm to 1.00 am the following morning, and Sunday: 12.30 pm to midnight, subject to the outcome of the Environmental Protection Unit's assessment of the Acoustic Report and any recommendations arising being complied with.

**Applications for the Grant of a 7-Day Annual Outdoor
Entertainments Licence for Whites Tavern, 2-4 Winecellar Entry**

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received for the grant of a 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence in respect of Whites Tavern for permission to provide entertainment after 11.00 pm based on the Council's standard conditions to provide outdoor musical entertainment.

He reported that the current Indoor Entertainments Licence granted to the premises is a 7-Day Annual Licence which extends to 2.00 am.

He advised that the applicant had applied to provide outdoor entertainment within 14-16 High Street and a new opening had been formed between Whites Tavern and this building with the roof being removed to create an external space. He reported that the building works to create this external space were ongoing and were planned to be completed by the end of August. He confirmed that, if the Committee were minded to grant the Outdoor Entertainments Licence, it would not be issued until such time as all works and technical requirements were completed to the satisfaction of the Service.

The Building Control Manager confirmed that the applicant had proposed to provide entertainment within the new outdoor as follows:

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

- Monday to Saturday: 12.00 pm to 2.00 am the following morning, and
- Sunday: 12.30 pm to 1.00 am the following morning.

He pointed out that the applicant had stated that the main reason they wished to provide outdoor entertainment was due to restrictions on licensed premises arising from Covid 19 and the outdoor area would be used to increase capacity for the venue whilst adhering to social distancing requirements.

The Building Control Manager confirmed that no written representation had been received in relation to the application and that the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland had not objected.

He highlighted that a copy of the applicant's proposals to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 had been provided to the Health and Safety section of City and Neighbourhood Services for their consideration.

He advised that no noise complaints had been received in relation to the premises in the last 12 months and there did not appear to be any residential premises in the vicinity, therefore it was unlikely that noise from the area of the premises would adversely impact on nearby noise sensitive premises. However, as the applicant proposed to provide outdoor entertainment to 2.00 am an acoustic report had been requested for the outdoor area and would be provided to the Environmental Protection Unit for evaluation.

The Committee agreed to grant the Seven-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for unit to the rear of Whites Tavern, 14-16 High Street, thereby permitting entertainment to take place from Monday to Saturday: 12.00 pm to 2.00 am the following morning, and Sunday: 12.30 pm to 1.00 am the following morning, subject to the completion of building works and technical requirements to the satisfaction of the Building Control Service.

Stationary Street Trading Licence application for Cornmarket site including the sale of bus tour tickets

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on the 19th September, 2018, it had been agreed that any further applications to sell bus tour tickets would be considered by the Committee and, if approved, be granted on a one-year trial basis.

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received from Mr. M. Kerr for the grant of a Stationary Street Trading Licence at the available designated site in Cornmarket, which would permit him to sell tour tickets (including bus tours), art work, clothing, clothing accessories, confectionery, flowers and plants, jewellery, jokes, novelty items, seasonal items, souvenirs, wrapping paper and cards. Mr. Kerr was proposing to operate his business from Monday till Sunday between the hours of 6.00 am and 10. 00 pm.

He reminded the Committee that Mr. Kerr already had a Stationary Street Trading Licence to trade at the designated site in Fountain Lane, selling similar commodities including bus tour tickets. However, since being granted that Licence, Mr Kerr had not been able to trade due to Covid 19 restrictions.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

He reported that neither Transport NI nor the Police Service of Northern Ireland, who had been consulted on the application, had offered any objections.

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to grant to Mr. M. Kerr a Street Trading Licence for a designated site in Cornmarket, permitting him to sell tour tickets (including bus tours), art work, clothing, clothing accessories, confectionery, flowers and plants, jewellery, jokes, novelty items, seasonal items, souvenirs, wrapping paper and cards, from Monday to Sunday from 6.00 am to 10.00 pm, on a one-year trial basis.

**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.

**Minded opinion on the renewal of a Licence to
operate a House in Multiple Occupation at 93B University
Avenue, Belfast, BT7 1GX**

The Committee was reminded that, at its June meeting, it was asked to consider whether it would be minded to grant or refuse the application for the renewal of a Licence permitting the use of premises as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) at 93B University Avenue.

It was reported that, the Chief Executive's decisions that were taken under delegated authority for the Licensing Committee in June, stated that, due to no consensus from the Committee, the application would be referred to committee for determination at the earliest opportunity.

The Committee was reminded that Section 8 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 ("the 2016 Act") stated that the council may grant a renewal application if it was satisfied that the applicant and their managing agent were fit and proper persons, and in assessment of this, the Council must have regard to any relevant convictions, including any offences which relate to the operation of HMOs.

The HMO Unit Manager advised that the applicant had submitted an application to renew the HMO licence for the aforementioned premises which was deemed valid on 24th April, 2020.

He highlighted that, pursuant to the 2016 Act, the applicant was required to declare any offences committed. As outlined under the Application History of the report, one of the applicants had failed to declare an offence in relation to the operation of HMOs in 2013. Therefore officers felt it was necessary to seek members' views on whether they would be minded to either grant or refuse the licence, so that the applicant could be notified prior to the application being determined. He confirmed that the applicant was

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

entitled to make representations in respect of the proposed decision before a final decision was made.

The HMO Unit Manager advised that, pursuant to the 2016 Act, the Council may only grant a renewal application if it was satisfied of the following:

- The owner, and any managing agent of it, are fit and proper persons;
a) the applicant and their managing agent are a fit and proper person;
b) the proposed management arrangements are satisfactory; and
c) the living accommodation is fit for human habitation and—
 (i) is suitable for occupation as an HMO by the number of persons
 to be specified in the licence, or
 (ii) can be made so suitable by including conditions in the
 licence.***

The HMO Unit Manager highlighted that as this was a renewal application planning permission and over provision could not be taken into account.

He advised that, in considering the question of fitness, the Council must have regard to whether the person had committed any offence involving –

- a) Fraud or other dishonesty,
b) Violence
c) Drugs,
d) Human trafficking, or
e) A firearm (within the meaning of Article 2(2) of the Firearms
(Northern Ireland) Order 2004);
f) an offence listed in Schedule 3 to the Sexual Offences Act 2003
(offences attracting notification requirements);
g) practised unlawful discrimination in, or in connection with, the
carrying on of any business;
h) contravened any provision of the law relating to housing or of
landlord and tenant law;
or
i) acted otherwise than in accordance with an approved code of
practice.**

**The council must have regard to whether any associate or former
associate of the applicant has engaged in any of the above conduct
where it is considered relevant as to the fitness of the applicant.**

**The Council is also entitled to take into account any other matter
which it considers to be relevant.**

He advised that no objections had been received, however a small number of noise complaints had been received, the most recent being 10th March, 2020.

He informed the Committee that, due to data protection issues which had recently arisen, PSNI had not been accepting or responding to notification of these applications but Officers were continuing to engage with PSNI to find a resolution to this issue. He stated that Officers were not aware of any other issues relevant to the applicant's fitness.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

After discussion, the Committee agreed that it was minded to grant the application for the renewal of a Licence to operate a House in Multiple Occupation at 93B University Avenue.

**Minded opinion on the renewal of a Licence to
operate a House in Multiple Occupation at 17 Colenso
Parade, Belfast, BT9 5AN**

The Committee was reminded that, at its June meeting, it was asked to consider whether it would be minded to grant or refuse the application for the renewal of a Licence permitting the use of premises as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) at 17 Colenso Parade.

It was reported that, the Chief Executive's decisions that were taken under delegated authority for the Licensing Committee in June, stated that, due to no consensus from the Committee, the application would be referred to committee for determination at the earliest opportunity.

The HMO Unit Manager provided an overview of the application and explained that the application must be considered by the Committee, pursuant to the 2016 Act and aforementioned legal advice.

He advised that the applicant had submitted an application to renew the HMO licence for the aforementioned premises which was deemed valid on 23rd March, 2020.

He highlighted that, pursuant to the 2016 Act, the applicant was required to declare any offences committed. As outlined under the Application History of the report, the applicant had failed to declare an offence in relation to the operation of HMOs in 2014. Therefore officers felt it was necessary to seek members' views on whether they would be minded to either grant or refuse the licence, so that the applicant could be notified prior to the application being determined. He confirmed that the applicant was entitled to make representations in respect of the proposed decision before a final decision was made.

He advised that one objection had been received and a single noise complaint had also been received in respect of the property in March, 2017.

He reiterated that, due to data protection issues, the PSNI had not responded to the notification, but stated that Officers were not aware of any other issues relevant to the applicant's fitness.

During discussion, one Member raised general concerns in regards to HMO's in the area in relation to overprovision, complaints from residents, anti-social behaviour, and the impact on local families.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that it was minded to grant the application for the renewal of a Licence to operate a House in Multiple Occupation at 17 Colenso Parade.

**Minded opinion on the renewal of a Licence to
operate a House in Multiple Occupation at 29 Stranmillis Park,
Belfast, BT9 5AU**

The Committee was reminded that, at its June meeting, it was asked to consider whether it would be minded to grant or refuse the application for the renewal of a Licence permitting the use of premises as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) at 29 Stranmillis Park.

It was reported that, the Chief Executive's decisions that were taken under delegated authority for the Licensing Committee in June, stated that, due to no consensus from the Committee, the application would be referred to committee for determination at the earliest opportunity.

The HMO Unit Manager provided an overview of the application and explained that the application must be considered by the Committee, pursuant to the 2016 Act and aforementioned legal advice.

The HMO Unit Manager advised that the applicant had submitted an application to renew the HMO licence for the aforementioned premises which was deemed valid on 28th February, 2020.

He highlighted that, pursuant to the 2016 Act, the applicant was required to declare any offences committed. As outlined under the Application History of the report, the applicant had failed to declare an offence in relation to the operation of HMOs in 2014 and 2015. Therefore officers felt it was necessary to seek members' views on whether they would be minded to either grant or refuse the licence, so that the applicant could be notified prior to the application being determined. He confirmed that the applicant was entitled to make representations in respect of the proposed decision before a final decision was made.

He advised that no objections or recent noise complaints had been received in respect of the property.

He reiterated that, due to data protection issues the PSNI had not responded to the notification, but stated that Officers were not aware of any other issues relevant to the applicant's fitness.

The Committee received a representation from Mrs. J. Crawford. She advised that the failure to disclose the convictions on the application form had been an oversight on her behalf. She explained that, due to ill health and her husband previously dealing with the property management, she had not remembered the convictions, therefore did not fill in the form correctly. She reported that the house had been in their ownership for the last 25 years.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

During Members questions, Mrs Crawford explained that she intended to get an agent to help manage the property but would always be on hand to assist. She also advised that they maintained close contact with tenants and their parents and had implemented behaviour policies and maintenance standards.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that it was minded to grant the application for the renewal of a Licence to operate a House in Multiple Occupation at 29 Stranmillis Park.

Non-Delegated Matters

**Review of Designation of street trading
sites policy timeframe**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

- “1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**
- 1.1 The Street Trading Act (NI) 2001 (the Act) provides district councils with the power to designate or to rescind the designation of specific streets or parts of streets as being suitable for street trading.**
- 1.2 If a street has not been Designated under the Act the Council cannot issue a Licence for street trading from a stationary position in that street.**
- 1.3 At present, as previously decided by Committee, the designation process will be undertaken every 2 years to reduce the costs to the Council.**
- 1.4 At your meeting of June 2019 the Committee granted approval to initiate the statutory process for the designation of a new street trading site. Therefore any new proposed street trading sites will not be considered by the Council before June 2021.**
- 2.0 Recommendations**
- 2.1 Members are asked to consider if they wish to deviate from the current policy regarding street trading designation time frames and agree that a new designation process be commenced.**
- 3.0 Main Report**
- Key Issues**
- Background**

- 3.1 The Act sets down the procedures which must be followed in considering whether to designate a site or rescind a designation. The steps the Council must undertake are summarised as follows:
- a) Give public notice of the proposed resolution;
 - b) Consult with the PSNI, Department for Infrastructure, licence holders (if any) and other persons it considers appropriate;
 - c) Consider any representations relating to the proposed resolution which it has received;
 - d) After the Council has considered those representations it may, if it thinks fit, pass the Designating Resolution;
 - e) Publish notice of the outcome for 2 consecutive weeks in 2 or more newspapers, giving not less than 28 days between the date of the publication and the date set out by the Council when the Designating Resolution will come into effect.
- 3.2 The Council has received two applications for new sites as well as a number of other enquiries about designating new sites.
- 3.3 Officers have advised those enquiring about the Council's policy on carrying out designation every two years and that any new proposed street trading sites will not be considered by the Council before June 2021.
- 3.4 Given the current situation and the impact it has had on the economy this advice has been met with disappointment by prospective applicants.
- 3.5 In an effort to assist permission is sought to deviate from the agreed policy and to engage with those who have made enquires and to bring back a report detailing the proposed sites for designation to a future meeting of the Committee.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.6 There are direct financial costs such as the cost of publishing statutory notices in newspapers, attached to the designation process. We estimate the cost of the required notices to be £3,500. These costs are included in the existing revenue budget.

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

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th August, 2020**

3.7 There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report.”

The Committee noted the deviation from the current policy regarding street trading designation time frames and agreed that a new designation process be commenced, as outlined in the report.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

**Circulation of Applications Received
(Councillor McKeown to Raise)**

Councillor McKeown suggested that, to raise awareness of new applications received by the Service, Building Control could implement a process to circulate a list to all councillors. He suggested that this could be sent out electronically, on a fortnightly basis, with applications identified by type, address, and DEA, with contact information for members who wished to seek further details or raise objections to an application.

The Committee agreed that Building Control implement a process to circulate an electronic list of Entertainments Licence, Amusement Permit, Street Trading, Pavement Licence and Road Closure applications that are received by the Service, to all Members, from week commencing 7th September, 2020.

Chairperson

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Planning Committee

Tuesday, 18th August, 2020

SPECIAL MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

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

In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and
Building Control;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager
(Development Management);
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Hutchinson and McKeown.

Minutes

The minutes of the Special meetings of 21st and 28th July were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 10th August, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in the proposed pre-emptive site visit to Havelock House, in that she had previously made representation in respect of the application and had engaged with objectors and, as such, would not take part in the discussion or decision regarding the application.

Councillor O'Hara declared an interest in LA04/2019/1540/F - Centralised Anaerobic Digestion (CAD) plant on lands to the northwest of existing Belfast City Council Waste Transfer Station, 2a Dargan Road, in that he was on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and that the Belfast Harbour Commission was objecting to the application. He advised that, as it was a Council appointment and as he did not have a pecuniary interest, he could fully participate in the discussion on the item.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

Motion - Restoration and Listing of Historic Street Signs

The Committee considered the undernoted motion which, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), had been immediately referred to the Planning Committee by the Council at its meeting on 1st July:

“This Council:

1. notes the valuable contribution that Belfast's historic tiled street signs make to the character of the areas in which they are situated and laments the loss of so many of these signs over the years;
2. further notes that a number of freestanding tiled street signs in Belfast have been listed and thereby protected from destruction or removal, but that most such signs have no protection at all;
3. requests its officers :-
 - to take all necessary steps to effect the repair and restoration of the freestanding tiled street signs identified below* and to take steps to identify other such signs and to take all necessary steps to effect the repair and restoration of those signs; and
 - to request that the Department for Communities adds those signs which are of particular quality and merit to the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.
4. The street signs referred to above are situated at the junctions of :
 - (a) Kensington Road/Knock Road.
 - (b) Cherryvalley Park/Kensington Road.
 - (c) Kingsden Park/Knock Road.
 - (d) Knockland Park/Barnett's Road.
 - (e) Summerhill Parade/Barnett's Road.
 - (f) Belmont Road/Massey Avenue [the unlisted sign].
 - (g) Wandsworth Road/Belmont Road [2 signs].
 - (h) Belmont Church Road/Sydenham Avenue.
 - (i) Belmont Church Road/Belmont Road [the unlisted sign].
 - (j) Eastleigh Drive/Kincora Avenue.
 - (k) Clonlee Drive/Upper Newtownards Road.
 - (l) Beersbridge Road/Upper Newtownards Road.”

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting providing further information on the issues raised.

Committee Site Visits

Note of Site Visits

It was noted that the Committee had undertaken site visits on 12th August in respect of the following three planning applications:

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

- LA04/2018/2876/F - Lands opposite 13, 15, 17 and 32 Somerdale Park;
- LA04/2020/0757/F - Upgrade of existing gravel pitch to synthetic sand dressed hockey pitch, with floodlighting, fencing, acoustic barrier, storage container at West Pitch, Downey House, Pirrie Park Gardens; and
- LA04/2018/1411/F - Upgrade of existing gravel pitch to synthetic sand dressed hockey pitch, with floodlighting, fencing, acoustic barrier, storage container at East Pitch Downey House, Pirrie Park Gardens.

Proposed Pre-Emptive Site Visit

In response to a suggestion from the Planning Manager (Development Management) relating to a number of major planning applications which were due to be considered by the Committee over the next few months, the Committee agreed to undertake a pre-emptive site visit to:

- LA04/2020/0067/F: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 270 no. apartment building comprising 8, 5 and 3 storey elements, provision of hard and soft landscaping including communal courtyard gardens, public realm, provision of 40 no. car parking spaces, cycle parking, substation and associated works. (Further information and amended plans received) at Havelock House, Ormeau Road, Belfast.

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 15th July and 7th August.

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.

**DfI Notification - Provision of Accessible/
Disabled Parking Bay**

The Committee noted correspondence which had been received from the Department for Infrastructure, advising of its intention to provide an accessible/disabled parking bay at 26 Fortwilliam Crescent.

Miscellaneous Item

Graffiti/defacing of Street Furniture

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To bring to the Committee’s attention the outcomes of cross-departmental discussions regarding graffiti and defacing of street furniture. A Motion was presented to the Council at its meeting on 4th February, and discussed at Planning Committee on 19th February 2019.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to:**

- Note the outcomes of cross-departmental discussions and the intention to move forward with the public art project.**

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 The motion regarding street furniture, which was proposed by Councillor Boyle, and seconded by Councillor Dudgeon, was presented to the Council at its meeting on 4 February 2019:**

“This Council recognises that it is difficult to contact those responsible for the maintenance of street furniture, utility boxes, phone boxes and masts, post boxes, advertising facilities and any other structure that sits on or in the footpath or in a public place throughout the City.

The Council supports the need for people to be able to contact those responsible for the cleaning and maintaining of these structures. Accordingly, the Council will undertake a piece of work to identify whose ownership these are in and will encourage those responsible for maintaining and cleaning same to put their details on these structures and ensure their details remain on these structures so that they can be contacted when needed. Furthermore, the Council agrees that any future planning approvals for street furniture, boxes etc. as listed above, will include a condition requiring the contact details of those responsible for cleaning and

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

maintaining and servicing them to be prominently displayed.”

- 3.2 In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the Motion was referred without discussion to the Planning Committee.
- 3.3 Planning Committee meeting on 19th February 2019; The Director confirmed to the Committee that not all items of street furniture required planning permission and that the requirement to provide contact details was not a material planning consideration. However, he explained to the Members that, where an application was in front of the Committee, it could add an informative on the consent requiring the owners of the equipment to include contact details on the piece of street furniture. He outlined to the Committee that cross-departmental meetings were taking place to look at the issue of graffiti on street furniture.
- 3.4 In response to a Member's question, he confirmed to the Committee that it could, by condition, require that owners maintained street furniture in good order, whereby the enforcement team could ensure that those conditions were upheld.
- 3.5 The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting on the outcomes of any cross-departmental discussions relating to the issues of graffiti/defacing of street furniture.
- 3.6 Outcomes of any cross-departmental discussions relating to the issues of graffiti/defacing of street furniture
- 3.7 Under The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985 the Council's City and Neighbourhood Services Department may remove or obliterate graffiti, placards and posters. In the case of graffiti if it is detrimental to the amenity of land in its district and for fly-posting if displayed in contravention of the advertising regulations. Additionally, the Council has further limited enforcement powers in relation to graffiti and defacement of street furniture.

(i) Fixed Penalty Notices

An £80 Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) can be issue in certain circumstances to anyone who is caught in the act of graffiti on any road, tree, road traffic signs or where anyone is caught displaying fly-posters which contravene the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (Displaying

advertisements in contravention of regulations made under Section 130 of the Act).

(ii) Removal Notices

A two-day removal notice can be served on an individual who is identified as being responsible for the graffiti asking them to remove the graffiti. This also applies if the graffiti, placard or poster publicises the goods, services or concerns of an identifiable person. In which case the notice is served on the business or person advertised. Failure to comply with the notice may result in the removal of the graffiti or poster by the Council and the recovery of debt as a civil debt.

(iii) Defacement Removal Notices:

A Defacement Removal Notice can be served on the owners of a relevant surface, such as a utility box or building controlled by a statutory undertaker, in certain circumstances to request that they remove graffiti from their properties. A defacement removal notice allows the owner twenty-eight days to remove the defacement from their property. If they fail to do so the council may remove the defacement and recover the costs as a civil debt. The Guidance suggest that Councils should seek to achieve co-operation through a partnership approach and that the use of these Notices should be a last resort.

3.8 Operational impacts and ability to respond

Graffiti related activity tends to happen under the cover of darkness and is difficult to detect, with the result that the above FPN and Removal Notice powers have limited impact as the perpetrator is very rarely observed whilst in the act of defacing surfaces.

Following engagement with statutory agencies and utility companies, officers within the enforcement team have undertaken some proactive monitoring to identify hotspot areas and engage with the respective statutory agencies and utility companies to achieve removal of the graffiti. This has resulted in the removal of some graffiti from bridges, telephone boxes and utility boxes. Unfortunately in a number of instances, the graffiti has re-appeared within days of its removal.

In relation to fly-posting on utility boxes and other surfaces, the Council's enforcement and planning enforcement team work collaboratively to address

defacement of property and street furniture due to flyposting activity using the above powers contained within the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act (NI) 2011 in the first instance. Where there is persistent illegal fly-posting advertising, the cases can be referred to the Planning enforcement team for further investigation under the Planning Act 2011 and the Control of Advertisement Regulations (NI) 2015.

3.9 The Belfast Canvas Pilot Project

Following approval in March 2019 meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee, the Council developed a pilot public art project in partnership with Destination Cathedral Quarter and Belfast One Business Improvement District to improve the area's appearance through animation of utility boxes. The project aimed to decrease incidences of graffiti/tagging, fly posting, and other anti-social behaviours associated with utility boxes. Professional street artists, collaborating with community groups and university students, decorated 18 utility boxes in the city's main retail heart, to transform them into unique works of art, adding colour to the cityscape. Following an evaluation of Phase 1, a more detailed proposal was planned for delivery of Phase 2 on the Belfast Rapid Transport route, involving engagement with community groups from east and west Belfast. Following the relaxation of lockdown and in anticipation of developing Phase 2, it is hoped to have 4 pilot boxes in East and West painted by end of July 2020 with a view to extending this project across the BRT route and further across the city centre when funding can be made available to support this project.

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

None.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None."

The Committee noted the content.

Planning Applications

THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO IT BY THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(e)

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

Withdrawn Items

The Committee noted that the following items had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- LA04/2019/1598/F - Apart-Hotel (87no. bedrooms & 26no. serviced apartments), 14no. Business Studios and 10no. live/work studios with associated car parking and landscaping at Adelaide Business Centre, Apollo Road – as the applicant had withdrawn the application from the planning process; and
- LA04/2019/1540/F - Centralised Anaerobic Digestion (CAD) plant on lands to the northwest of existing Belfast City Council Waste Transfer Station, 2a Dargan Road, due to recent correspondence which had been received from the applicant which required further consideration by the officers.

**(Reconsidered) LA04/2020/0454/F - House of
Multiple Occupancy at 19 Balfour Avenue**

The Committee was advised that the application had previously been listed for consideration by the Committee on 16th June 2020, during the period of delegated authority in respect of Covid 19. However, Members of the Committee had advised that they did not feel that they had been given sufficient time to consider the late items, which had been submitted on behalf of the applicant, in order to form a view at that time. Consequently, consideration of the item was deferred.

The Case officer provided the Committee with an overview of the application. She explained that the key considerations in the assessment of the proposal were the principle of development and the impact on amenity. The Members were advised that the site was located within a zoned Housing Action Area in accordance with the BUAP and within the proposed Lower Ormeau Area of Townscape Character in draft BMAP.

As the application site fell within a designated HMO policy area, the Case officer explained that Policy HMO 1 applied and that within designated HMO Policy Areas, planning permission would only be granted where the number of HMO dwelling units did not, as a result, exceed 30% of all dwelling units within the Policy Area. The Committee was advised that, out of 370 domestic properties within the Lower Ormeau Policy Area, 122 were HMOs, equating to 32.9%.

She advised that the proposed development was therefore contrary to Policy HMO 1 of the Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) Subject Plan for the Belfast City Council Area 2015, in that the number of HMO dwelling units already exceeded 30% of all dwelling units within the Policy Area.

The Committee was advised that the application had been neighbor notified and that no representations had been received. However, the Case officer outlined that an objection had been received since the June Committee from Councillor Gormley.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, whereby the applicant's son had rebutted a number of points which had been raised in the objection, including that a Special Action Area had not yet been designated. The Case officer provided the Members with the officers' response to those issues, during which she confirmed that, as the Special Action Area had not yet been designated, it had not been afforded any weight in assessing the application.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Gormley to the meeting. He advised the Committee that:

- the proposal was contrary to Policy HMO1 of the HMO Subject Plan 2015;
- the Council had proposed to designate the Holyland and Lower Ormeau Area (including Balfour Avenue) as a Special Action Area, within which the return of properties to family dwellings would be favoured and that allowing new HMO developments ran directly contrary to that intention;
- in addition to HMOs, over 40% of houses in Balfour Avenue were privately rented and only 25% were owner occupied/NIHE, which impacted the sense of community in the area; and
- it posed a detrimental impact on parking and residential amenity.

The Chairperson the welcomed Mr. R. Kerr, the son of the applicant, to the meeting. He outlined to the Committee that:

- he felt the figures used by the Planning Department, to calculate the number of HMOs in the Lower Ormeau Road area, were incorrect and were 16 years out of date;
- there were only 69 HMOs in the HMO Lower Ormeau policy area;
- he had received information from the Council's HMO licensing team which differed from the information provided in the case officer's report; and
- that the Local Development Plan had not yet been finalised, nor adopted, and so it was not relevant.

In response to a Member's question, Mr. Kerr advised that he felt that his father was being penalised for following the correct legal process of registering an HMO, by applying for planning permission.

A number of Members queried the difference in the figures used by the Planning Department and the figures used by the Licensing Department and whether there were plans to bring the Planning register up to date.

The Director of Planning and Building Control advised the Committee that, as part of the new Local Development Plan, new, more agile policies would be adopted which would allow officers to be more responsive instead of the inherited policies which specifically dictated the figures that officers needed to use. He added that the 2004 figures were updated as part of the assessment of each new application.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

The Committee agreed with the officer's recommendation to refuse the application, with delegated authority granted to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the refusal reasons subject to no new substantive planning issues being raised by third parties.

**(Reconsidered) LA04/2018/2876/F - Residential
development comprising 16 units on lands opposite
13 15 17 and 32 Somerdale Park**

The Principal Planning officer presented the details of the application to the Committee.

She reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 21st July, it had agreed to defer the application for a site visit to allow the Members to acquaint themselves with the location and the proposal at first hand. She advised that the site visit had taken place on Wednesday, 12th August.

The Members were advised of the key issues which were considered during the assessment of the proposed development, including the impact on open space, the layout, parking and access, impact on residential amenity, and height, scale and design.

The Principal Planning officer explained that, under the adopted Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001 the site was zoned for open space and recreation. The 2004 version of Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) had also designated the site as lands reserved for open space and recreation. She explained that, at the public inquiry to draft BMAP 2004 the PAC had recommended that the site be re-designated as housing land, which the former Department of the Environment (DoE) carried through to the 2015 version of Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 which was unlawfully adopted and subsequently quashed. The Committee was reminded that, therefore, there was a conflict between the statutory adopted BUAP 2001 and the draft BMAP 2015 version.

She explained that significant weight was afforded to the adopted BUAP 2001 and its designation as open space and the draft BMAP 2004 version which also designated the site as existing open space. The 2015 version remained a material consideration however it did not carry greater weight than the existing adopted plan, the BUAP 2001, despite its vintage.

The Committee was advised that, whilst a previous planning application had been granted in 1996 for a residential use at the location, it was a decision of the previous Authority, the DoE, which was a Central Government decision by which the Council was not bound and was also within a different policy context, pre the introduction of PPS 8 – Open Space and Recreation.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the applicant was afforded the opportunity to submit a PPS 8 statement to address policy OS1 but it was not submitted, and the statement that had been submitted did not address the policy tests of OS 1 and focused on a reliance on the status of the draft BMAP 2015 version instead. She outlined that the applicant had failed to address the policy context and therefore the proposed land use for housing was considered unacceptable in principle.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

She advised the Committee that the proposed design, was acceptable but that the scheme resulted in overdevelopment, as the number of units created a layout dominated by parking, minimal or no front gardens, with rear gardens backing onto the front access laneway resulting in a safety and surveillance concern at a sensitive interface. The Members were advised that the scheme was not reflective of the character of the area and failed to provide a quality residential environment and was considered to be contrary to policies QD1 of PPS 7 and LC1 of Addendum to PPS7.

The Committee was advised that, since the site visit had taken place, six objections had been received, the details of which were listed within the Late Items pack. The objections listed issues regarding a lack of neighbour notification, a history of sectarian incidents in the area, that the development might create another sectarian interface, traffic volume and that there was a lack of open space in North Belfast.

She added that Environmental Health, NIEA, the Local Development Plan Team, NI Water, Rivers Agency and DFI Roads had all been consulted and had offered no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. A. Larkin, agent, to the meeting. He advised the Committee that:

- it was entirely within its rights to set aside the open space zoning of the site in making its decision and, having visited the site, he was sure that it would agree that the land was not publicly accessible, nor did it offer any public amenity or value as open space;
- the PAC had come to the same conclusion when it assessed the site in 2009 as part of the public inquiry into draft BMAP and it was on that basis that the most recent iteration of BMAP 2014 that the site was zoned for housing;
- since 1995 there had been no attempt by the Council to acquire the site as public open space;
- the Council's own Area Plan team had recommended that more weight be given to the housing zoning afforded to the site under BMAP 2014;
- the proposed layout did not constitute overdevelopment and that the Development Management Group, in April 2019, confirmed the proposed layout in front of the Committee was acceptable and that a change in personnel seemed to have seen a change in opinion, demonstrating how finely balanced that refusal reason was;
- the existing density in Somerdale Park was between 27-36 dwellings per hectare and the proposed density, at 30 dwellings per hectare, was well within the existing range;
- low level retaining walls were proposed to make rear garden spaces level and more usable and the assertion that they would dominate the scheme was misleading;
- due to the presence of a security turnstile and gate on the walkway, if units 11-13 were turned around to front the walkway as had been

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

- suggested, it was unreasonable to expect occupants to access the front of their dwellings via this turnstile and locked gate;
- the Council's Physical Programmes Department had recently lodged an application to upgrade the walkway as part of the ForthMeadow Greenway shared space initiative, whereby lighting of that section of walkway was proposed and the turnstile was to be removed and replaced with a gate closer to the playing fields which would continue to be locked in the evenings; and
 - guidance in paragraph 5.28 of creating places stated that, in exceptional circumstances, where rear boundaries were exposed to public areas, measures such as high quality boundary walls and landscaping were necessary to provide security and privacy and that was exactly what was proposed.

In response to a Member's question as to why the applicant had not submitted a PPS Statement outlining the "substantial community benefits" which the development would bring in order to warrant the exception, he advised the Committee that it had to determine how much weight to give to the most recent zoning of the site. He explained that the provisions of PPS8 did not apply, as the site was not publicly accessible, nor did it offer any public amenity or value as open space, even if it was zoned as such.

Mr C. Bryson, agent, also added that the site did not comply with any of the typologies of open space listed within PPS8 Annex A, and that therefore those policies did not apply.

A further Member stated that, upon visiting the site as part of the site visit, it seemed to be a poorly maintained open space with years of overgrowth. He sought further clarification in relation to the height of the retaining walls to the rear of a number of the properties. The agent advised that they would range from between two to three feet in height. The agent responded to a further question regarding the rear facing houses, units 11-13.

The Principal Planning officer and the agent sought to provide Members with further clarification on the potential relocation of the turnstile, in response to a Member's question.

In response to a further Member's question regarding which part of PPS8 the officers felt was applicable to the application, the Principal Planning officer advised that any open space was not required to be maintained or be in good order and that typology vi, Natural Urban Green Spaces, applied.

The Principal Planning officer, in response to a further Member's question, confirmed that officers had calculated that the density proposed was 32 units/hectare, compared to 23 units/hectare in Somerdale and Ingledale, which were in the immediate context.

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor Maskey,

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

That the Committee agrees the application, as the loss of open space was justified, in that there would be a greater community benefit through the development of housing at the site, given the chronic housing shortage in North Belfast and that the residential amenity would not be adversely impacted as a result; that there was open space within the surrounding area, specifically the Clarendon Playing Fields; that car parking was not a good enough reason to refuse the application; and, that only three of the properties would be impacted by the retaining walls.

On a vote, five Members voted for the proposal and seven against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to refuse the application to the Committee, with delegated authority granted to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the refusal reasons subject to no new substantive planning issues being raised by third parties.

On a vote, seven members voted for the proposal and five against and it was declared carried.

LA04/2020/0757/F - Upgrade of existing gravel pitch to synthetic sand dressed hockey pitch, with floodlighting, fencing, acoustic barrier, storage container at West Pitch, Downey House, Pirrie Park Gardens

The Principal Planning officer provided the principal aspects of the application to the Committee. She pointed out that a related application, at the adjoining east pitch under reference LA04/2018/1411/F, was also under consideration at the meeting.

The Committee noted that a site visit had taken place at the pitches on 12th August.

The Principal Planning officer outlined that the main issues to be considered in the assessment of the proposal were:

- the principle of development;
- design, visual amenity and impact on character of locality;
- landscaping / ecology / draft LLPA;
- impact on residential amenity;
- access, movement and parking; and
- flooding / infrastructure capacity.

She explained that the proposed hours of operation of the pitch were from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday, and 8.00 am to 1.00pm on Saturdays. There would be no use of the pitch on Sundays. The Members were advised that the applicant had confirmed that the pitch was for the primary use of the school only with the occasional use of the pitches for Easter and summer camps as per the existing arrangements with Pirrie Park.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

She explained that the proposal involved upgrade works to an existing hockey pitch, thus retaining its recreational use in accordance with Policy OS1 of PPS8 and paragraph 6.205 of the SPPS.

The Committee was advised that 195 representations had been received, comprising of 71 objections from local residents, 119 letters of support from the general public and 5 letters of support from school staff.

The objections raised issues including that the applications should be a major development and that the applicant had sought to avoid the requirements of a major application, lack of an Environmental Impact Assessment statement, light spillage, access issues, noise, significant harm to the visual amenity of residents and wider area, traffic congestion, parking and highway safety issues, drainage/flooding and health and safety concerns.

The representations of support cited that the current facilities were outdated, substandard and unsafe, the development would help the enhancement of girls' sporting activities, physical and mental health benefits, there was adequate existing parking and access via Ardenlee Avenue, it would benefit children currently attending school, future generations and the local community, the proposed mitigation would limit harm to neighbours and it would provide a positive aesthetic effect on the surrounding area.

The Committee was advised that DfI Roads, Rivers Agency, NI Water, DAERA, Environmental Health and the Landscaping Section had been consulted and had no objection to the proposal.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items pack whereby six additional objections had been received. The Principal Planning officer advised the Committee of the Planners' response to the points raised and also clarified two minor errors within the report. She explained that, immediately before the meeting, an additional objection had been received. The Members were advised that it was in relation to a DfI Roads response which had been received by the Council earlier that day in respect of the two pitch applications. She explained that the objector was concerned that he had not had time to consider the information within it but she explained that public consultation was not carried out in respect of consultation responses.

The Committee noted that Environmental Health had recommended a construction management condition.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. S. Crawford, objector, to the meeting. He advised the Committee that:

- there had been 71 objections in respect of the application, representing 35 neighbouring properties, which represented the properties immediately adjacent to the pitch;
- the vast majority of the supporters of the schemes did not live near the proposed pitches and that only 8 of those supporters resided in the vicinity;

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

- none of the 8 supporters lived in properties adjacent to Downey House/ Pirrie Park itself i.e. their properties did not run along the boundary of same and thus they would not be directly impacted by the proposed pitches;
- the residents were not objecting to new upgraded hockey pitches being built but rather they objected to the overwhelming scale of what was being proposed, i.e. 2 International standard hockey pitches shoehorned into the corner of Pirrie Park, only a few metres away from the neighbouring properties, to be surrounded by high netting (up to 5 metres high in parts) and fencing and floodlit by 15 metre high lighting columns;
- there was no need for floodlighting and that school hockey had, and could continue to, operate without the need for floodlighting;
- the school very rarely, if ever, played hockey beyond 4pm on weekdays and if matches were necessary after that time in the dark Winter months then it already owned a floodlight astro-turf pitch (recently relaid) at Belfast Harlequins at Deramore Park, which was closer to the school;
- if the applications were successful, a further application would likely be brought down the line to take full advantage of the floodlighting and to extend the hours of usage to 10 pm, Monday to Friday, and extensive weekend usage as originally planned, regardless of the residents' concerns, thereby allowing the school to make a substantial income from 3rd party usage;
- no legally binding guarantee could be given that the school would not apply for extended hours involving extensive 3rd party usage;
- the school submitted two separate applications for the two pitches, thereby sidestepping the requirements which would be required under a major application;
- both applications failed to comply with Planning Policy Statement 8 (PPS 8) Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation and in particular Policy OS 7 (POS 7);
- it was hard to think of a greater adverse impact on residents' visual amenity and character than 2 very large, caged, floodlit hockey pitches, just meters from the boundaries of their homes, where once there were ground level pitches, darkness and peaceful enjoyment from dusk to dawn;
- no objective evidence had been produced by the applicant, such as a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
- the Council had acknowledged the need to comply with the above planning policies when it had built the multi sports pitch at Cherryvale, where the nearest neighbouring property was 37metres from the pitch, not the 3metres proposed here.

The Chairperson then welcomed Mr. S. Beattie QC, representing the applicant, to the meeting. He advised the Committee that:

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

- neither Methodist College, nor Fullerton House, had any open space and that Downey House and Pirrie Park were key to the sports activities;
- there was a focus on enhancing sport facilities for females within the college;
- the school currently rented pitches for £2,000/week which was unsustainable;
- the two pitches at Pirrie park were 58 years old, they were used and would continue to be used and that considerable weight should therefore be attached to that fact;
- the hours of use and the hours of floodlighting would be restricted;
- hockey was a pretty dangerous sport, with sticks and a hard ball moving at pace, and floodlighting was therefore regarded as a necessity and as a safety feature;
- the suggestion by an objector that a further application would be submitted to extend the hours of operation was without evidence and merit, that the conditions were perfectly clear and enforceable and that the College had commended those conditions;
- considerable weight should be given to the independent expert reports regarding drainage, noise, equality and landscaping;
- statutory consultees had no objections to the proposal;
- the site would benefit from enhanced drainage and a betterment in terms of landscaping in terms of the treatment of the boundaries; and
- in terms of consultation, the had school met with groups of residents, had conducted an open hearing at Pirrie Park and that, due to the ongoing pandemic, planning officers had delivered copies of the plans to residents to ensure that they had sight of them.

A Member asked whether the College would consider engaging with residents and replacing more of the non-retractable floodlights with retractable posts. Mr. Beattie QC advised the Committee that a light assessment had been carried out as part of the application process which detailed within the case officer's report. He explained that none of the statutory consultees had requested that any of the floodlights should be retractable. The Committee was advised that the College had already, in response to feedback from residents, agreed to make the three floodlights to the west of the pitch retractable.

In response to a further question, as to whether a condition could be added, in respect of whether a further number of the floodlights could be replaced with retractable posts, the Principal Planning officer explained that the lighting had been assessed both individually and cumulatively as detailed within the report, and that as no statutory consultee had any issue with the proposed lighting, it would therefore be difficult to add an onus onto the applicant for an issue which did not exist.

The Director of Planning and Building Control added that any conditions which were attached to a permission must be reasonable and meet the relevant Planning tests.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

In response to a further Member's question, the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that if any future application was lodged to vary to the hours of use at the site, it would be submitted for the Committee's consideration.

Moved by Councillor Nicholl,
Seconded by Councillor Hanvey,

That the Committee agrees to refuse the application, on the basis that it is contrary to PPS8 OS4 and OS7, in terms of its impact upon residential amenity, specifically the visual impact of the 15metre high pylons and the impact of the floodlighting on nearby houses.

On a vote, three Members voted for the proposal and nine against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application to the Committee, with delegated authority granted to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of conditions subject to no new substantive planning issues being raised by third parties, and it was agreed.

LA04/2018/1411/F - Upgrade of existing gravel pitch to synthetic sand dressed hockey pitch, with floodlighting, fencing, acoustic barrier, storage container at East Pitch, Downey House, Pirrie Park Gardens

(Councillor O'Hara left the meeting at this point in proceedings)

The Principal Planning officer provided the principal aspects of the application to the Committee. She pointed out that this was the adjoining pitch to the previous application, LA04/2020/0757/F.

The Committee noted that a site visit had taken place at the pitches on 12th August.

The Principal Planning officer outlined that the main issues to be considered in the assessment of the proposal were:

- the principle of development;
- design, visual amenity and impact on character of locality;
- landscaping / ecology / draft LLPA;
- impact on residential amenity;
- access, movement and parking; and
- flooding / infrastructure capacity.

She explained that the proposed hours of operation of the pitch were from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday, and 8.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays. There would be no use of the pitch on Sundays. The Members were advised that the applicant had confirmed that the pitch was for the primary use of the school only with the occasional use of the pitches for Easter and summer camps as per the existing arrangements with Pirrie Park.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

As the proposal involved upgrade works to an existing hockey pitch, she explained that retaining its recreational use was in accordance with Policy OS1 of PPS8 and paragraph 6.205 of the SPPS.

The Principal Planning officer explained that 238 representations had been received, comprising 118 objections from local residents, 51 of which were in objection to the original and 67 to the amended scheme. She advised that 115 letters of support had been received from general public, with 5 letters of support from school staff.

The objections cited that the applications should be a major development and that the applicant had sought to avoid the requirements of a major application, lack of an Environmental Impact Assessment statement, light spillage, noise, significant harm to the visual amenity of residents and wider area, traffic congestion, parking and highway safety issues, access issues, drainage/flooding and health and safety concerns.

The representations of support cited that the current facilities were outdated, substandard and unsafe, the development would help the enhancement of girls' sporting activities, physical and mental health benefits, there was adequate existing parking and access via Ardenlee Avenue, it would benefit children currently attending school, future generations and the local community, the proposed mitigation would limit harm to neighbours and it would provide a positive aesthetic effect on the surrounding area.

The Committee was advised that DFI Roads, Rivers Agency, NI Water, DAERA, Environmental Health and the Landscaping Section had been consulted and had no objection to the proposal.

The Members were advised of a number of late items and the officers response to the issues raised which were within the Late Items pack. The Committee noted that Environmental Health had recommended a construction management condition.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. M. Graham, objector, to the meeting. He advised the Committee that:

- the process had been flawed in that he felt that the Council's 2017 decision regarding the Pitch Development at Cherryvale was pertinent, and that officers had taken a different approach to this application;
- in the Cherryvale pitch application, officers had taken measurements from the residential boundaries and not from the length of the gardens, which was different to the Pirrie Park pitch applications;
- the drainage assessment had been submitted in 2018 and had not covered the specific areas of the two applications;
- a DfI Roads Service response which had been received that day, he was unaware that issues were still to be addressed and particularly an overlap in the use of Pirrie Park as a Park and Ride facility for Ulster Rugby matches on Friday evenings;

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

- no independent objective assessment had been carried out regarding the requirement for floodlights at Pirrie Park, and pointed out that a 69 page visual impact assessment had been submitted as part of the ongoing Stranmillis College pitch application;
- in terms of Draft BMAP, the site fell within a Local Landscape Policy Area and that without a proper objective impact assessment it did not meet POS7 of PPS8; and
- no account had been taken of the impact of the pitches in a night time setting.

The Chairperson invited Mr. S. Beattie QC, representing the applicant, to speak. He advised the Committee that:

- the Planning Department required the pitches to be cumulatively assessed and updated to contain a cumulative impact assessment;
- in terms of noise, it was concluded that the upgrades proposed would be an improvement on the current pitches and were below the levels determined by guidance;
- there would also be a betterment in terms of drainage on site;
- the movement of the pitch 5.5 metres to the east, in response to feedback from residents, made no material difference to the drainage assessment and that statutory consultees were content with this;
- the Cherryvale Pitch decision was not the precedent and nor should it be approached as one, and nor were the distances guidance or policy;
- the suggestion that the length of gardens was not a material consideration exercise by the officers and independent experts was wrong – it was a material consideration and it was a question of the weight which should be attached to it;
- the DfI Roads response simply clarified issues which they'd already stated and had no objection;
- statutory consultees had not requested that any of the floodlights be retractable and that floodlighting plans had been submitted with the application;
- the 6.00 pm deadline for the use and hours of floodlighting was significant to note; and
- documents had been submitted assessing the residential amenity.

The Principal Planning officer clarified a number of points to the Committee. She explained that, in relation to drainage, a meeting had been held with a number of elected members, the College and residents. The College subsequently withdrew the West pitch application and resubmitted it, having moved the boundary 5.5 metres away from residents. She advised that Rivers Agency were content with the information which had been submitted to them, including the drainage assessment and the addendum, and did not require a new assessment to be carried out.

She added that DfI Roads and the other consultees had been consulted throughout the process as there had been a number of technical objections. She

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

explained that DfI Roads had reiterated today that they were content with the numbers provided by the school and the numbers that exist currently, cumulatively.

A Member stated that, while he did not feel that there were adequate reasons to refuse the application, it would be useful if the College would engage with those residents who had objections to the proposals, insofar as was possible, in order to maintain good community relations with their neighbours.

Moved by Councillor Nicholl,
Seconded by Councillor Hanvey,

That the Committee agrees to refuse the application on the basis that it is contrary to PPS8 OS4 and OS7 in terms of its impact upon residential amenity, specifically the visual impact of the 15 metre high pylons and the impact of the floodlighting on nearby houses.

On a vote, three Members voted for the proposal and eight against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Chairperson put the officer's recommendation to approve the application to the Committee, with delegated authority granted to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of conditions subject to no new substantive planning issues being raised by third parties, and it was agreed.

LA04/2019/1540/F - Centralised Anaerobic Digestion (CAD) plant to include a bunded tank farm, (6no. digester tanks, 2no. buffer tanks, 1no. storage tank and associated pump rooms), biogas holder, biogas conditioning system, temperature control system, waste-water treatment plant (WWTP), motor circuit control room building, hot/cold water recovery system, feedstock reception and digestate treatment building, product storage building, odour control system and associated tanks, emergency gas flare, back-up boiler, administration/office building, car parking, 3no. Weighbridges, fire water tank and pump house, pipelines to existing combined heat and power (CHP) plant engines, switchgear earth bunding, 3no. Accesses to existing Giant's Park Service road infrastructure and ancillary plant/site on lands to the northwest of existing Belfast City Council Waste Transfer Station, 2a Dargan Road

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda by officers, due to correspondence which had been received from the applicant immediately prior to the meeting.

The Committee agreed to undertake a site visit in order to acquaint itself with the location and the proposal at first hand.

The Divisional Solicitor advised the Members that the two objectors had requested five minutes each to address the Committee on the issue, and had provided exceptional circumstances as to why they required the additional time. The Committee agreed to

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

grant the objectors five minutes each to address the Committee, and subsequently that the applicant/agent would be given ten minutes, at the meeting at which the application would be considered.

The Committee noted that, as the application had not been presented, all Members' present at the next meeting, would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.

LA04/2020/0010/F - Aquarium, car parking and associated infrastructure on lands to the South East of Titanic Hotel, North East of Bell's Theorem Crescent and South West of Hamilton Road

Moved by Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor Collins,

That the application be deferred to allow a representative from the Department for Infrastructure to attend, in order to answer questions surrounding the number of trips associated with the application and the trigger for providing mitigating roads infrastructure.

On a vote, eight members voted for the proposal and three against and it was declared carried.

The Committee noted that, as the application had not yet been presented, all Members' present at the next meeting would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.

(Reconsidered) LA04/2020/0662/A - Mesh banner Signage at Former Belfast Telegraph Printworks

The Case officer explained that advertisement consent was sought for a temporary mesh banner sign.

She outlined that the key issues which were considered in the assessment of the proposal were the impact on local amenity, public safety and the setting of listed buildings.

The Committee was advised that, whilst the sign was contrary to PPS17 Outdoor Advertisements, it was accepted that by granting consent for a period of one year was acceptable in the circumstances, given that the locality was going through a period of transition with the construction of the university campus and that future plans for the host building were also well advanced.

She explained that the Belfast Telegraph Building was listed and that the Historic Environment Division had been consulted and had no objection to the proposal, subject to the temporary approval being for one year.

The Members were advised that no representations had been received.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

A Member highlighted that the policy test had not been met and that she was concerned that if the Committee was to approve it, it would set a precedent. She added that the Council had taken action previously against similar banners on listed buildings and that it should be leading the way and following policy.

The officer's recommendation, to approve the application for a temporary period of one year, was then put to a vote whereby ten Members voted for it and one against, and it was declared carried.

**LA04/2020/1063/F - Re-siting of James Connolly statue
from 275-277 Falls Road to 374-376 Falls Road**

The Committee was provided with the principal aspects of the application, for the re-siting of a James Connolly statue from 275-277 Falls Road to 374-376 Falls Road. The Case officer explained that the statue measured 3.75m in height with a plinth measuring 0.9m by 0.9m. She explained that the statue was proposed to be re-located to the front of the existing building, integrated within the existing planting.

The Members were advised that the proposed site was located within white land in the BUAP and was designated within a proposed Area of Townscape Character within dBMAP, as well as on an arterial route. The statue was to receive a new plinth of corten steel with backlit letters and the design was considered compatible within its new context in front of the Connolly Building. She outlined that the proposal would not harm the proposed Area of Townscape Character.

The Committee was advised that no representations had been received and that DFI Roads had offered no objection.

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.

**LA04/2019/2217/F - Public realm improvements and
removal of existing toilets on lands south of Albert Bridge
and directly north of 5 Ravenhill Road**

The Case officer provided the Members with the key aspects of the application which included include the demolition and removal of existing public toilets, landscaping works, new paving, and provision of street furniture, lighting, railings, tree/hedgerow and all associated site works for a temporary period of three years.

She outlined the main issues which had been considered during the assessment of the proposals, which included the principle of development at this location, the impact on visual amenity, the potential of contaminated land, the impact on the setting of a listed structure and on existing open space.

The Committee was advised that HED, DFI Roads, Rivers Agency, NIEA, BCC Environmental Health, the Tree and Landscape Team and the City Regeneration and

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 18th August, 2020**

Development Team had been consulted in relation to the proposals and had offered no objections subject to conditions.

The Case officer pointed out that one letter of representation had been received regarding measures to prevent graffiti and interference with the adjacent property at 5 Ravenhill Road.

She advised the Committee that the application site lay within the development limits for Belfast and that the proposals complied with the Development Plan and relevant policy.

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

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Brexit Committee

Thursday, 13th August, 2020

MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Flynn (Chairperson); and Councillors Baker, Brooks, de Faoite, Gormley, Hanvey, Long, Magennis, McMullan, Newton, Pankhurst, Walsh and Whyte.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mrs. C. Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer;
Mr. D. Connolly, City Protection Manager;
Ms. L. Leonard, International Relations Manager;
Mrs S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Aldermen Haire, Rodgers and Sandford, and Councillors Canavan, Ferguson, Kyle and McLaughlin.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Update on Brexit Preparedness (Verbal Update)

The Policy and Business Development Officer provided the Committee with an update on Council's Brexit preparedness and arrangements.

She advised that Officers would continue to monitor developments over the coming months and take part in a range of webinars on subjects related to Brexit and disseminate any relevant information when it became available. She explained that the Council would continue to engage with NILGA and SOLACE in relation to Brexit preparedness and also share information on events such as the Settlement Scheme information sessions. She highlighted that the UK government's website (<https://www.gov.uk/transition>) provided advice on what actions people might need to take to prepare for the end of the transition period.

She confirmed that the Council planned to review and update its Business Continuity Management process for the Council's critical and key services to prepare for the various scenarios. She pointed out that learning from the Covid 19 crisis would be taken into account and Members would be kept informed on the process.

In relation to Belfast Port, the City Protection Manager provided an update on the work being undertaken with central government departments and other stakeholders to

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 13th August, 2020**

prepare for implementation of the NI Protocol. He advised that requirements for checks on 1st January were still unknown as these would be dependent on outcomes of negotiations between the EU and UK government. He advised that precautionary planning for the Council, following Food Standards Agency (FSA) direction, was based on current EU requirements and the Council was currently recruiting additional temporary staff to carry out checks funded by the FSA. He reported that there was an assumption that DAERA would be producing a business case to the UK Government to cover all associated costs and that it was anticipated that Councils would be fully funded.

During Members' questions, the City Protection Manager confirmed that meetings were still ongoing with the lead department DAERA, but that no final decisions surrounding issues with Belfast Port had been issued. The City Solicitor confirmed that the previously agreed Members' visit to Belfast and Dublin Ports would be taken forward by Officers.

The Committee was informed of future presentations to the Committee, which included David Phinnemore, QUB; Update on NI Protocol (September) and that previous confirmed Speakers, which had to be cancelled due to Covid-19, would be rescheduled in due course.

After discussion, the Committee noted the update and that the previously agreed visit to the Ports would be arranged by Officers.

The Committee also agreed to invite the following organisations to a future meeting of the Committee:

- The Executive Office/Department of Finance and the Northern Ireland Office to discuss the Shared Prosperity Fund; and
- Representatives from the Brexit Working Group of The European Committee of the Regions.

Shared Prosperity Fund Update

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 provide Members with an update on a study currently being undertaken by ekosgen on behalf of SOLACE NI, being managed directly by Belfast City Council officers, to develop a regional local government position on the development and future management and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is therefore, asked to:**

- a) note the ongoing Ekosgen study, commissioned by SOLACE NI, in developing a local government position piece on the future SPF;
- b) agree that the final Ekosgen report, which will be used to inform the development of a Belfast City Council corporate position on the SPF, be brought back to members for their information at a future meeting.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Members will be aware that European Structural and Investment (ESI) funds help to pay for initiatives supporting business development, research and development, investment in digital and green infrastructure, as well skills and training interventions and support for job-seekers.
- 3.2 But with the UK having formally departed the European Union, the country will stop receiving new ESI funding at the end of 2020. Thus, for 2021 and beyond, the UK government faces choices over what to replace ESI funding with. This is important as ESI funding forms a substantial component of spending on regional economic development in the UK, especially in the poorest regions.
- 3.3 To this end government has announced the creation of the SPF. The objectives set by the Government for the SPF is to tackle inequalities between communities, and raise productivity in those parts of the country whose economies are furthest behind, but so far it has given few details around its scale, design and implementation.
- 3.4 As you will no doubt be aware Northern Ireland has been a net beneficiary of the EU Structural funds and their impact on economic development has been significant – indeed in Northern Ireland we receive approx. 5% of the total UK allocation, while only representing 2.8% of the population.
- 3.5 Therefore, the future scope and operation of the SPF as EU successor funding, will be crucial in shaping the future economic and social prosperity of Northern Ireland – by providing funding to support the foundations of prosperity, it can also contribute to eliminating inequalities and ensure inclusive growth for local communities.
- 3.6 SOLACE NI commissioned research on behalf of the 11 councils to consider the issues and opportunities provided by the SPF and to develop a strong local government position to present to NICS. There is little doubt that given the experience of local councils in delivering and working with local area

delivery partners through European funded economic development and infrastructure programmes, that we can make an important contribution to co-designing the SPF, sharing our expertise with NICS, to ensure a model that benefits all our communities.

- 3.7 This study will also promote the understanding that some decisions are best made locally, and councils are sometimes best placed, particularly given our community planning responsibilities, to address inequalities in our local communities with partners across agencies, government and civic society, and the future SPF if designed correctly will provide a useful mechanism for us to achieve this added value for our local areas.
- 3.8 In relation to engagement around this study, Ekosgen have consulted with relevant officer from each council and other key stakeholders to understand the current system of European Funding in NI, and areas for potential improvement with a future SPF. Ekosgen have also facilitated a number of virtual workshops involving representatives from each council, NILGA, and also local organisations which manage or deliver European funded programmes.
- 3.9 It is anticipated that the final report from Ekosgen will be considered and agreed by SOLACE NI in early September. This report will then be brought back to members for information and will be used by council officers across relevant departments, in developing a Belfast City Corporate position to be agreed by elected members, on the future delivery of SPF across the city.
- 3.10 Officers expect that announcements on the quantum of UKSPF, its investment priorities and its shape and design, will be made by the UK Government in the Autumn following the Comprehensive Spending Review 2020. Therefore, it will be timely that this eksogen report and specific Belfast City Council response is developed, so that as a council and sector we are in a evidence-based position to inform and contribute to future discussions on the operation of the SPF in Northern Ireland.

4.1 Financial and Resource Implications

None associated with this report.

4.2 Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**EU week of Regions and Cities and
EU Funding Opportunities Update (Verbal Update)**

The International Relations Manager provided information in relation to the EU week of Regions and Cities together with an update in EU Funding Opportunities.

She explained that, this year, the EU week of Regions and Cities would take virtually over three consecutive weeks from 5th – 22nd October. She reported that the registration link would be circulated to Members and joining the meetings would be a good opportunity to engage with a wide range of cities. She advised that the Council had been invited to attend a Panel by the Irish Regions Office on the topic of resilience, to set out and showcase the work that was being undertaken in Belfast and further information would be provided on the participants of the Panel in due course.

During discussion, one member suggested that the Council could organise its own event, in relation to resilience, at the EU week of Regions and Cities in 2021.

The International Relations Manager provided an overview of the Peace Plus Programme 2021-2027. She explained that this would be a replacement programme for the current Peace IV and Interreg Europe Programmes. She presented the following table of the 6 Thematic Areas and Eligible Activities that had been included in the draft Programme:

Thematic Areas	Eligible Activities
Theme 1: Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Through development and implementation of Local Action Plans (LAPs), per Council area (17 in total, North and South), which are co designed with communities. LAPs will support inclusion, build positive relations, and improve physical and social environment- regeneration, reimagining and restoration, community shared facilities, celebrating cultures, diversity and inclusion○ Small project funds up to £100,000, empowering bottom up, grass roots projects to embed peace○ Building positive relations, focusing on minority and marginalized groups At a Regional or Functional level, transcending local authority boundaries – <i>Belfast City Deal area- an opportunity?</i>○ Developing key Institutional capacity○ Initiatives to re image communities through physical restoration, and creation of shared spaces – Councils will determine which capital projects to include within their LAPs.○ Justice related community interventions.

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 13th August, 2020**

Theme 2: Delivering Economic Regeneration and Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specifically targeting sectors and communities most affected by the Covid 19 crisis and in most need and to mitigate the effects of Brexit. ○ Actions to support SMEs to become more competitive, diversification, digitalisation, R and D, access new markets, network and sectoral clusters. ○ Support for the development of Smart Cities, - develop and adopt new technology approaches to support the delivery of services and the development of new products. ○ Support for Social Innovation in response to societal challenges- Social entrepreneurs, Social economy ○ R and D for specific sectors eg Green Economy, Fintech, Cyber security- collaboration between academia, industry and high level Institutions to strive to be world leaders and create centres of excellence in certain sectors ○ Skills training and apprenticeship, skills development and retaining for any sectors (seen as essential in light of C 19, and for the most marginalised from society). Councils seen as playing a key role here with all key partners ○ Actions to support the rebuilding of the Tourism and Hospitality sectors- infrastructure and products as well as Marketing the region.
Theme 3: Empowering and Investing in our Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shared Education initiatives from early years settings onwards ○ Mental Health and Well-being programmes- intergenerational trauma, emotional resilience and personal development of young people. ○ Skills development and enhancement of support services, including affordable childcare ○ Empowering young people to become Leaders ○ Cross border skills interventions and qualification recognition.
Theme 4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities (particularly in relation to cross border healthcare and addressing health inequalities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Innovations in e-Health and integrated healthcare ○ Mental Health interventions- addiction, suicide prevention, wrap around services ○ Rural Health issues including digital health, transport access ○ Rural development, physical reimagining and regeneration ○ Support for victims and survivors including mental health
Theme 5: Supporting a Sustainable Future (cross border collaboration seen as essential)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaboration in transboundary management of the Marine and Coastal environment ○ Protection of biodiversity including nature recovery activities, including climate change resilience measures ○ Development and protection of water catchments and associated water quality

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 13th August, 2020**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitoring and management of air quality and the development of renewable energy ○ Research and data collection across all area as outlined above ○ Investment in Cross Border Rail infrastructure – Belfast to Dublin Economic corridor – driving the environmental efficiency of rolling stock and improving the regularity of services ○ Community engagement and awareness and education on climate change
<p>Theme 6: Building and Embedding Partnership and Collaboration – represents the Interreg (EU regulatory required, cross border specific EU Objective 1 – 15% overall programme budget allocation).</p> <p>This theme will enable North, South Govt department collaboration, as well as small projects to engage with citizens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of cross border Local Authority Strategic Area Plans to support tourism, skills development, rural development- East Birder Region, ICBAN , North West etc. Note: Funding will cover the cost of the development NOT delivery of these Plans. ○ Development of tourism initiatives such as joint cross border, collaborative, Marketing plans ○ R and D for developing cross border solutions on border issues/challenges.

The International Relations Manager explained that the Programme was due to begin in 2021, but might experience a slight delay in commencement due to Covid-19. She advised the Programme would include local action plans and local and capital projects, however the funding allocation had not been confirmed as yet, however, the Council would be preparing a programme of work to ensure eligibility for such funding. She confirmed that Councillor Corr was the Council's representative on the Northern Ireland Programme Development Steering Group, which was working with the Department of Finance to develop and produce the final draft

The Committee noted the update which had been provided and agreed that that the Council would organise its own event for next year's EU week of Regions and Cities, subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for funding.

Chairperson

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Universal Basic Income for Northern Ireland

“In the wake of the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic, this Council recognises the need for a reformed, fairer welfare system that protects everyone in society and acknowledges the need to provide economic security for all to invest in people, protect livelihoods and kick-start the economy.

Additionally, this Council reaffirms our support for the investigation of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) for Northern Ireland, recognising the need for a radical overhaul of the welfare state and the positive impact this would have on poverty alleviation, inequality and mental health.

Accordingly, Belfast City Council calls on the Departments of Communities, Finance and the UK Treasury to design and deliver a recovery UBI for Northern Ireland, and will commit to producing a plan for how such a pilot could be implemented in Belfast.”

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Proposer: Councillor Peter McReynolds

Seconder: Councillor Heading

To be debated

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Review of Housing Fitness Standard

“This Council welcomes the Communities Minister Carál Ní Chuilín’s ambitious programme aimed at addressing housing stress, providing housing solutions and supporting those in greatest need. This council recognises that housing faces many challenges but agrees that it should be a primary focus of government as it is so vital to building and sustaining communities and improving the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

This council notes that the current housing fitness standard that is applied to private rented housing in the North of Ireland is the statutory minimum physical standard which focuses on the most basic structural standards for human habitation, and applies to all tenures. It was last updated in 1992. This Council calls on the Department for Communities to carry out a review of the fitness standard with a view to introducing legislation which offers greater protection to tenants.”

Proposer: Councillor Claire Canavan

Seconder: Councillor Magee

To be debated

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Free Car Parking for Health Workers, Patients and Workers

"This Council greatly values and appreciates the role of health workers, especially given their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic; and believes that proper investment in our health service is necessary to facilitate the incredible effort of health workers.

Council views parking charges for healthcare workers at their workplace as wrong, and as an effective wage cut; also views parking charges for patients and their visitors as a callous charge levelled against the sick and the vulnerable; and believes no-one should have to pay to receive healthcare or visit those in ill-health.

To this end, the Council:

- Opposes the recent move to remove free car parking for health workers and calls on the Minister for Health and the wider Executive to immediately reverse this decision.
- Supports calls from the trade union movement for free car parking to be provided for patients and visitors alike, and agrees to organise an all-party delegation with the Minister for Health to discuss the matter."

Proposer: Councillor Fiona Ferguson

Seconder: Councillor Matt Collins

To be debated

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Climate Change Act

“This Council welcomes the environmental commitments in the New Decade New Approach Deal. This council is deeply concerned that the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs did not support an Assembly Motion to develop a Climate Change Act for Northern Ireland.

This Council notes that Northern Ireland has fallen behind other parts of the UK in progressing reduction of emissions. A Climate Change Act can help us realise the ambition of the Belfast Agenda to create an environmentally sustainable City. This Council calls on the Minister to immediately prioritise the development of a Climate Change Act with legally binding and ambitious sectoral emission-reduction targets and a just transition to protect jobs through upskilling in less carbon intensive sectors.”

Proposer: Councillor Anthony Flynn

Seconder: Councillor Aine Groogan

To be debated

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Residents' Parking Schemes

“This council recognises the recent changes in commuter travel patterns, including a greater emphasis on connectivity particularly for cycling and walking.

However, this council is mindful that such changes are a result of decreased traffic volumes due to working from home and are likely to rise again with full re-opening, returns to work and education.

Daily issues facing city centre surrounding communities related to excessive parking levels and dangerous practices remain and are increasing to a pre-lockdown hazardous level.

This issue is prevalent in city centre surrounding communities and causes documented operational problems related to cleansing, access for emergency services, road safety for families, street layout, pedestrian access, connectivity, road and pavement surfacing, air quality and daily life.

Belfast City Council, in line with the Belfast Agenda's commitments related to good health and wellbeing, vibrancy, attractiveness and connectivity, must influence action to find realistic solutions to support densely populated urban residential communities.

Flexibility and dynamism have been illustrated during the pandemic related to connectivity. This same level of expediency must be implemented to target this historical and highly contentious problem.

As such this Council agrees to write to the Department for Infrastructure to invite representatives to attend the People and Communities Committee and to advance residents parking schemes in urban affected communities”.

Proposer: Councillor Christina Black

Seconder: Councillor Ronan McLaughlin

To be referred without discussion to People and Communities Committee

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National Armed Forces Day - 2022

“This Council agrees to bid for the National Armed Forces Day to be held in Belfast in June 2022.”

Proposer: Councillor Pankhurst

Seconder: Councillor Hutchinson

To be referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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Procurement Policy – Living Wage

“That this council consider promoting a procurement policy that supports the principles of a real living wage and respects the rights of workers including the right to form and participate in trade unions.”

Proposer: Councillor Ryan Murphy

Seconder: Councillor Ciaran Beattie

To be referred to without discussion to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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Summer Youth Employment Programme

Proposer: Councillor Ronan McLaughlin

Seconder: Councillor Ciaran Beattie

“This council agrees to work in partnership with other public sector bodies, the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and the private sector to develop a Summer Youth Employment Programme.

This programme should be aimed at 14-21 year olds primarily from areas of multiple deprivation from across the 4 quarters of the city. The programme will last 6 weeks.

This paid internship will aim to give the young kids of this city a decent wage, improve their skills and qualities, develop experience and hopefully lead to employment opportunities for kids from lower socio economic backgrounds in sectors that they know, enjoy and excel in.

In developing this programme, Belfast City Council should look to Boston Mayor Marty Walsh’s programme as a model of good practice in this field, which even during the COVID crisis offered 8,000 posts to young people across the city of Boston.”

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

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Alleygating Programme

“Belfast City Council:

Recognises that the COVID-19 crisis has allowed local communities to develop a greater appreciation of open and green spaces throughout the city and commends those residents who have taken an active role in improving those spaces in their local area, providing an opportunity for their community to enjoy fresh air, activity and socially distanced interaction during the difficult months of lockdown;

Resolves that Council should do all that it can to support residents and local communities who are proactive in seeking to improve and regenerate open and green spaces in their area.

Believes that, although a review of phases 1-4 of the alleygating programme was agreed earlier this year, the new context of Coronavirus gives cause to reprioritise both our approach to the allocation of alleygates and how a new alleygating programme should be funded.

Determines that a new funded alleygating programme is included as part of Council's Recovery Plan, recognising the intrinsic benefit and popularity of existing alleygating programmes.

Agrees that this new alleygating programme, when determining eligible streets, should give equal consideration and scoring to the efforts of communities to develop and maintain their alleyways as is currently given to crime-reduction and anti-social behaviour concerns.”

Proposer: Councillor Gary McKeown

Seconder: Councillor Seamas de Faoite

To be referred without discussion to the People and Communities Committee

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Closure of Botanic needle exchange

“This council notes the closing of the needle exchange facility on Botanic Avenue following on from the closure of the Boots facility in City Centre earlier this year. This council will invite the Public Health Agency to its next meeting of the People and Communities Committee to address these worrying closures of much needed facilities and what longer term strategy it has in place to:

1. address drug use and misuse in the City Centre,
2. drive forward a civic conversation of drug classifications, legislation and decriminalisation,
3. develop harm reduction models that save lives
4. and proactively addresses the concerns of local residents.”

Proposer: Councillor Brian Smyth

Seconder: Councillor Paul McCusker

To be referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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Addressing hate and intolerance across all our communities

“The Belfast Agenda has an ambition to be a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive City for all. While we have made significant progress there are opportunities for enhancing this work. This council recognises the work that has been undertaken particularly by many in the community and voluntary sector to improve relations and realise the Belfast Agenda. However, gaps remain, including through the allocation of funding.

This Council recognises the scourge of Hate Crime and Incidents in the City. In 2019/2020 there were 694 Hate Crimes and 758 Hate Incidents reported to Police in the Belfast District Area on the basis of sexual orientation, race and religion. We appreciate that there is a significant underreporting of hate crimes and incidents. There were 98 hate crimes and incidents on the basis of transgender status and 171 crimes and incidents on the basis of disability status across all of Northern Ireland.

This Council recognises that it has a statutory duty to address Good Relations but also recognises that this is on the limited basis of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group. This only covers some of the hate crime categories yet we understand that to tackle hate and intolerance we must promote good relations between those groups who experience hate but are not covered by the Good Relations duty.

This Council therefore commits to:

- Supporting the extension of the Good Relations duty to the hate crime categories
- Write to the Executive Office requesting flexibility in its Good Relations funding and request that the Executive Office consider extension of its Good Relations duties to the hate crime categories
- Council officers scope internal mechanisms re good relations and equality and diversity funding to fund more proactive work in addressing hate crime and fulfilling the ambition of the Belfast Agenda.”

Proposer: Councillor Mal O'Hara

Seconder: Councillor Aine Groogan

To be referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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