

Public Document Pack

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

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

Notice is hereby given that the monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, on Monday, 2nd December, 2019 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 - 14)
5. Official Announcements
6. Requests to Address the Council

To consider a request from:

- i. Ms. Patrice Hardy, a teacher in John Paul II Primary School, for a number of Primary 7 pupils to address the Council in relation to the motion on Homelessness being proposed by Councillor Corr; and
- ii. Mr. John Patrick Clayton, Policy Officer, UNISON NI, for a deputation from UNISON to address the Council in advance of the motion on Support for Health and Social Care Workers being proposed by Councillor McAteer.

7. Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 15 - 68)
8. People and Communities Committee (Pages 69 - 106)
9. City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 107 - 140)
10. Licensing Committee (Pages 141 - 156)
11. Planning Committee (Pages 157 - 188)
12. Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee (Pages 189 - 192)
13. Brexit Committee (Pages 193 - 204)
14. Notices of Motion
 - a) Bowel and Breast Cancer Screening

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

“This Council notes that early diagnosis of bowel cancer and breast cancer offers patients the best chance of successful treatment.

England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland all currently use the more accurate screening test, the Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) for bowel cancer and have a lowered age for screening.

NHS England is currently trialling breast cancer screening at the lower age of 47 and the upper age of 72.

This Council agrees to write to the Permanent Secretary, Department of Health, highlighting the difference in the screening service provision across Britain and Ireland and calling for the extension of the age range for bowel screening and to trial breast cancer screening at a lower age in the North of Ireland.”

(To be debated by the Council)

b) Support for Health and Social Care Workers

Proposed by Councillor McAteer,
Seconded by Councillor Groves,

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

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

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

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

Furthermore, the Council agrees to convene an all-Party meeting with those Trades Unions representing health and social care staff to hear directly the challenges which they are facing and to take such action thereon to support staff and patient care at this time.”

(To be debated by the Council)

c) Social Media Abuse of Political Representatives

Proposed by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor O'Hara,

"This Council notes the increasing level of personal abuse, intimidation, smear campaigns and false information directed towards political representatives and activists, particularly during election campaigns.

It further note the number of politicians, especially women, citing social media abuse and intimidation as a reason for leaving politics.

As Councillors, we pledge to use social media responsibly, to promote our policies positively and to engage in debate respectfully.

We call upon social media companies to also act responsibly and proactively to ensure that their platforms are not abused in this way, to end account anonymity and to co-operate with the PSNI swiftly where such abuse meets the threshold for a criminal investigation. "

(To be debated by the Council)

d) Patient Client Care Council - "Make Change Together" Programme

Proposed by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds),
Seconded by Councillor Kyle,

"This Council recognises and endorses the hard work of the Patient Client Care Council, notes the launch of its new programme 'Make Change Together', and agrees to support awareness of the programme through all of our available channels and platforms."

(To be debated by the Council)

e) Intermediate Football

Proposed by Councillor D. Baker,
Seconded by Councillor Black,

"In light of the proposed changes which the IFA will introduce to intermediate football and the concerns for the future of many grassroots clubs, I call upon this Council to engage with the FAI to explore alternative options for clubs to continue to play at the highest possible level."

(To be debated by the Council)

f) Irish Unity Referendum

Proposed by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

“This Council notes with deep concern the hugely damaging, toxic and chaotic politics currently being administered by the Conservative British Government regarding Brexit.

This City has an ever-growing population of young people who will ultimately have to live with the long term consequences of this British Government’s damaging policy of attempting to drag citizens out of the European Union against the wishes of the majority of citizens in Belfast who voted to remain.

As a Council, we have a duty to protect all our citizens, young and old, against the policies and hardship that this British government and its allies will bring by dragging them out of the European Union. There is no Brexit that is a good Brexit for the citizens of Belfast or elsewhere in Ireland.

This Council must, therefore, investigate alternative solutions to Brexit that seek to protect its citizens from the damaging effects which Brexit will ultimately bring.

In seeking alternative solutions to protect Belfast citizens, a referendum on Irish Unity, as enshrined within the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, must be legitimately considered. This is a solution that would protect our citizens from Brexit and is supported by categorical statements from the European Council where, in the event of Irish Unity, the citizens in the north would be returned back into the European Union.

We call upon this Council to write directly to the Taoiseach and to the British Secretary of State requesting that they clearly specify what would satisfy the requirement, as provided for under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, to facilitate an Irish Unity referendum.”

(To be debated by the Council)

- g) Irish Football Association - Criteria for Intermediate Status

Proposed by Councillor Brooks,
Seconded by Councillor Newton,

“This Council expresses its disappointment in the proposed new Irish Football Association (IFA) criteria for intermediate status. In our view, these criteria are arbitrary and highly questionable, and we are entirely dissatisfied with the explanations which have been offered in meetings with the IFA thus far. The Council, as a long term partner of the IFA in many areas, recognises and celebrates the contribution of local intermediate football clubs to our local communities and records our distaste at the contempt which we believe our concerns, reflecting those of local communities, have been shown to date.

Furthermore, as an organisation which has invested heavily in both past and future IFA events and programmes in our City, we are concerned that the IFA has put forward these criteria as a diktat, without even basic consultation with this Council, clubs, intermediate leagues or other partner organisations. This disregard for best practice is particularly concerning, in light of previous concerns raised in the public sphere around the fitness of the IFA structures and hierarchy.

The Council calls upon the IFA to reflect upon its strategy for engaging productively with partner organisations and, crucially, to further delay the implementation of these criteria in order to revisit parts of the restructuring plan and carry out meaningful consultation with partner organisations, leagues, clubs and the communities most impacted.”

(To be debated by the Council)

h) Free-at-the-Point-of-Use Universal Healthcare

Proposed by Councillor de Faoite,
Seconder Councillor Lyons,

“This Council:

- i. supports the principle of publicly-owned, free-at-the-point-of-use universal healthcare;
- ii. expresses concern at a decade of cuts and encroaching privatisation of the NHS and the intent of Donald Trump to use UK-US trade negotiations as an opening for further privatisation;
- iii. opposes any further privatisation of the NHS; and
- iv. calls upon the British Government to oppose any trade deal which would force any aspect of the NHS to be privatised or exposed to exorbitant price rises for medicine or medical equipment.”

(To be debated by the Council)

i) Women against State Pension Inequality Campaign

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

“This Council reaffirms its support for the Women against State Pension Inequality campaign and supports a fair transitional arrangement for women affected by State Pension age changes and calls upon the Government to work with WASPI to deliver a solution for everyone.”

(To be debated by the Council)

j) City Tree Initiative

Proposed by Councillor McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor D. Baker,

“This Council has ambitious plans to plant over one million trees over 15 years.

However, it acknowledges that there are several sites across Belfast that breach current legal guidelines in terms of air pollutants

Air pollution is often hidden in plain sight, but it can have potentially life-threatening consequences. Exposure to high levels of air pollution can lead to chronic respiratory problems and increased risk of developing cancer. Having access to clean air is a human right.

To reduce levels of air pollution, we need to reduce our reliance on carbon as well as finding innovative solutions to air pollution.

One such innovative solution is to introduce the City Tree initiative, which is in many European cities such as Amsterdam, Brussels and London. The City Tree does the work of 275 trees in 1% of the space. Each tree holds 1,682 pots of moss, which extract particulate matter, soot, dirt and other pollutants from the air.

This Council agrees that a report be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which will identify sites in each quarter of the city that are heavily polluted, explore the costs associated with the purchase of the trees and the potential public-private partnership in regards to the advertising space which comes with the tree which could be used to offset the cost of the purchase.”

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

k) Pridestrian Animation

Proposed by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Councillor Flynn,

“This Council recognises and values the huge contribution which our LGBTQ+ citizens make to the city of Belfast and beyond.

We commend the progressive approach taken by Belfast City Council in its support of Belfast Pride, the bid to secure Euro Pride, the illumination of and the flying of both the Rainbow and the Transgender Flags at the City Hall.

Building on this progressive approach and, as a demonstration of our continued solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community, including our commitments to create a city that is welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all, we call on this Council to follow best practices elsewhere throughout the world in the creation of permanent Rainbow Pride themed animation.

We call on this Council to directly engage with the Department for Infrastructure and other Government departments, where, in partnership with the Council, we create permanent animation at appropriate points along the Pride Parade route ahead of the 2020 Pride festival. This should include, but not be limited to, pedestrian crossing points and public realm points along the route.”

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

l) Homelessness

Proposed by Councillor Corr,
Seconded by Councillor Hargey,

“This Council notes that today, 2nd December, marks the start of Homelessness Week and acknowledges the fact that the right to a home is a basic human right. It commends the ambition set out within the Belfast Agenda to build 1,800 social homes by 2021 and calls upon the Council to scope all publicly-owned sites and land within the city boundary, to ascertain their potential for building homes on them. We support that public housing continues to be a priority within the Belfast Agenda.”

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

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



Chief Executive

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Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 4th November, 2019
at 6.00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

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

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey and Councillor de Faquite.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor McKeown declared an interest in relation to the motions on Alcohol Misuse and Reshaping Breast Assessment Services, on the basis that they involved issues of policy which were relevant to the work of his employer, and left the Chamber whilst they were being debated.

Councillor Whyte declared an interest in relation to the motion on Reshaping Breast Assessment Services, in that the company in which he was employed provided event management services around the public consultation, and left the Chamber whilst it was being discussed.

Minutes of the Council

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 1st October and the special meetings of 1st and 11th October be taken as read and signed as correct.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th November, 2019**

Official Announcements

The Lord Mayor referred to the forthcoming marriage of the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds) and wished him and his fiancée, Eileen, every happiness for the future.

The Lord Mayor agreed, in response to a request from Councillor Mulholland, to extend on behalf of the Council his condolences to the family of local filmmaker, Mr. Matt Curry, who had died on 31st October.

At the request of Councillor Pankhurst, the Council condemned the recent attack on cleansing staff in North Belfast and assured them of its ongoing support.

At the request of Councillor Beattie, the Council condemned the recent threats made to Ulster Unionist Party staff in the north of the City.

At the request of Councillor Graham, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated Mr. Rory Best, who had retired recently from professional rugby, on his illustrious career and wished him well for the future.

Councillor Flynn welcomed the passing of the 21st October deadline, in the context of introducing abortion services and same-sex marriage to Northern Ireland.

In response to Councillor Magennis, the Lord Mayor agreed to forward on behalf of the Council a letter to Irish boxer Ms. Katie Taylor congratulating her on becoming a two weight World Champion and to Belfast boxer Mr. Ryan Burnett, who had been forced to retire prematurely due to injury, wishing him well for the future.

At the request of Alderman Rodgers, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, extended his sympathy to the family of Mr. Leonard Pugh, the founder of the City of Belfast School of Music, who had died on 31st October.

The Lord Mayor agreed, in response to a request from Councillor Lyons, to extend his condolences on behalf of the Council to the family of local poet and novelist, Mr. Ciaran Carson, who had died on 6th October.

At the request of Councillor Carson, the Lord Mayor agreed to forward on behalf of the Council a letter of congratulations to Ireland's Women's Hockey Team on its achievement in qualifying for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Change of Membership on Committee

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Alliance Party indicating that it wished to replace Councillor Nicholl with Councillor Hanvey on the Planning Committee.

The Council approved the change.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th November, 2019**

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Alderman Kingston,
Seconded by Councillor T. Kelly,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th October, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

**Requests for the Use of the City Hall
and the Provision of Hospitality**

Moved by Alderman Rodgers,
Seconded by Alderman Kingston and

Resolved - That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th October, under the heading "Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality", insofar as it relates to the City of Belfast Youth Orchestra's 65th Anniversary celebration event in October 2020, be amended to provide that the Council agrees to waive the room hire charge.

Amendment

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Active Belfast Limited Board**

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Hargey,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th October, under the heading "Minutes of the Meeting of the Active Belfast Board", be amended to provide that the Council agrees to reject the 2% – 3% increase in leisure charges, as approved by the Active Belfast Limited Board and noted by the Committee.

On a recorded vote, fifty-six Members voted for the amendment and none against and it was declared carried.

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<u>For 56</u>	<u>Against 0</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, Rodgers and Spence; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Donnelly, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groogan, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, Nicholl, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Smyth, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.	

Submission of Report

The Council noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in relation to charges for the use of leisure facilities across the City generally.

Amendment

**Business Rates Review –
Consultation Response**

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson and

Resolved - That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th October, under the heading "Business Rates – Consultation Response", be amended to provide that the Council agrees to request the Department of Finance to extend the deadline for the submission of responses until after the General Election.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th November, 2019**

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th October were thereupon approved and adopted.

Motion – Economic Future Development

Moved by Alderman Kingston,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the minute of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 20th September, under the heading “Motion – Economic Future Development”, which had been called in, be approved and adopted.

On a recorded vote, twenty-five Members voted in favour of adopting the minute and twenty-eight against, with four “no votes”, and, accordingly, the Council did not adopt the minute.

<u>For 25</u>	<u>Against 28</u>	<u>No Vote 4</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Donnelly, Ferguson, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McKeown, McLaughlin, Murphy, Walsh and Whyte.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, Rodgers and Spence; and Councillors Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Dorrian, Graham, Hanvey, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Long, McAllister, McDonough-Brown, McMullan, Mulholland, Newton, Nicholl, Pankhurst and Verner.	Councillors Flynn, Groogan, O’Hara and Smyth.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Michael Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 8th October be approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and

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Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 9th and 23rd October be approved and adopted.

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Carson,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 15th October, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.
Shareholders' Committee**

Moved by Councillor Mulholland,
Seconded by Councillor Flynn and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee of 3rd October be approved and adopted.

Brexit Committee

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor Flynn and

Resolved – That the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 14th and 24th October be approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

Alcohol Misuse

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

“Alcohol misuse has been described by Belfast Coroner Joe McCrisken as the biggest health problem in Northern Ireland. Over the past decade the number of alcohol-related deaths has increased by almost 50% and 12,000 people are admitted to hospital each year with alcohol-related problems.

Evidence indicates that Minimum Unit Pricing of alcohol is the most effective way to reduce alcohol-related harm.

This Council calls for legislation to introduce Minimum Unit Pricing and, to that end, will seek a meeting with the Permanent Secretary, Department of Health.”

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The motion was seconded by Councillor Lyons.

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

Arrest and Imprisonment of Catalan Political Leaders

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Matt Collins proposed:

"This Council notes with great concern the recent arrest and imprisonment of Catalanian political leaders and wishes to extend its solidarity to Catalan citizens living in Belfast.

The Council opposes these arrests and demands that the Spanish authorities end violence and criminalisation directed at the peaceful Catalan struggle for justice and immediately rescind jail sentences imposed by the Spanish Supreme Court on Catalan representatives.

The Council calls also on the European Union to end its complicity with the Spanish government's violent repression, denial of democratic rights and imprisonment of Catalan leaders.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to write to the Spanish government and to the European Union to relay this position."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Ferguson.

At the request of Councillor McLaughlin, the proposer agreed to amend the final paragraph of his motion to reflect that, in terms of the European Union, the Council would write to the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Parliament.

On a recorded vote, thirty-eight Members voted for the motion, as amended, and none against, with fifteen "no votes", and, accordingly, the motion was carried.

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For 38	Against 0	No Vote 15
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Black, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Donnelly, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Groogan, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, Kyle, Long, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, O'Hara, Smyth, Walsh and Whyte.		The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, Rodgers and Spence; and Councillors Brooks, Bunting, Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, T. Kelly, Newton, Pankhurst and Verner.

Ban on Hunting with Dogs and use of Snares

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

“This Council notes with concern that hunting with dogs remains legal in Northern Ireland and is still used in the barbaric practice of pursuing and killing live animals. It further notes that snares are still being used to capture and kill wildlife.

The Council believes that the selling and use of snares for capturing or killing animals should be banned outright and agrees that legislation should be brought forward to ban hunting with dogs in Northern Ireland. It, therefore, resolves to write to the Permanent Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, outlining these concerns and requesting that preparatory work be undertaken to enable the relevant laws to be changed to reflect this.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor McKeown.

At the request of Councillor Hussey, the proposer agreed to amend his motion to provide for the addition of the following wording after the final paragraph:

“The Council notes also that the Republic of Ireland continues to permit hare coursing and that its Government actively funds and licenses organisations which engage in this barbaric practice and further notes that the affected animals routinely move between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

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The Council, therefore, resolves to write also to the appropriate minister within the Government of the Republic of Ireland urging them to follow Northern Ireland's example and ban hare coursing".

After discussion, the motion, as amended and set out below, was put to the meeting and passed:

"This Council notes with concern that hunting with dogs remains legal in Northern Ireland and is still used in the barbaric practice of pursuing and killing live animals. It further notes that snares are still being used to capture and kill wildlife.

The Council believes that the selling and use of snares for capturing or killing animals should be banned outright and agrees that legislation should be brought forward to ban hunting with dogs in Northern Ireland. It, therefore, resolves to write to the Permanent Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, outlining these concerns and requesting that preparatory work be undertaken to enable the relevant laws to be changed to reflect this.

The Council notes also that the Republic of Ireland continues to permit hare coursing and that its Government actively funds and licenses organisations which engage in this barbaric practice and further notes that the affected animals routinely move between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Council, therefore, resolves to write also to the appropriate minister within the Government of the Republic of Ireland urging them to follow Northern Ireland's example and ban hare coursing."

Reshaping Breast Assessment Services

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

"This Council notes with grave concern the public consultation 'Reshaping Breast Assessment Services', the first draft report of which is due in the coming weeks.

It notes also that the plans contained within the consultation could lead to the closure of two breast clinic services, including the centre at the Belfast City Hospital, and that the closure of a local, highly effective centre would have a devastating impact on women in surrounding communities who rely on this lifesaving service. In particular, detrimental and discriminatory impact would be felt by those who cannot travel further for treatment because of age, economic, physical or mental health reasons.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to write to the Department for Health and to the Secretary of State adding its input to the consultation responses,

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stating that it recognises the incredibly high level of care and the ground breaking work in the Belfast Breast Screening Centre.

Also, the Council agrees, within the correspondence, to object in the strongest terms to the suggestion that this vital service could be lost from the Belfast City Hospital and to the suggestion that any reduction in Breast Screening Services could be made across the region, and requests an urgent cross-Party meeting with the Permanent Secretary, Department of Health, to discuss the issue.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Michael Collins.

At the request of Alderman Rodgers, the proposer agreed to amend the final paragraph of her motion to reflect that the Chief Medical Officer would be invited also to attend the cross-Party meeting.

The motion, as amended, was thereupon put to the meeting and passed.

Briefing Session

At the request of Alderman Kingston, the Council agreed that representatives of the Department of Health be invited to attend a briefing session in order to provide an update on the wider work being undertaken around the transforming of healthcare services.

“Parenting in the Picture” Campaign

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

“Following on from the 20th year of Parenting Week, this Council recognises the vital importance of parents to society.

Furthermore, it notes with concern that 82% of parents indicated in the most recent “Big Parenting Survey”, that they felt that parents do not receive enough support.

In order to bring attention to and in an attempt to redress this, the Council formally supports Parenting NI’s “Parenting in the Picture” campaign and pledges to work towards implementing the promises and commitments contained in this campaign.

To do this, the Council commits to conducting an audit of the existing initiatives which it delivers to support parents, with a view to working with the voluntary and community sector, as well as other partners, to explore if such initiatives may be improved, as well as seeking to bring forward new programmes to support our parents.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Smyth.

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

Unregulated Car Washes

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

“This Council expresses concern about unregulated car washes and calls for a detailed report to be prepared on the number of unregulated car washes across Belfast. The necessary investigation and production of the report to be led by Council officers and to involve experienced staff from all relevant statutory bodies, in particular, the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The Council requests that the report cover all aspects of unregulated car washes, including potential human trafficking, employee contracts and wages, environmental and health and safety issues.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Graham.

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

**Nutrition Support for Children
in Out-of-Hours School Clubs**

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

“Practical healthy eating, supported by positive influence around lifelong food choices, improves children’s wellbeing in physical and mental terms, including their ability to concentrate and learn.

Good nutrition is essential for children to grow properly, do their best in school and be healthy and happy in the future. (Education Authority).

A World Health Organisation commission has described childhood obesity as a ‘growing epidemic’. Department of Health survey statistics indicate that 25% of children in this region are deemed to be overweight or obese. The estimated costs of healthcare attached to weight problems are around £450 million, representing 2.8% of total healthcare expenditure.

Small changes across a range of arenas can help to turn the tide. Implementing healthy snack choices, as part of the daily routine, significantly increases the capacity of positive choices becoming embedded, ultimately, resulting in wider savings to the health sector.

Belfast City Council supports a range of services and programmes for children, including Summer Schemes and Out-of-Hours School Clubs in areas facing disadvantage and food poverty.

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Such spaces provide daily opportunities for children to undertake physical activity, learning and play. It is worth noting the capacity for such spaces to further improve the health of children via the provision of small healthy snacks.

It is within this Council's gift to contribute to the improvement of quality of daily life for children and to cement children's positive relationship with food and nutrition.

Accordingly, the Council agrees that a report, looking at clubs located in areas of disadvantage and the potential for such spaces to incorporate healthy snacks, as part of out of school hours provision during both term and non-term time, be prepared."

The motion was seconded by Councillor McAteer.

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

Action on Avoidable Winter Deaths

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

"In December last year, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) published Excess Winter Mortality figures for the period 2017/18, which revealed the second highest recorded number of excess winter deaths in the north of Ireland since data began in 1974/75. Furthermore, these shocking statistics recorded that the number of excess winter deaths in the north had more than doubled since 2015.

The 2017/18 statistics record that 1,500 people died, who were classed as Excess Winter Deaths, and, of these, 22% or 320 people were from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. These deaths are avoidable winter deaths and even one is too many. Unfortunately, it is our citizens aged over 65 who are most affected, particularly those vulnerable elderly people aged 85+.

The increase in winter deaths is widely understood to be down to the flu and spells of very cold weather, yet these deaths are avoidable. A combination of high energy prices, fuel poverty, ill health, low income and poor housing can make winter a dangerous time for many older people.

As we await the NISRA figures for 2018/19 and approach the upcoming winter, this Council will do all in its power to effectively act on avoidable winter deaths. The Council welcomes the joined up multi-sectoral approach that will focus on preventing avoidable winter deaths through Belfast's Community Planning Process and agrees to convene and facilitate a meeting of Belfast's community, voluntary and social enterprise agencies which focus on protecting and supporting older vulnerable people, to

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identify, develop and support innovative programmes that can be deployed and co-ordinated to prevent avoidable deaths in our city over the upcoming winter.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Black.

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

**Management of Communal Areas
and Open Space in Developments**

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

“This Council is concerned by the impact on new and long term homeowners of property management fees for the upkeep of open spaces and communal areas in housing estates.

We recognise that the Council has a role to play in this through the planning process and call upon it to develop a framework around the management of open space and communal areas and explore the possibility of how we can regulate the property management sector.

We further call upon the Council to engage with relevant parties such as the Law Society in the carrying out of this work.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Beattie.

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

New Year Event

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

“This Council notes the huge success of our Hallowe’en Monster Mash event.

As a regional capital city, the Council agrees to hold on an annual basis a similar event to celebrate the New Year. The event will appeal to all our citizens and visitors, enhancing the appeal of Belfast as a welcoming and diverse city.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Verner.

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

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

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Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 22nd November, 2019

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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

Also attended: Councillors de Faoite and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mrs. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. G. Long, Commissioner for Resilience;
Mr. A. Reid, Director of Place and Economy; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 25th October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th November.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Black declared an interest in respect of item 2a – Revenue Estimates and District Rate and left the meeting whilst this item was under discussion.

Schedule of Meetings 2020

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for 2020, all meetings to commence at 9.30 am:

Friday, 10th January (Rate setting, if required)
Friday, 24th January
Friday, 21st February

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Friday, 20th March
Friday, 24th April
Friday, 22nd May
Friday, 19th June
Friday, 21st August
Friday, 18th September
Friday, 23rd October
Friday, 20th November
Friday, 18th December

Change of Date of Meeting in December

The Committee approved the change of date of the December meeting from Friday 13th to Tuesday 17th to commence at 9.30 am.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 5 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion of these items 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.

Presentations: Ulster Orchestra and the MAC

Prior to consideration of the reports on the Revenue Estimates and District Rates 2020/21 and Financial Reporting Quarter 2, the Committee was advised the representatives of the Ulster Orchestra and the MAC were in attendance to address the Committee in relation to funding issues.

The Committee agreed to receive the presentations and accordingly the representatives were invited to the meeting.

Ulster Orchestra

Mr. Richard Wigley, Managing Director, Ulster Orchestra, stated that the Orchestra was seeking to continue its Additional Funding Agreement with the Council beyond the current endpoint of March 2020. He indicated that it had been a vital part of the Orchestra's success story, and a strong Public Value Proposition, by allowing the Orchestra to focus resources on securing income for its Learning and Community Engagement programme (LGE), and that that needed to continue.

He reviewed what the additional funding agreement covered, including Ulster Hall and Waterfront Hall rent and services, LGE activity and office rent.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
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Mr Wigley then reviewed what the Ulster Orchestra was able to achieve with the Council's support and what it would allow it to do in the future and how it supported partners and local people. He then referred to its search for a new rehearsal and leaning hub.

In conclusion, he highlighted the Orchestra's 50 performances in one day event to mark its 50th anniversary.

Mr Wigley then answered a number of questions from the Members and the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, thanked him for his presentation and he retired from the meeting.

The MAC

Ms. Anne McReynolds, Chief Executive, The MAC, highlighted how the venue was animating the city since its opening in April, 2012, in that it was open 365 days a year, was accessible, inclusive, home-grown and international. It had received 27 awards and 12 nominations for the building, the business and its work and had 2.2 million visits to date.

Following a review of its business model in 2017, the MAC had developed a sustainability plan which included bringing the café bar in-house, redeveloping the venue's hire strategy, the creation of a cabaret club and a creative leaning strategy.

This had resulted in a 76% theatre occupancy versus the Northern Ireland average of 50%; an increase of 25% in the sale of tickets compared to year one; and income being nearly doubled since 201/13. Ms. McReynolds then reviewed the income from venue hire, from the cafe bar and from trusts and foundations, corporate sponsorship and donations.

She the outlined the financial support received from the Council for the previous three years and stated that for the current year The MAC was seeking a similar level of funding this year as in the previous 2 years.

Ms. McReynolds concluded by the outlining the venue's purpose which was "To make Northern Ireland a better place through the creation and enjoyment of and participation in outstanding art" and its vision which was "A creative and confident society that celebrates diversity".

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms McReynolds for attending and she left the meeting.

The Committee noted the presentations and noted that any requests for additional funding could only be considered in conjunction with the Financial Reporting Quarter 2 report which is due to be considered later in the meeting.

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Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2020/21

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance and Resources submitted a report which provided an update on the development of the Revenue Estimates for 2020/21 which advised the Members of the next steps in the rates setting process.

The Director highlighted the seven key elements to setting the rate, the current Revenue Estimates position, including the recommended Growth Proposals and the Business as Usual costs pressures, the Efficiency Programme, the Growth Proposals – Priority Areas, Capital Finance, the Estimated Penny Product (EPP) and the General Reserves position.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted the update on the development of the revenue estimates and the setting of the district rate;
2. noted that party group briefings had been arranged for the week beginning 25th November 2019, with a further report on the setting of the district rate being brought to the Committee at its meeting on 17th December 2019; and
3. agreed that representatives of Land and Property Services be invited to the December meeting to provide a presentation on the outcome of the Non-domestic re-evaluation.

Financial Reporting – Quarter 2 2019/20

The Committee considered a report which presented the Quarter 2 financial position for the Council, including a forecast of the year end outturn. It included also a reporting pack with the summary of the financial indicators and an executive summary. It also provided a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators and the forecast outturn for the year.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted the report and agreed that, given the departmental and district rate forecasts, no further reallocations or cash flow payments are considered until the Quarter 3 position is presented to the Committee in February 2020;
- agreed that officers proceed with the development of a specification for an Air Quality Assessment and consider its financing as part of the Quarter 3 Financing Report;
- agreed that a specified reserve be established to build up the required level of funding for the hosting in the City of the 2021 Super Cup; and
- agreed that no funding be allocated toward the hosting of the 2020 UEFA Men's Under-19 Euro Championships but to provide in-kind support through, for example, the provision of training facilities.

Strategic Sites Assessment (SSA)

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the emerging Strategic Sites Assessment workstream and the recommendations which had been agreed by

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee at its meeting on 6th November. The report also sought approval from the Committee to explore the feasibility of including a number of priority sites within wider regeneration projects.

The Committee:

- i. noted that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 6th November 2019 had agreed a number of recommendations as set out in the report and appendices;
- ii. Noted the progress on Phase 1 of the SSA and the recommendations from the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 6th November 2019;
- iii. agreed to explore the feasibility of taking ownership of the Department of Finance's (DoF) Corporation Street site, taking into account the capital implications of acquiring the land, including the potential for land swaps with the DoF or a similar arrangement as recommended by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee;
- iv. agreed to the inclusion of the Council's Hope Street North car park and Whitla Street car park within the planning and masterplanning considerations for the Weavers Cross regeneration project and the Yorkgate Train Station project, respectively;
- v. agreed to the inclusion of Gloucester Street within the strategic site delivery programme; and
- vi. agreed to a Phase 2 SSA and that a scoping exercise be undertaken to see what other sites were available throughout the city.

Belfast Agenda – Statement of Progress

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the development and publication of a Belfast Agenda statement of progress in November 2019, which was a legislative monitoring requirement for the Council and its community planning partners. The Committee was reminded that the Belfast Agenda, the city's first community plan, had been published in November 2017 and was led by the Council, in partnership with its community planning partner organisations. The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 required the Council and its partners to publish a statement of progress highlighting delivery towards the outcomes and actions taken every two years. The first statement of progress was due for publication by the end of November, 2019.

At its meeting on 23rd August, 2019, the Committee had agreed the proposed structure and contents of the Statement of Progress, which was in line with legislative guidance issued by the Department for Communities. In addition, the Committee had agreed a proposed timeline for the publication of the report which included consultation with partners and political engagement with members via party group briefings in October 2019.

The draft and detailed statement of progress had been developed in association with and input from all community planning partners. The document also adhered to the full spirit of the legislation and provided detailed information on delivering against the stretched goals, indicators and outcomes as well as progress update on the action plans attached to the Belfast Agenda boards established to drive forward collaborative action. The Statement of Progress

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also highlighted a number of case studies and noteworthy achievements showcasing the work of partners over the last 12-18 months in the context of community planning.

After discussion, during which a number of questions were raised by the Members, the Committee:

- a) noted the statutory requirement for the Council and its community planning partners to publish a Statement of Progress in November 2019;
- b) noted the process of engagement and input from community planning partners which had led to the development of the Statement of Progress;
- c) considered the statement of progress executive summary, attached at appendix 1 the full detailed and technical statement of progress attached at appendix 2 to the report;
- d) agreed that both documents be made available and circulated to community planning partners and the Department of Communities;
- e) agreed that the executive summary be published and promoted for the public and the full detailed report would be available on line; and
- f) agreed to convene a meeting of the Elected Members' Working Group to discuss a number of questions which had been raised during the Committee meeting.

**Proposed Public Realm Improvements at
Erskine House, 34-36 Chichester Street**

The Committee considered a report which proposed an approach to deliver a public realm upgrade scheme comprising a new surface, bollards, lighting, seating, paving, kerbs and associated site works at Erskine House, the proposed new office building for HMRC, at 34-36 Chichester Street, utilising a developer contribution which had already been secured for the site.

The Committee:

- (i) agreed that the developer contribution of £110,000 received by the Council in respect of Planning Application Ref. LA04/2016/1789/F (Demolition of existing building at 34-36 Chichester Street and erection of new 8No. storey mixed use development incorporating retail and office ground floor, and 1st-7th floor offices (with associated external plant) be utilised to deliver the approved public realm upgrade scheme at Erskine House (Planning Application Ref. LA04/2018/2650/F; and
- (ii) agreed that the Council enters into an appropriate agreement with the developer and HMRC to ensure that the developer contribution was used solely for the purpose of delivering the enhanced public realm scheme, prior to the occupation of the office space in Erskine House.

Matters referred back from Council/Motions

Motion – Unregulated Car Washes

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th November, the following motion had been proposed by Councillor Newton and seconded by Councillor Graham:

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“This Council expresses concern about unregulated car washes and calls for a detailed report to be prepared on the number of unregulated car washes across Belfast. The necessary investigation and production of the report to be led by Council officers and to involve experienced staff from all relevant statutory bodies, in particular, the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The Council requests that the report cover all aspects of unregulated car washes, including potential human trafficking, employee contracts and wages, environmental and health and safety issues.”

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

The Committee agreed that the Policing and Community Policing Partnership (PCSP) be consulted and requested to consider the motion and that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed be brought back to the Committee.

**Motion – Nutrition Support for Children
in Out-of-Hours School Clubs**

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th November, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Black and seconded by Councillor McAteer, had been referred to the Committee, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), for consideration:

“Practical healthy eating, supported by positive influence around lifelong food choices, improves children’s wellbeing in physical and mental terms, including their ability to concentrate and learn.
Good nutrition is essential for children to grow properly, do their best in school and be healthy and happy in the future. (Education Authority).

A World Health Organisation commission has described childhood obesity as a ‘growing epidemic’. Department of Health survey statistics indicate that 25% of children in this region are deemed to be overweight or obese. The estimated costs of healthcare attached to weight problems are around £450 million, representing 2.8% of total healthcare expenditure.

Small changes across a range of arenas can help to turn the tide. Implementing healthy snack choices, as part of the daily routine, significantly increases the capacity of positive choices becoming embedded, ultimately, resulting in wider savings to the health sector.

Belfast City Council supports a range of services and programmes for children, including Summer Schemes and Out-of-Hours School Clubs in areas facing disadvantage and food poverty.

Such spaces provide daily opportunities for children to undertake physical activity, learning and play. It is worth noting the capacity for such spaces to further improve the health of children via the provision of small healthy snacks.

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It is within this Council's gift to contribute to the improvement of quality of daily life for children and to cement children's positive relationship with food and nutrition.

Accordingly, the Council agrees that a report, looking at clubs located in areas of disadvantage and the potential for such spaces to incorporate healthy snacks, as part of out of school hours provision during both term and non-term time, be prepared."

The Committee agreed that a report on how this could be facilitated, resourced and managed be brought back to the Committee.

Motion – New Year Event

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 4th November, the following motion had been proposed by Councillor Pankhurst and seconded by Councillor Verner:

"This Council notes the huge success of our Hallowe'en Monster Mash event.

As a regional capital city, the Council agrees to hold on an annual basis a similar event to celebrate the New Year. The event will appeal to all our citizens and visitors, enhancing the appeal of Belfast as a welcoming and diverse city."

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion had been referred without debate to the Committee.

The Committee agreed to a report, on how this could be facilitated, resourced and managed, being submitted to a future meeting.

**Motion – NIPSA Strike – Response
from the Department of Finance**

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 1st October, the following motion had been proposed by Councillor Ferguson and seconded by Councillor Matt Collins:

"The Council notes that NIPSA members have planned strike action for Thursday, 3rd October. Council also notes that public sector workers have faced years of wage freezes and attacks on working conditions. Council believes that in this context strike action is a measured and appropriate response to the paltry pay deal that is currently being offered to public sector workers.

To this end, the Council fully supports NIPSA in their campaign for better pay and better terms and conditions, including strike action. The Council sends particular support to those workers on picket lines on Thursday. Finally, the Council agrees that the Chief Executive should write to Permanent Secretary

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of the Department for Finance, Sue Gray, to implore her to immediately revisit the issue of public sector pay and reconsider the offer extended.”

It was reported that, subsequent to the motion being passed, a letter had been forwarded to the Permanent Secretary.

A response had now been received in which she had concluded that there were no plans to re-open negotiations on 2018 pay and she had already initiated negotiations on 2019 pay.

Noted.

Motion on Srebrenica Genocide

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 At the Council meeting on 1st October 2019, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Dorrian and seconded by Councillor McMullan, had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f) been referred to the Committee for consideration:

‘This Council continues to stand with those who suffered as a result of the Srebrenica genocide. We will continue to support those who suffered during this shameful time and mark the occasion with a suitable event, which informs the wider community and promotes the message of reconciliation.’

1.2 Subsequently, the Committee noted the motion and agreed that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed would be brought back to the Committee.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to approve the following actions:

- That officers liaise with Remembering Srebrenica to ascertain their plans for the commemoration of the 25th anniversary in 2020.
- That officers work in partnership with representatives from Remembering Srebrenica to determine how this period can be marked in Belfast.
- That any proposals be brought to the Shared City Partnership in the first instance for discussion given the remit of the Partnership in this subject matter.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1** The Srebrenica massacre, also known as the Srebrenica genocide, was the July 1995 massacre of more than 8,000 [Bosniaks](#), mainly men and boys and mostly Muslim, in and around the town of [Srebrenica](#) during the [Bosnian War](#).
- 3.2** In 2005, [Kofi Annan](#), then Secretary-General of the United Nations described the massacre as the worst crime on European soil since the [Second World War](#). Both the International Tribunal to the former state of Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice have ruled the acts committed in July 1995 constituted genocide.
- 3.3** The 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide will occur on 11th July 2020. In previous years, events have been held between 7-10th July given the time of year.
- 3.4** Belfast Council has assisted Remembering Srebrenica NI to mark the Srebrenica genocide in July over the past number of years. This has been in the form of provision of a venue and/or the attendance of the Lord Mayor who usually speaks at the event. Support is also provided through TEO and Remembering Srebrenica UK. The latter provides the resource to bring survivors or relatives of those who were killed to tell their story and emphasise the importance of reconciliation including recognition of the steps that can lead to genocide and tackling prejudice at an early stage in a robust way.
- 3.5** Remembering Srebrenica is a charitable initiative. It organises UK memorial events to honour survivors and keep alive the stories of their loved ones who died. They work with individuals and organisations to help strengthen society by learning the lessons of history to help tackle hatred, racism and intolerance wherever it occurs. They do this through commemoration, education and by taking individuals from communities across the UK to Srebrenica to speak to survivors and families whose loved ones were killed. Following the visit, participants are asked to apply the lessons learned from the experience and apply them in their own community and context to combat prejudice.
- 3.6** Members may recall that the Good Relations Manager was invited to Bosnia by Remembering Srebrenica UK as part of a delegation from Northern Ireland in September which included senior civil servants from The Executive Office and the Department of Finance. Whilst there, the delegation met a number of groups and organisations including the Mothers of Srebrenica to hear about

their work in relation to ensuring the events in Srebrenica and the impact which is still keenly felt today will not only be remembered but will serve as reminder that intolerance and prejudice must be tackled at many levels within society.

3.7 Given that there is already an organisation which has the responsibility to organise a commemoration event, Members are asked to agree the following:

- That officers liaise with Remembering Srebrenica to ascertain their plans for the commemoration this year.
- That Council works in partnership with Remembering Srebrenica to determine how this period can be marked in Belfast.
- That any proposals be brought to the Shared City Partnership in the first instance for discussion given the remit of the Partnership in this subject matter. .

On a related note, Members are reminded that the TEO have asked us to partner with them again to deliver and host International Holocaust Remembrance Day again in January 2020 as next year is the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

3.8 **Financial & Resource Implications**

Any event/programme costs would be covered through the Council's Good Relations Action Plan which is 75% funded by The Executive Office.

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

The District Council Good Relations Action Plan has been screened for equality, good relations and rural needs, and screened out."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Proposed approach to enable the strategic consideration of Notices of Motions and Issues Raised in Advance by Members

The Committee deferred consideration of the report and agreed that it be referred for Party briefings.

Governance

National Association of Councillors – Attendance at National Executive Meetings

The Committee was reminded that it had eight Members on the National Association of Councillors – Northern Ireland Region. In addition, it was aware that Alderman Sandford

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had been appointed to represent the Northern Ireland Region on the National Executive, which would require attendance at a number of meetings in 2020. The meetings were scheduled to be held on 13th January, 11th May and 7th September in London, with the AGM to be held on 28th November in Liverpool. Accordingly, authority was being sought to authorise the payment of travel costs and subsistence for the attendance of Alderman Sandford at those events.

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

**Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)
Annual Conference, Exhibition and Local Government Awards 2020**

The Committee was advised that the NILGA Annual Conference would take place this year at the Crown Plaza Hotel on 20th February, 2020. The Council was represented on NILGA by 10 Members across the political parties and the normal practice was to authorise those representatives to attend the Annual Conference if they so desired. In addition, later that evening the Northern Ireland Local Government Awards dinner would be held, these awards set out to showcase excellence in service delivery across the work of Councils. It was reported that there were two free places for each Council, with a cost for each additional day delegate at the conference only costing - £99 plus VAT; and day delegate plus awards dinner - £145 plus VAT. Any costs for attendance at the conference and or awards dinner could be met from within existing budgets.

The Committee approved the attendance of the Council representatives on NILGA at the Annual Conference, Exhibition and the Local Government Awards dinner on 20th February.

Election Accounts – May 2019

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To advise the Committee of the cost to the Council of the Local Government Elections in May 2019.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- note the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The local council expenditure for delivering Local Government Elections is, under the provision of the Electoral Law Act (Northern

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Ireland) 1962, constrained by a scale of expenditure set by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

- 3.2 The Local Election Fees and Expenses Scale for Belfast City Council for May 2019 was £650,100. This excludes the cost of candidates' mailing, which is not included within that maximum. However, that cost still has to be covered by the Council.**
- 3.3 The Cost of administering the election was £584,374.61, which was within the budget set by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). With the additional cost of candidates' mailing being £268,634.03 this brings the total cost to the Council to £853,008.64.**
- 3.4 Compared with the cost of the Elections in 2014 of £618,114, this is an increase of £234,894.64**
- 3.5 This increase is due principally to the fact that in 2014, as well as the Local Government Elections, for which the Council has responsibility, there was also a European Election, which falls under responsibility of the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (EONI), the costs to cover the polling stations, polling staff, etc. was split between the Council and EONI.**
- 3.6 As this year was a single election, the Council is required to bear that cost. A breakdown of the costs is set out below:**

Limit set by the NIO		£650,100
<u>Direct Costs to Council</u>		
Staff costs	£142,186.60	
Printing of ballot papers	£29,600.00	
EONI - Registration of Electors	£15,543.73	
Public Notices	£10,567.73	
Count security, incl. access passes	£5,536.86	
Equipment Hire	£5,078.00	
Furniture hire	£4,885.00	
Count Stationery and signage	£2,294.17	
	£215,692.09	
<u>EONI costs charged to Council</u>		
Staffing	£222,285.72	
Postage	£99,858.83	
Stationery/Printing	£18,634.85	
Transportation/Travel	£17,291.82	
Use of Premises	£7,188.76	
Hire of Equipment	£3,422.54	
	£368,682.52	
Sub total	£584,374.61	£65,725.39

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Candidates' Mailing	£268,634.03	
Total cost to the Council	£853,008.64	

3.7 Financial & Resource Implications

There were sufficient funds in the relevant specified reserve to meet the election costs. The reserve will need to be maintained and possibly enhanced in the future to meet the cost of the 2023 election.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None associated with this report.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Appointment of Members to the Board of
the Belfast Harbour Commissioners**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To consider the process to be used to identify 8 elected Members to be considered under a public appointment's process to fill 4 places on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- employ a one-off proportionality exercise for the purpose of identifying the political nomination of 8 members for consideration for appointment to the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. Note only 4 members will be chosen.
- to agree which of the proportionality systems it wishes to use.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

3.2 The Belfast Harbour Order (Northern Ireland) 2002 provides that a maximum of four of the Harbour Commissioners shall be Members of Belfast City Council.

3.3 Correspondence has been received from the Department for Infrastructure dated 31st October indicating that the Council

should provide to it the names of eight Members who would be willing to serve as Commissioners from which four would be selected by the Permanent Secretary following an interview under a public appointment's process.

- 3.4 The Department has also pointed out that a Councillor would not be permitted to serve more than two terms (normally of four years each) as a Commissioner and no more than ten years in total.
- 3.5 The Committee is reminded that, in June, 2011, when the former City Council was considering the appointment of Members to the Harbour Commissioners, it was decided that a one-off selection process using the d'Hondt system to select 8 nominations was the proper way to proceed rather than including the selection of names as part of the overall pool of nominations to outside bodies.
- 3.6 Again in April 2015, the Council agreed to the use of a one-off selection process, with each of the proportionality systems considered at that time, that is, d'Hondt, Saint Lague and the Quota Greatest Remainder, achieving the same outcome.
- 3.7 In keeping with this principle, a one-off d'Hondt exercise for eight nominations would provide the following result:

1	SF
2	DUP
3	ALL
4	SF
5	DUP
6	SF
7	SDLP
8	ALL

- 3.8 Therefore, Sinn Fein – 3 nominations, DUP – 2 nominations, Alliance – 2 nominations and SDLP – 1 nomination.

3.9 The Sainte Lague method would provide the following result:

1	SF
2	DUP
3	ALL
4	SF
5	SDLP
6	DUP
7	GREEN
8	SF

3.10 Giving Sinn Fein – 3 nominations, the DUP – 2 nominations with the Alliance, SDLP and Green having 1 nomination each.

3.11 The Quota Greatest Remainder method does not produce an order list but would provide the following result and number of nominations:

Sinn Fein	3
DUP	2
Alliance	1
SDLP	1
Green	1
People Before Profit Alliance	0
UUP	0
PUP	0

3.12 Sinn Fein – 3 nominations, DUP – 2 nominations, Alliance – 1 nomination, SDLP – 1 nomination, Green – 1 nomination

3.13 Financial & Resource Implications

There are not any financial implications for the Council associated with this report.

3.14 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The suggested approach to be employed to select Members for consideration for appointment to the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners is in keeping with the principles of proportionality established in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. Therefore, there are not any equality or good relations considerations associated with this report.”

The Committee agreed:

- to employ a one-off proportionality exercise for the purpose of identifying the political nomination of eight members for consideration for appointment to the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and noted only four members would be chosen.
- to the use of the Sainte Lague method.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

City Region Growth Deal – update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

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

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Agree to that the Fraunhofer Institute support the development of the regional digital projects, including the Regional Innovators Network and testbeds.
- Agree the minutes of the BRCD Council Panel held on 23rd October 2019.
- Note the next steps in maximising the cross cutting challenges of the BRCD Programme.

3.0 Main report

Programme Update

3.1 Members will be aware that work to support the development of Phase 2 of the BRCD Programme is continuing with the establishment of an overall governance structure at a regional level and the set-up of a central Programme Office in Belfast City Council (BCC).

- 3.2 The focus of this has primarily been the development of Outline Business Cases (OBCs) for the individual BRCD projects which will help inform the content of the documents required for this phase including
- A Financial Plan and Agreement
 - A Deal Document - detailed document covering all elements included within Heads of terms, including Governance Framework
 - An Implementation Plan - summarising milestones for key deliverables, outputs, resources and risk mitigation for each project
- 3.3 The majority of the OBCs are being progressed through the individual partners, who have committed specific internal and external resources to their development, under the guidance of the Advisory Boards and in consultation with colleagues from UK Government and NICS.
- 3.4 Members will also be aware that the Fraunhofer Institute have been appointed to support the development of the digital projects, given their complexity and specialist nature. The regional aspect of the digital programme, which includes Regional Innovator Networks and testbeds across the city region is a key element of the programme as it enables the benefits of the Digital and innovation projects to be connected across the region and support wider, more inclusive economic growth. Again the further development of these will require specialist input and it is therefore recommended that the Fraunhofer Institute undertake an additional specific piece of work which focuses on the regional aspect of the digital programme to maximise the overall benefits. This work has been costed at £134k and will be paid for by the other five councils within the BRCD.

BRCD Council Panel

- 3.5 The BRCD Council Panel provides a joint forum for members from all six councils to meet to jointly discuss issues, progress and benefits of the BRCD. Each council has four members on the Forum and as agreed by this committee the four nominees from BCC are the party group leaders (or their nominees) of the four largest parties.
- 3.6 The Panel held its first meeting on 23rd October in Belfast City Hall. They agreed terms of reference, received an update on the BRCD programme and discussed items for consideration at further meetings. The minutes of the meeting are attached at Appendix 1.

The next meeting will be held on 29th January 2020 and will be hosted by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

Cross Cutting Programme Challenges

3.7 Benefits Delivery:

Given the scale of the BRCD investment programme there is the potential to use planning agreements and social clauses in support of our inclusive growth ambitions, including through the provision of significant new opportunities in terms of training, skills development, employability placements and apprenticeships. The E&S Board will be leading work to review good practice and maximise the impact of the BRCD investment on local communities across the Belfast Region.

3.8 Communication

Progressing OBCs has been and will continue to be the key priority for the BRCD during phase 2. However, it is also essential to ensure that momentum is maintained while detailed project and programme work continues in the background. A small number of key events will therefore play an important part in a communication programme over the next six months in order to effectively communicate our progress to date in delivering such a complex and ambitious programme.

3.9 Business/Private Sector Engagement

It will be vital that planned investments are responsive to industry requirements and that businesses support and invest in them. The BRCD partners are therefore working to ensure more direct business engagement and involvement in the development of projects. This remains challenging, particularly for those projects which are at early stages of development.

3.10 Partnership Working

The city deal process offers an opportunity for developing sustainable relationships which will enable partners to continue working in a more collaborative way in the longer term. The BRCD partnership is continuing to strengthen with increasing evidence of effective joint working between universities, colleges and central and local government.

3.11 NI departments and key agencies such as Invest NI and Tourism NI are now directly engaged in supporting project development and there is a recognition among all parties of the need to keep momentum as the Belfast region is competing for the proposed

investments, in areas such as innovation and digital, with other UK and European cities. In such a complex programme this will require genuine cross-government collaboration, timely decision making processes and a strong focus on the goal of the programme- more and better jobs

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets. The additional £134k for the digital regional piece will be paid for by the other five councils in the BRCD, with no cost to BCC.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

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

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Towards a Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plan

The Commissioner for Resilience submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 SP&R has requested the All-Party Group on the Climate Crisis recommend a process for producing a comprehensive Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plan for the Council. A Council motion approved by SP&R in October confirmed that a fully costed Climate Plan should be completed by mid- 2021 at the latest. At its meeting on the 18th November, the All Party Working Group approved this document for recommendation to SP&R.

1.2 This paper outlines a proposed methodology, governance structure and resourcing for an eighteen-month programme of work to agree targets and produce a Climate Plan. It was developed in consultation with a number of other cities across the 100 Resilient Cities Network to learn from established practice,

and also in consultation with UK cities that are part of the Place Based Climate Action Network (P-CAN).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- approve the proposed methodology, governance structure and resourcing for development of a Climate Plan, and establishment of an internal Programme Board to take this forward.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Many cities globally have developed Climate Plans to set out how to respond to the potential impacts of climate change, and to reduce adverse impacts on the environment, e.g. by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Belfast's city-wide climate plan will aim to deliver the vision set out in the draft Resilience Strategy- *to transition to a low-carbon economy in a generation.*

3.2 The plan will focus on climate adaptation and mitigation. Climate adaptation is the process associated with preparing for the effects of climate change, e.g. building flood defences. Climate mitigation is the process associated with preventing or alleviating the impacts of climate change, e.g. reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by reducing an organisation's carbon footprint. Many organisations produce two separate plans as they tend to involve distinct disciplines. However to reflect the level of urgency attached to the climate crisis by Belfast City Council, it is proposed that adaptation and mitigation are planned together within the Council.

3.3 Separately from the Council's plan, a city-wide Climate Plan amounts to a substantial piece of work, and some cities have spent several years developing plans. Given the urgency of the climate crisis, we are proposing a parallel process; (1) that Belfast City Council develops its Climate Plan by mid-2021, overseen by the All-Party Group on the Climate Crisis, for approval by SP&R and Council (2) a city-wide Climate Plan is developed by stakeholders across the city using existing community planning structures through the establishment of a Resilience and Sustainability Board, which will commence its work in November, and is Chaired by the Commissioner for Resilience. In steering the development of both plans, the Commissioner for Resilience will have responsibility for ensuring they are aligned.

3.4 This document recognises that the core business of Council cannot stop as we put the plan together- therefore the plan must

have sufficient in-built flexibility to be applied to a complex organisation. Existing work on climate change will continue as the plan is developed- e.g. progress on air quality, on urban forestation etc.

3.5 Belfast City Council Climate Plan- Proposed Objectives:

1. To establish a science- based set of targets for decarbonisation (e.g. BCC arriving at a net-zero carbon position and milestones to meet as we progress towards a net zero carbon target)
2. To set out how Belfast City Council will protect its assets from the impact of climate change
3. To agree a range of measures which the Council can take to ensure an inclusive and just transition to a low carbon city –alignment with our Inclusive Growth Strategy. As a core principle, we must ensure that those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change are protected.
4. To identify as far as possible the projected costs to the Council associated with climate mitigation and adaptation measures, and to identify financial models and sustainable funding structures in response.
5. To use our existing networks and partnerships effectively to drive this work, e.g. Global Resilient Cities Network (100RC), Place Based Climate Action Network (P-CAN), Eurocities etc.
6. To agree a broad range of costed measures which the Council will take to ensure Belfast is climate resilient (our contribution to the wider city plan)

3.6 Developing the Plan in Three Phases

Phase One (January- June 2020): Understanding the Problem

In recent months, significant work has already been undertaken to understand the scale and nature of the climate challenges for Belfast. This work should be completed by the middle of 2020, and includes the following:

1. Research and Data Collection

- Use the completed ‘mini-Stern’ to identify a range of priorities for decarbonisation
- Commission an external review, to consider the range of ways the Council can reduce its own carbon footprint (following the Edinburgh model)
- Commence work to agree a Carbon Budget for Belfast City Council

- Complete a climate risk assessment of Belfast City Council assets
- Undertake adaptation research- examining how climate change will affect Belfast [work through P-CAN network]

2. Governance and Structures

- Establish a Resilience and Sustainability Board to bring together a range of agencies in the city to agree a collaborative adaptation and mitigation plan for the city
- Establish an internal officer Programme Board within BCC to develop the adaptation and mitigation plan for the Council – board will bring papers to All Party Working Group and SP&R for approval

3. Legal and Policy Levers

- Identify and map the legal and policy levers available to Council on climate adaptation and mitigation. For example, how to urgently reduce our own greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. changes to procurement criteria) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the wider city (e.g. planning regulations), and to improve water conservation (e.g. public education and campaigns). This should include opportunities arising from transformational programmes e.g. City Deal implementation.
- Identify legislative constraints which might inhibit climate adaptation or mitigation approaches (e.g. charging policy and impact for adoption of EV infrastructure).
- Map existing climate related policy and programmes across the city
- Identify funding opportunities – EU Commission funding, Innovate UK etc.

3.7 Phase Two (July- December 2020) Agree targets and priorities

Set targets

- Carbon budget: Using the data from the Mini- Stern and other relevant tools and sources (e.g. the Tyndall Carbon Targeter¹, used by Manchester City Council) to agree a maximum carbon budget for Belfast, as well as projected emissions reduction pathway, interim carbon budgets and average emissions reduction rate. This will be done in

¹ <https://www.tyndall.ac.uk/news/tyndall-carbon-targeter-helps-local-authorities-respond-their-climate-emergency>

partnership with agencies on the Resilience and Sustainability Board as the target will apply city-wide².

- Identify global standards to work towards (e.g. Destination Sustainability Index, working with Visit Belfast and ICC)
- Based on data from the external review of BCC assets and other sources in Phase One, agree a target to arrive at a net zero carbon position for Belfast City Council's assets/estate. This should include energy efficiency of existing buildings, energy transition and decarbonisation across BCC fleet/transport, decarbonisation of our new build properties/projects etc.

Co-design with communities

- The development of a climate adaptation and mitigation plan is an opportunity to ask communities to shape the future of their city, and to build community resilience to climate change. Many cities globally are currently engaged in community-led climate adaptation and mitigation planning, so there are lessons for us to learn, and models we can adopt from elsewhere. [Learnings already identified from Wales, London, Rotterdam, Gothenburg, Dublin.] Furthermore, the involvement of young people in climate activity at a community level provides an opportunity for proactive engagement with Council, and to build civic leadership among young people. This work should also include capacity building where relevant, and where possible to enhance the capacity of the voluntary community sector in this area. It should also include where possible engagement with schools across Belfast.

Focus on Air Quality, Transport, Energy, Circular Economy and Water

- Take account of/ align with the development of revised Air Quality Plan for the city by 2020- led by City and Neighbourhood Services directorate and ensure appropriate level of ambition in setting strategic goals on air quality. This may include consideration of, for example, Clean Air Zones for the city.
- Take account of/ align with development of Belfast City Council Transport Plan – led by Economy and Place

² These targets could include, for instance, agreement on a carbon budget and the overall target; agreement on a target year for when our emissions should have peaked ; agreement on a year in which we stop being a net energy importer and become energy self sufficient; agreement on a % of the city's energy coming from renewables

- directorate and ensure that solutions are driven by principles of sustainable development
- Align with ongoing implementation of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy- led by Economy and Place directorate- in particular considering ways to decarbonise the city and design and build sustainable and green solutions for the city centre. This work includes an important focus on sustainable economic development.
 - Produce an energy plan for the Council aimed at setting and delivering targets on energy transition– led by the Resilience Commissioner and an opportunity to transition to renewable energy as well as becoming more energy efficient. The plan should also include ambitions on renewable energy generation by the Council.
 - Align with the ambitions set within a future fleet strategy- led by City and Neighbourhood Services directorate. The strategy will outline the future direction for the Council’s fleet in terms of type, number of vehicles. The fleet strategy will include medium and long-term ambitions for transition to low-carbon options, powered by renewable sources of energy. It should necessarily include a fully costed range of options and a timeline for transition. The strategy will be informed by piloting/testing of a small number of low-carbon vehicles currently being added to the fleet.
 - Take account of/align with the Circular Economy strategy. Led by led by the City and Neighbourhood Services Directorate, the work aims to achieve a more sustainable pattern of consumption, production and reuse/recycling in the city, thereby supporting the Belfast Agenda.
 - Align with Living with Water Programme Board priorities on water resilience for the city and undertake work to identify ways in which BCC can drive greater levels of water conservation and water re-use
 - Develop a plan for urban forestation – which could potentially encompass a ‘One Million Trees’ initiative- a possible collaboration between resilience, culture and CNS teams and city stakeholders- currently in early development following discussion at People and Neighbourhoods Committee, with future proposals to come before CMT in due course.
 - Agree actions arising from the blue and green infrastructure strategy which could enable climate adaptation opportunities. Align with work ongoing by DFI to build sustainable urban drainage systems across the city, as identified by the Living with Water Programme Board

- Identify a range of measures BCC will take to improve our climate resilience through protection of the city's biodiversity
- Consider potential actions BCC can take to contribute to a city-wide focus on sustainability and food

Exploit existing partnerships

- Using existing partnerships and networks (e.g. P-CAN and Dialogue on European Decarbonisation Strategies-DEEDS), identify external funding opportunities to support the delivery of the adaptation and mitigation plan.
- Using our existing city networks, such as Belfast's Economic Forum, and relationships at a global level (such as Resilient Cities Network, Eurocities, World Economic Forum), identify and secure a major global city partner to work alongside Belfast in the development of our adaptation and mitigation strategy.

Climate Finance

- Supported by climate finance expertise in the P-CAN network, put in place a financing strategy for investment in climate mitigation and adaptation- led by Deputy Chief Executive.

3.8 Phase Three: Finalise Actions for Implementation (January – June 2021)

- Ensure a range of planning policies are reviewed/developed to deliver on the targets agreed in Phase Two. This may, for example, include:
 - using plan making and development management/building control functions to enforce energy efficiency standards in new buildings and extensions
 - reduce transport emissions by concentrating new developments in existing areas and/or ensuring communities are well served by public transport
 - work with developers to make renewable energy projects acceptable to local communities;
 - plan for infrastructure such as low-carbon district heating networks, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems;
 - Managing Belfast's risk to climate change impacts by considering the location of new developments relative to areas of flood risk.

- Finalise changes to corporate policy as relevant to give effect to the targets outlined above, e.g. changes to procurement frameworks etc. Consider implications for our grant-making function, i.e. requiring prospective partners to demonstrate commitments to sustainable development.
- Use the data gathered from the range of studies in Phase One to establish a city wide single source of data of climate adaptation and mitigation (in collaboration with QUB, UU, Belfast Met or other relevant institution)
- Arising from the plans completed in Phase Two, identify and agree positive campaigns on behaviour change as part of public education on climate adaptation and mitigation.
- Map out fully costed action plan for decarbonisation of BCC assets- including potential revenue streams and financial models
- Seek peer review/external challenge on the draft Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plan from P-CAN cities (e.g. Leeds Climate Commission).
- Develop a coherent approach to communication of BCC priorities and in particular find ways to enhance public knowledge and public education on the issue of climate adaptation and mitigation in an accessible way.

It is proposed that a programme board will be established to take forward early planning.

3.9 Financial & Resource Implications

This paper has been produced as part of the budget estimates process with Climate Resilience identified as a potential growth area for the Council. It is being proposed to establish a small permanent team working to the Commissioner for Resilience to lead the development of the BCC Climate Plan and coordinate the development of the wider city plan. The team as proposed would include the following functions: project management and support; research and statistics; climate adaptation technical advice and climate mitigation technical advice. A programme budget of £150k for the financial year 2020/21 has also been proposed. The total annual cost proposed is £610k.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The Climate Plan will be equality screened during the development process for Good Relations and Rural Needs Impacts.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Inclusive Growth Knowhow Network

The Committee was advised that the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Metro Dynamics (MD), Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP) and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) had developed a proposition paper aimed at establishing an Inclusive Growth Knowhow Network based in the UK with international links. The purpose of the network was to equip individuals and organisations leading on inclusive growth with practical “know how” (evidence, knowledge, expertise) through peer learning. It built on the foundation of the combined work at place level by these lead partners and the former Inclusive Growth Commission. The proposed mission statement for the Network was:

“Members of the Inclusive Growth Knowhow Network across the UK have the commitment, knowhow and tools to develop, deliver and measure inclusive growth. Through this, the Network will help to tackle inequalities, alleviate poverty, drive productivity and create sustainable, inclusive local economies.”

It was envisaged that the Inclusive Growth Knowhow Network (IGKN), which was aiming to launch in April 2020, would provide the following:

- A local inclusive growth network of places
- Implementation advice / advisors
- Thematic working groups and workshops
- A website and online communication tools

In the shorter term, the network would comprise up to 12 local areas committed to the inclusive growth agenda. Those areas involved would be required to demonstrate active involvement (to be defined), including relevant senior attendance at the annual workshop, hosting/participation in thematic working groups, and deep place engagement with partner implementation advisers.

The Councils Strategy, Policy and Partnership Manager had been actively engaged with the Network partners over the last twelve months in terms of shaping their proposition to provide practical support to local authorities to support the embedding and delivery of inclusive growth.

Given the Council’s role to date in driving the inclusive growth agenda at the Belfast City and regional level, it was important that the Council continued to be actively involved. The membership of the Network would assist the Council as it began to implement its Inclusive Growth Strategy, which was currently out for public consultation, and would further demonstrate the Members’ commitment to inclusive growth for the city and as part of the Belfast Region City Deal.

There was no direct financial implication arising from participation. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation had committed funding to the IGKN for a period of 4 years, with additional in-kind support from the Centre for Progressive Policy. Participation offered a significant opportunity to access support and resources from across the Network to support the Council’s inclusive growth ambitions.

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During discussion, a member requested if some amendments could be incorporated into the mission statement, such as, needing systemic change to tackle inequalities to alleviate poverty and, in addition, references being made to community wealth building and the inclusion of social justice.

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy pointed out that a meeting of the Network would be held in due course and discussions could be held in relation to the mission statement to ascertain if the issues which had been raised could be included.

After discussion the Committee agreed:

- that Council participates in the Inclusive Growth Knowhow Network (IGKN);
- that officers continue to work with the IGKN partners in the run up to its official launch next year; and
- that discussions be held with the Network around the mission statement to see if it could amended to include: leading systemic change to tackle inequalities to alleviate poverty; the inclusion of community wealth building; and the inclusion of social injustice.

Draft Consultation and Engagement Framework

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present a draft Corporate Consultation & Engagement Framework, including outline action plan, for approval. This framework is needed in order to meet Local Government Auditor recommendations, to signal a best practice approach and to support delivery of Inclusive Growth and Corporate Plan commitments.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to agree:

- i. the draft policy framework, outline action plan and underlying principles and best practice standards that will guide our approach to consultation and engagement; and**
- ii. to authorise its release for public consultation.**

3.0 Key Issues

Background

3.1 In 2015, following a review of council’s approach to consultation and engagement (C&E), SP&R approved in principle a draft C&E framework. However, a public consultation and final adoption of the framework was postponed to enable supporting infrastructure

to be implemented and for emerging engagement requirements associated with the Belfast Agenda to be more fully taken into account. The draft framework has now been revised to reflect new developments and process, including commitments in the Belfast Agenda and draft Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Why the Framework is needed

- 3.2 The Local Government (NI) Act 2014 reinforced the council's duty to consult. The framework, which aims to improve the quality and consistency of our C&E thereby providing improved value for money, reputation and trust, is an important step in demonstrating council's commitment to consultation. As a result, the Local Government Auditor has highlighted the delay and absence of an agreed corporate C&E framework as a key area for improvement [Assessment Report 2018]. Whilst, council's approach to consultation has improved significantly in recent years, our approach to engagement remains an area for development. An indicative action plan has been developed to support the framework which focuses in particular, on enhancing our engagement capabilities. Ultimately, the framework seeks to ensure that our residents and partners are more involved in the decisions and services that affect them. This brings about positive benefits for public services and for communities and is one of the commitments in our draft Inclusive Growth framework (IG).

Draft Consultation and Engagement Framework 2019

- 3.3 The draft framework is not a programme of engagement events or consultations, but instead provides the policy context in which we will do this i.e. how we will plan, deliver and utilise our C&E activity. The framework outlines the council's approach to C&E and sets out a vision with underlying principles and standards that we will aspire to meet. It aims to improve the quality, value and cost-effectiveness of our consultation and engagement, enabling council to meet statutory duties to consult whilst also helping to manage the increased public expectation to be consulted and involved.

Strengths and Areas for Improvement

- 3.4 Since 2015, council has invested in staff capacity building and an online corporate consultation platform, which over the past 3 years has hosted 167 consultations (public, customer and internal) and generated in excess of 28,000 individual survey responses. In addition, we have held a wide range of engagement events and can reference a number of good practice approaches such as the Belfast Conversation, physical programme and capital projects, cultural strategy and waste collection consultations and processes. Good practice case studies such as these will form

part of the officer toolkit being developed to support the implementation of the framework.

- 3.5 However, if we are to meet growing public expectations and honor commitments in the Belfast Agenda and our draft Inclusive Growth Strategy, then we must build on our strengths and address areas for improvement. In particular, we need to critically examine and improve how we engage with residents on an ongoing basis and earlier in the process using meaningful co-design and co-production methods. To this end, we will work with the Belfast Community Planning Partnership to strengthen civic voice and embed effective community engagement.
- 3.6 A cross-departmental working group has been established to develop a detailed action plan and to support its implementation. This group will work closely with the Belfast Agenda partners and the emerging CVSE Advisory Panel to test and develop shared approaches to community engagement. An indicative action plan has been incorporated within the draft framework. It comprises the following key elements:
- i. Setting the framework
 - ii. Consolidating our consultation and demonstrating impact
 - iii. Strengthening engagement and civic voice (including digital inclusion)
 - iv. Building capacity
 - v. Continuous improvement and alignment to the Belfast Agenda
- 3.7 In particular, Members attention is drawn to the proposed action to develop and deliver at least 3 innovative engagement pilots. Given the correlation between community engagement, our civic leadership role and community planning, it is envisaged that the pilots will align to and support work being developed as part of the wider Belfast Agenda as well as more council focused engagement. The aim is to ensure a seamless engagement for the residents of Belfast moving forward.

Next Steps

- 3.8 Members are asked to approve the draft framework and the indicative action plan and to agree the following next steps, and specifically the publication of the draft framework for public consultation:

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<i>Public consultation</i>	As per our Equality Scheme, the draft framework will be issued for public consultation in December for a period of 12 weeks
<i>Action Plan</i>	C&E Working Group to develop a detailed action plan, with specific focus on engagement and civic voice, ensuring alignment to inclusive growth, Belfast Agenda, customer focus and the digital inclusion element of the BRCD.
<i>Publication</i>	Finalised plan to be presented for approval and adoption by SP&R in March / April and published on council website.

3.9 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no direct financial implication arising from this report. Costs associated with the implementation of the action plan have been factored into current council budgets. Future and ongoing budget implications will be monitored as part of the action plan implementation and learning.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no equality implications contained in this report. However, the implementation of the framework will help support equality and inclusion.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Draft Belfast Open Spaces Strategy (BOSS)

The Committee noted a report which provided an update on the progress of the draft Belfast Open Spaces Strategy (BOSS) and provided also an initial update on the findings of the public consultation on the draft strategy.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Assets Management

The Committee:

- i) Belfast Transport Hub – Proposed land transfer and licences, Belfast City Council to the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company**
 - approved the grant of licences to the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHC) on lands at the Blythefield Play Area; and
 - approved the transfer of a plot of land to the NITHC.

ii) 133 Mount Eagles Avenue – Land Transfer

- approved the transfer of a small plot of grass land at Mount Eagles Open Space to the owner of an adjoining residential property known as 133 Mount Eagles Avenue.

iii) Dunbar Link Depot – Proposed licence to Limelight Belfast Ltd for Emergency Escape

- approved a licence to Limelight Belfast Ltd for a period of 18 months for use of Council lands at Dunbar Link Depot to facilitate an emergency escape.

Leisure Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This report updates Members on the development and implementation of the £105m leisure assets capital programme.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and

- Note that site visits to the two completed centres have been arranged for Wednesday 27th November and all Members are encouraged to avail of this opportunity
- Note the detail of the ongoing promotional activity in relation to the new centre openings and planned taster sessions outlined at 3.5
- Note the update with respect to GLL’s community engagement plans for the new centres and the recommendation that these are funded from the Programme’s Mobilisation budget as outlined at 3.6
- Note the update around the next phase of the Programme with respect to proposed closure and start dates for Avoniel and Templemore as outlined at 3.9 and recommend that the current centre at Templemore remains operational until June 2020 and that notice is served on Templemore Users Trust by end December 2019
- Note the update with respect to a further leisure development at the Girdwood site as outlined at 3.10
- Note the update with respect to the remaining centres within the leisure estate and agree the Terms of Reference to carry out a feasibility study in this regard as outlined at 3.11

3.0 Main report

Project Updates – Current Phase

Works are well underway on the three new builds and all are currently on schedule.

3.1 Lisnasharragh- Construction works to the building are now largely completed and GLL have begun their mobilisation phase. Staff are now in the building, installing equipment, testing systems and receiving training. The centre is due to open on 2nd December. The initial opening hours for the centre will be 6am-10pm. Initially access to the pool area will be limited to specific sessions in the morning, afternoon and evening to allow for staff training and review sessions. The other facilities including the sports hall, fitness suite, exercise studios and 3G pitch will be fully open. A full programme of activities from Avoniel such as swimming lessons and exercise classes will also be delivered from opening. New programmes will start from January. Members are also asked to note that works on the back of the site (to include the second 3G pitch and new playground) commenced at the start of November and is due to complete in the Spring time.

3.2 Brook- Construction works to the building are now largely completed and GLL have begun their mobilisation phase. Staff are now in the building, installing equipment, testing systems and receiving training. The centre itself is on course to open on 4th December (with the old Brook Activity Centre due to close on 3rd December). The initial opening hours for the centre will be 9am-9pm. Initially access to the pool area will be limited to specific sessions in the morning, afternoon and evening to allow for staff training and review sessions. All the other facilities such as sports hall, fitness suite, exercise studios and 3G pitches will be fully open.

Both centres are due to be officially opened in January and Members will be informed of the opening dates as soon as these are confirmed.

3.3 Andersonstown- The main pool hall is now watertight and tiling is due to commence imminently. The junior pool floor has been tiled and the surrounds will also be tiled over the coming weeks. The gym and studios are currently being floored ahead of the delivery of initial gym equipment. Externally, the pitches are now substantially complete and the base course has been laid to 80% of the car park area. The centre is currently on schedule to be handed over to Council in February 2020 and following

mobilisation will undergo a soft opening in late March 2020 before opening to the public in mid-April 2020.

Site Visits- A series of site visits for Lisnasharragh and Brook for a wide range of stakeholders including the media are being organised for late November/early December. **Members will be given the first opportunity to see the completed centres on Wednesday 27th November.** A mini bus will leave City Hall courtyard at 10am for Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre and return at 12.00pm. The bus will then leave for Brook Leisure Centre at 12.30pm and return to City Hall at approximately 2.30pm. All Members have received an e-mail invite.

3.4 **Communications-** Members are asked to note that a full communications plan to promote the opening of the three new centres is in place and officers are continuing to work closely with GLL to coordinate its delivery. Regular updates on the progress of the builds, opening dates, programming details etc. are provided on the Council and GLL websites, Facebook and via social media and are receiving extremely positive feedback. In addition, information stands promoting the centres have appeared in the Kennedy Centre, Victoria Square, Castle Court, Connswater and Forestside shopping centres. GLL have recently launched their formal 'pre-sales' offering and an extensive outdoor advertising campaign has also been rolled out across the city.

3.5 **GLL Promotional Activity-** As part of the new centre openings GLL will deliver a wide range of promotional activity to encourage people to visit and use the new facilities. In addition to the pre-sales offer which gives users a month's free membership if they sign up prior to opening, GLL are also delivering a variety of free taster sessions to a wide range of stakeholder groups such as: sports clubs, Avoniel users, schools, Council employees and local residents.

- **GLL Community Engagement-** In addition to the plans around opening GLL are also proposing to deliver a range of community initiatives designed to maximise community engagement in the new centres as follows:
- **Schools Membership Initiative-** 51,575 registered school children in Belfast will be issued with a free 'Pay and Play' membership card for all centres across the city. This card gives a 30% discount to all facilities and will encourage young people to access and use the centres.
- **Community Events Programme (USP specific)-** At Brook an outdoor, citywide teenage sports programme will be delivered over a ten week period. Lisnasharragh will host a 'Better' Christmas Swimming Gala and Andersonstown will

host a series of 'Come and try it' days where the facilities will be free to use for the local community.

- Health Assessments and Fitness Programmes- Detailed health assessments and devised tailored fitness programmes will be offered to up to 500 'health referral' members at the new centres. Tailored fitness programmes individually designed for 1500 Belfast residents, with progress tracked over 12 weeks to provide health outcomes will also be delivered.
- Brand X- GLL will be introducing the Brand X Method into the new centres which is a strength-and-conditioning program specifically designed for children and adaptable to any environment. Brand X focuses on optimising kids' fitness, elevating their athleticism, boosting their sports performance, and pushing back against the forces behind childhood obesity.
- 60+ Events- GLL will also deliver a range of initiatives at each of the new centres aimed at the 60+ market. These will include a 60+ Club Games event, Danderball tournaments and 60+ 'Come and try it' open days.

- 3.6 **The above initiatives will together result in over 35,700 individuals becoming actively involved with the new centres and positively engaging in a range of programmes designed to promote healthy living and more active lifestyles. Delivery of these initiatives has been costed at £126,500 and it is recommended they are funded through the 'Community Engagement' budget line of the Programme's mobilisation budget.**

Employment- The creation of the three new leisure facilities will create up to 75 new permanent jobs and up to 100 casual positions for the city. This represents another very positive impact for the Programme and feeds directly into the ambitious job creation targets within the Council's Belfast Agenda. To date GLL have recruited over 60 new permanent posts and 20 casual roles for Lisnasharragh and Brook. Brook's staffing team is now fully recruited and 85% of roles for Lisnasharragh have been filled. Several posts have been filled through the Council's Leisure Academy. The recruitment campaign for Andersonstown will be launched in December at the Leisure Academy Graduation Event.

- 3.7 **Social Responsibility – Economic and social benefit clauses - Members are asked to note the following key outcomes which have been delivered to date under the Social Responsibility Plan being delivered by Heron Brothers.**

Employment - The creation of employment opportunities was a central component of the Social Responsibility Plan including employment opportunities for the long term unemployed,

apprentices and tertiary level students. Members are asked to note that the following employment opportunities have been delivered as part of the Council’s leisure contract and that the overall target number of weeks for employment, apprentices and paid placements has now been exceeded by over 40%.

	Target	Weeks Delivered	Individuals Recruited
Employment for long-term unemployed or economically inactive	620	704	13
Apprentice	620	1475	34
Paid Placement/Work Experience	1100	1100	15
TOTAL	2340	3279	62

GLL have also commenced delivery of the Council’s Leisure Employment Academy and support is being provided for those out of work or currently working under 16 hours to compete for the positions that will be created as part of the current phase of LTP. To date the Lifeguard element of the Academy has been successfully delivered with 9 participants completing an accredited training programme, all of whom have now accepted full time posts in the new centres. Heron Brothers have also taken forward a range of other initiatives including promotion of local suppliers and businesses, community initiatives, sports development and various skills and health initiatives.

Project Updates – Next Phase (Avoniel, Templemore and Girdwood)

Plans are well developed to progress the next phase of the Programme as follows:

- 3.8 Avoniel – Members will recall that Heron Brothers, who were appointed to take forward the three current builds, have also been appointed to deliver the redevelopment of Avoniel. Planning permission for the development is due before Christmas and it is currently envisaged that demolition works will commence on the current centre in January 2020. Council officers are working closely with GLL on their demobilisation plans for Avoniel and it is currently envisaged that the centre will close on 1st December in tandem with the opening of Lisnasharragh, currently planned for 2nd December. As previously agreed, there will be no disruption to the continuity of swim provision in East Belfast.

Existing Users/Groups- GLL have consulted widely with all club/group users who currently use Avoniel and, as far as possible, have programmed their requirements into the new programme at Lisnasharragh (both wet and dry activities). All clubs/existing bookings that have been displaced from Avoniel will take up their allocation from the December opening and those bookings/clubs that have come through new expressions of interest will take up their allocations from January 2020. The full Swim School Programme from Avoniel will be transferred to Lisnasharragh in its entirety and the current instructors will be offered their existing hours. The new programme will then grow around this. The Tom Daley Diving Academy will launch in early 2020. Local schools will also be invited for free swimming taster sessions. A breakdown of the Programmes for the main pool, diving/learner pool, sports hall and fitness studios is attached at Appendix 3. Council is also offering free transport from Avoniel to Lisnasharragh for any existing users. Council officers are currently liaising with existing users to determine demand for this service and a further update on uptake will be brought Committee in due course.

- 3.9 **Templemore** –The Design Team continue to work on Stage 4 designs and these should be completed before the end of this year. Contractor procurement (PQQ) is due to commence before the end of November with the ITT then going out early in the new year. It is expected that the contractor will be in place by May 2020 and following mobilisation construction will commence in July 2020. In order to maximise leisure provision in East Belfast and ensure the building remains operational as long as possible it is proposed that the current facilities Templemore remain open until June 2020.

Templemore Users Trust (TUT) currently has a lease for the existing Templemore Baths building under which the Council is required to serve a minimum of six months' notice. It is therefore proposed that notice is serviced on TUT by end December 2019 with a view that TUT's current lease will then terminate by end June 2020. Council officers and GLL are also currently liaising with the Templemore Users Trust (TUT) to help ensure they have access to facilities to provide continuity of provision of their services for the period that Templemore Baths is under development. As with previous centres, a full demobilisation plan for Templemore will also be developed in due course.

- 3.10 **Girdwood Phase 2** –Officers are continuing discussions with DfC around options for a further leisure development at the Girdwood site. Following Committee approval in September it has now been confirmed that Council will act as the Delivery Partner for the project with DfC retaining the role of Investment Decision Maker. The first phase of the project will involve the engagement of an

Integrated Consultancy Team (ICT) to test the viability of the current options for the site through the development of initial concept designs. Funding for the ICT engagement will be provided by DfC (pending final business approval) from their 2020/21 budget. At this stage it is envisaged that procurement of the ICT will begin in early 2020 in order to have the team in place by April 2020. Members should be aware that at this stage DFC will only approve funding for ICT engagement and design development. Any subsequent capital funding will be subject to a separate business case and Departmental approval process once a preferred option is identified.

3.11 Other leisure facilities - Ozone, Ballysillan, Whiterock, Shankill, Loughside

Members agreed in September that a feasibility study would be undertaken on the rest of the leisure estate (Ozone, Ballysillan, Whiterock, Shankill, Loughside) which have not been part of the Leisure Transformation Programme given the age of these facilities. A draft terms of reference for this assignment is attached at Appendix 4. Members are asked to agree the terms of reference. The next step will be to engage consultants to progress this work. Members will be engaged as part of this process and further updates will be brought back to Committee in due course.

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

Financial – The design costs limits for each centre were agreed by Committee in April 2015 as part of the overall £105m leisure programme.

Financial- Delivery of the proposed community engagement initiatives has been costed at £126,500.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no direct equality implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that discussions be undertaken with GLL regarding the opening times of the Brook Centre.

Finance, Resources and Procurement

Contracts Update

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a as detailed in (Table 1) set below;

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- approved the contract extensions as detailed in (Table 2)
- approved the direct award contracts in line with Standing Order 55; Exceptions, as detailed in (Table 3); and
- noted that the Committee had delegated authority in relation to the award of contracts.

Appendix 1

Table 1 – Tenders to be Advertised

Title of Tender	Senior Reporting Officer	Proposed Contract Duration
Tender for Consultancy Services for the Development of a Visitor Experience Plan for Belfast Value	Alistair Reid	8 months
Provision of Consultancy Services to Support the Development of the Inclusive Growth Strategy Value	John Tully	Up to 1 year
Delivery of a Transport Employment Academy Term	Alistair Reid	Up to 2 years
Tender for the supply, delivery and offloading of haylage, meadow hay and barley straw, Lucerne and Browse at Belfast Zoo.	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 2 years
Tender for the manufacture, supply and delivery of skips	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 3 years

Table 2 Contract Extensions

Title of Tender	Senior Reporting Officer	Proposed Extension
T1581 Collection and recycling of scrap metal and abandoned vehicles	Nigel Grimshaw	Until end February 2020 when a new contract will be in place

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Table 3 Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Supplier	Value of Contract
Port Health Interactive Live Information System (PHILIS)	Suffolk Coastal District Council	£66,000 over 3 years

Update for Bobbin Catering Contract – Outdoor Coffee Unit

The Committee was reminded that the contract for the Bobbin was due to be re-let following the Committee's decision of 25th January. The Director of Legal and Civic Services had indicated at that meeting that he was exploring opportunities to increase revenue whilst enhancing the customer experience at the City Hall. Subsequently, at its meeting on 20th September, the Committee had approved, in principle, to the inclusion of an outdoor coffee unit, to be placed periodically in the grounds of the City Hall, into the forthcoming Bobbin catering contract. It was also agreed that a follow up report would be presented to the Committee for final decision.

The unit would enable tourists and locals to avail of tea, coffee and tray bakes whilst enjoying the grounds of the City Hall. The self-contained unit would also provide revenue to the Council as part of the franchise tender and would be included as part of the contractual arrangement in respect of the Bobbin.

The City Solicitor reported that, to ensure the unit was not intrusive on the landscape of the City Hall, the specification of the proposed unit would be small in size (approx. 8ft x 6ft). Officers would work in conjunction with the appointed Bobbin franchisee on the unit specifications, equipment and design. It was important that the unit colour scheme would be in keeping with the heritage palette of the City Hall building façade with colours of cream / grey / copper greens.

The proposed unit would be located along the West Façade of the City Hall, beside the electric power outlet. The West façade was preferred over the East, due to the Visitor Exhibition being located on the East and the desire to not obscure the outlook from the East windows and that footfall was higher on the West façade. The unit would be present during events and busy months of footfall in the grounds (the dates would be pre-agreed with the franchisee). However, it would not be present during the annual Christmas and Spring Continental Market.

The Committee:

- noted the siting, scale and appearance of the unit and operating principles;
- approved the inclusion of an outdoor catering unit in the grounds in the forthcoming Bobbin catering tender as a desirable addition, with operational details to be finalised with the appointed franchisee; and
- approved the leasing/sub-contracting of a self-contained unit for a trial period within the Bobbin tender.

Equality and Good Relations

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Shared City Partnership**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Shared City Partnership Meeting held on 11th November, 2019, including:

- to note the reports in relation to the PEACE IV Secretariat and updates in relation to the CYP, SSS and BPR themes; and
- that authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the Partnership and with input from the Special European Union Programmes Body, to proceed with the most appropriate option to facilitate project delivery for the Tech Connects project under the CYP theme.

**Response to Department for Communities’
Section 75 Equality Action Plan Consultation Document**

The Committee was advised that the Department for Communities had issued its Section 75 Action Plan for consultation which set out actions to address the inequalities identified after undertaking an Audit of Inequalities. The key areas of priority were: economic inactivity and unemployment; poverty and disadvantage; area-based deprivation; good relations; sports and arts; housing; public appointments; and community empowerment.

The Equality and Diversity Unit had prepared a draft corporate response, a copy of which is set out hereunder:

APPENDIX 1

Infrastructure and Community Development

Whilst the programmes and actions are welcome, we feel that a greater emphasis on community development is required to enable and equip particular individuals and communities to avail of the support and initiatives available. We are particularly conscious of the need to build confidence and resilience in young people generally and those further removed from the workplace. Joint initiatives with other government departments and community planning partnerships will be required to ensure a greater joined up person and community centred approach to addressing the inequalities.

It is important therefore, that any equality schemes build on this partnership working ethos from the outset. To ensure that this happens and is supported, a particular action design to put in place these building blocks and infrastructure is required. This could be captured under the action heading of “Community Planning” with bespoke actions included that are designed to support collaboration, understanding need and impact (see below) and addressing “voice poverty”. Community development is essential for effective community planning and we would welcome greater acknowledgment and support for this. In addition, we would suggest that

there is a need for greater emphasis and support for community engagement, as part of community planning and over and above the focus on women's empowerment.

Enabling seldom heard voices and those who are in voice poverty, would help address many of the inequalities and barriers that people face. Voice poverty is when people are unable to influence the decisions that affect their lives and are excluded from the decision-making process. It means that their voices are not heard, or even ignored, by decision makers. Often we speak to the communities that are easiest to reach and we know their views are not necessarily representative of the wider community. Government and the public sector need to do more to improve how we involve underrepresented groups, including young people in the LGBT+Q communities and minority ethnic communities. An action that relates to working partners with community planning partners to improve how we engage and involve community groups and organisations which work with those groups experiencing voice poverty would be welcome.

Partnership Working

We would encourage the ongoing partnership working between the Department and local government to co-design the delivery of actions to meet the needs of local areas as it is essential to ensure alignment between regional programmes and the local areas and labour markets.

Cultural Strategy

We are of the view that the Department should consider including the Council's new ten-year Cultural Strategy which will create new investment models to grow a more sustainable cultural eco-system while also encouraging a more diverse and open definition of what we mean by culture.

Place Based Approaches

The need for place based approaches should be recognised within the delivery of the actions. Opportunities to develop further place-based specific actions that will align to the work of the Belfast Region City Deal should also be considered.

Any other general comments you wish to make?

Equality Data and Impact

The Equality Scheme is written at quite a high level and greater consideration may be needed to delve into more specific equality groups and implications. For example, the document does not make reference to travellers or young people in/leaving care, both of whom face particular challenges and inequalities. Nor does it recognise the impact on people with multiple identities and how this impacts on inequality. A better understanding of the needs of particular groups and the interdependencies between S75 groups is needed if we are to make a real difference. However, this raises key issues regarding the availability and use of equality data.

The Council and our community planning partners have also found it challenging to access meaningful information at a local level across the various S75 categories. A joined-up

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approach to developing more effective data and, in particular measurements of impact, would be helpful in moving forward. This could perhaps be encapsulated within the community planning programme of work as referenced above.

Outcomes Based Accountability

Embedding equality considerations within an OBA approach is another areas of development which would need further consideration as we move forward regionally through the Programme for Government and locally through community plans. For many of the programmes and interventions set out within the action plan, there is an opportunity afforded through community planning to co-design and support integrated delivery across government and within the community planning partners.

The Council remains committed to working with the Department to maximise the impact of community planning at both a city and local level. There are real opportunities to take a more co-ordinated and targeted approach to addressing many of the challenges facing the city including, for example, the “Local Works” agenda.

The Committee approved the content of the corporate response and its submission to the Department for Communities, on a holding basis, subject to approval by the Council on 2nd December, in order to meet the submission deadline of 22nd November, 2019.

Operational Issues

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

The Committee approved the recommendations made in respect of applications received up to 11th November, 2019, as set out in the undernoted appendix:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2019 EVENTS						
Visit Belfast	22 November 2019	Cruise Industry Networking Breakfast - network event for Cruise ship shore excursion companies to boost cruise visitors into the City. Numbers attending – 90-100	A & B	No <i>£115 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	No Hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No Charge No hospitality

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Bal Feirste	14 December 2019	French Bal Dance Celebration – local community group dance celebration and show-case event. Numbers attending – 50-100	B & D	No (Community, Not for Profit)	No Hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No Charge No hospitality
North Belfast Area Learning Community	15 December 2019	Post 16 Cross Community Workshop on Resilience – event to promote cross community engagement and education for post primary students in Belfast. Numbers attending – 170	C	No (Community)	No Hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No Charge No hospitality
2020 EVENTS						
Malaysia Students Society of Northern Ireland	29 February 2020	Malaysian Night 2020 – Annual cultural celebration and dinner for the Malaysian community in Belfast. Numbers attending – 300	C & D	No (Community)	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Self Help Africa	19 March 2020	Launch of Twinning Programme for NI with the Teso Region of Uganda – Launch event for the twinning of NI with Teso region to celebrate similarities. Numbers attending – 100	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea Coffee and Biscuits	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception
Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees	18 April 2020	70th Anniversary Dinner – celebration dinner to mark 70 th anniversary of the Society. Numbers attending – 150	C	No (Community, Not for Profit)	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(celebrating significant anniversary)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
British Institute of Cleaning Science	28 August 2020	Cleaning Operative of the Year Awards – awards ceremony celebrating excellent industry standards in the province. Numbers attending – 100	B & C	Charge £115	No Hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Belfast Central Mission	1 September 2020	130th Anniversary Celebration – celebration event to mark 130 th anniversary of the organisation in Belfast. Numbers attending – 120	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea Coffee and Biscuits	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception
UACES	7 September 2020	50th Annual Conference Drinks Reception – welcome reception linked to conference celebrating 50 th taking place in Queen's University. Numbers attending – 400	A & B	No <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(celebrating significant anniversary)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management	8 September 2020	Welcome Reception for the 11th International EIASM Public Sector Conference – welcome reception linked to conference taking place in Queen's University. Numbers attending – 150	A & B	No <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Land and Property Services	14 September 2020	47th Annual Registrars of Title Conference Dinner – dinner linked to national conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending –50	A & B	No <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
British Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation	30 September 2020	Annual Conference Reception – welcome reception linked to national conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending – 100	A & B	No <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
CAMHS, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	9 October 2020	CAMHS Service Improvement Celebration for Young People – celebration event for young people contributing to the success of the organisation. Numbers attending – 150	C	Charge £115 <i>Public Sector</i>	No Hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Association of Upper Gastrointestinal Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland	15 October 2020	UGI 2020 conference Gala Dinner – dinner linked to national conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending 300-400	A & B	No (Charity)	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Aisling Events	16 October 2020	Belfast Homecoming Ambassador Banquet – celebration event to recognise those living abroad who have contributed to the Belfast economy. Numbers attending 300	C	Charge £825	No Hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality
2021 EVENTS						
Girls' Brigade	14 May 2021	Queen's Award Presentation Ceremony – awards event to celebrate the young people who have completed the Queen's Award. Numbers attending – 300 - 350	C & D	No (Charity)	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

**Requests for use of the Rooms and the Grounds for
the Belfast City Marathon in 2020 and 2021**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To consider a request of the City Hall function rooms and grounds for the Belfast City Marathon Expo and Pack Collection in April 2020 and 2021.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is recommended to

- approve the application by Belfast City Marathon.

3.0 Main report

Background

3.1 The Belfast City Marathon has been organised since 1982 by an organising committee involving Belfast City Council, Athletics Northern Ireland and other partners and sponsors. The event traditionally took place on the first bank holiday Monday in May.

3.2 The Committee, at its meeting on 27th June, 2018, agreed that, from 2019 onwards, the Belfast City Marathon would be held on a Sunday and approved a revised route for the event.

3.3 The Committee, at its meeting on 13th February, had approved a rolling reduction in the Council's financial commitment to the Marathon, from £26,000 in 2019 to zero support by 2025/26.

3.4 Belfast City Marathon previously held the Pack Collection and Expo at the City Hall in the days prior to the main event. This event was very successful in City Hall, receiving plenty of support from both participants, spectators and Belfast City Council staff. Marathon organisers have received numerous requests for the Expo and Pack Collection to return to City Hall.

3.5 In recent years organisers moved the Pack Collection and Expo to other locations including Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park and Mary Peters Track, however the space available was too small and organisers received complaints that sites were too far away from the city centre. Investigating private locations puts a strain on Belfast City Marathon financially as space needs to be booked in bulk.

Key Issues

- 3.6 Benefits for Belfast City Marathon if approval is granted for Pack Collection and Expo to be located back in City Hall for 2020 and 2021.
- 3.7 With the change of day (Monday to Sunday) and route, the organisers believe the number of participants will increase enabling more international athletes to take part. In 2019 total participant numbers increased 20% on 2018 as follows;
- Marathon 4803 (65% increase)
 - Team Relay 12,055 (11% increase)
 - Walk 967 (8% increase)
 - 911 (4% increase)
- 3.8 In 2019 total economic value to the City through our event was over £2million. Organisers believe that the event in 2020-2021 will continue to increase and having the Expo and Pack Collection at the City Hall would certainly assist with these numbers.
- 3.9 City Hall is an iconic landmark for the City and features heavily on marathon promotional material. The Marathon no longer starts at the City Hall, thus pack collection and expo provides an opportunity for participants to visit this landmark city centre venue. At other major European marathons, the Expo and Pack Collection takes place at an important landmark of their City to promote the City's tourism.
- 3.10 City Hall's central location is more accessible for all participants encouraging use of public and city centre parking. Consequently people can benefit from shopping, eating and other experiences which Belfast City Centre has to offer for that weekend.
- 3.11 City Hall functions rooms and grounds will enable organisers to plan for additional activities that benefits the attendees but also local traders and businesses.
- 3.12 Belfast City Marathon have requested the use of the three functions rooms and grounds for Pack Collection and Expo on 30 April to 3 May 2020 and 29 April to 2 May 2021.
- 3.13 If the Committee is minded to approve the application, then there would be no charge applied for the use of the functions rooms due to the Not for Profit nature of the organisation.
- 3.14 **Financial & Resource Implications**

There will be no cost to the Council in approving this request.

3.15 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no direct good relations or equality implications arising from this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that discussions be undertaken with the event organisers in relation to single-use plastic bottles.

Minutes of Party Group Leaders’ Consultative Forum

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders’ Consultative Forum of 14th November, 2019.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group on the Climate Crises

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group on the Climate Crisis of 18th November, 2019.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Customer Focus Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Customer Focus Working Group of 6th November, 2019.

Note of the Meeting of the Party Group Leaders’ Forum

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders’ Forum of 31st October.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Public Awareness Campaign on the Responsible use of Fireworks - Councillor Long

In the absence of Councillor Long, Councillor McAllister requested to the Committee to consider:

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

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- *to encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display."*

The Committee agreed that a report, on how this could be facilitated, resourced, managed, be brought back in due course.

Chairperson

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 29th October, 2019

SPECIAL MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Michael Collins (Chairperson);
Councillors D. Baker, Bunting,
de Faoite, Donnelly, M. Kelly,
Kyle, Magee and McLaughlin.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City
and Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Also attended: Councillors Groogan, McKeown and O'Hara.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were reported from the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds, and Councillors Black, Corr, McMullan, Mulholland, Smyth and Verner.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Anti-Social Behaviour in the Wider University and Lower Ormeau Area

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that a motion highlighting the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues in the Holylands, which had been proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor McKeown, had been considered by the People and Communities Committee at its meeting on 8th October.

She provided an overview of the recent work which the Council had been involved in, including a number of interagency meetings with representatives from the PSNI, the Department of Justice (DoJ), the Department for Communities (DfC), the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the two Universities, as well a Partners and Community Together (PACT) meeting last week. She advised the Members that an Action Plan had been in place for some time but that the overall consensus from all partners was that a new focus was now urgently required, both in response to recent trouble and given that the Halloween period was imminent.

She explained that better alcohol enforcement was required using existing legislation. She also advised the Committee that longer term actions were being implemented, including a bespoke piece of work which would be undertaken by PhD students and the DfC.

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The Members were advised that a further meeting had also been held last week, where the general sentiment was that “more feet” were needed on the streets in the area. She explained that there would be joint patrols between the Council and the PSNI over Halloween along with two noise teams, one each for the Holylands and the Lower Ormeau areas.

The Chairperson then welcomed Ms. J. Vaughn and Mr. L. Kielty, representing the Wider University Area PACT (Partners and Community Together), to the meeting. Together they outlined that:

- millions had been spent trying to tackle the anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the area but that the issues continued;
- it was important to treat the cause, not the symptoms;
- the area was the most multi-cultural in Belfast;
- the ASB and noise was from Sundays to Thursdays constantly;
- they wanted the area to receive Special Designation as an area for redevelopment and renewal, where a proper, balanced community was rebuilt, with families, young professionals and students living peacefully side by side;
- students were residents as well;
- the new Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) across the City wasn't attracting students away from the Holylands;
- some streets were 90% Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs);
- alleyways were required;
- there were licensing issues in the area, where bars were being granted licenses beyond 11p.m.;
- there were issues with the communal bins;
- Residents' Parking should be considered for other parts of the Holylands area given the success of the scheme in the Rugby Road/College Park Avenue;
- the Holylands/Botanic area had the highest crime rate in Northern Ireland;
- lessons should be learnt in preventing what was happening in the Holylands area from ever happening again;
- a multi-agency approach was required, with specific actions to be taken, and that it was important that the discussions did not just become another talking shop;
- residents were living in fear and no longer made complaints to the Police, as they would become a target for ASB; and
- the health of the residents in the area was being adversely affected.

The Chairperson welcomed Mrs. B. Ruddy, a representative of Holyland and Lower Ormeau (HALO), to the meeting. She outlined that:

- the Council did not have a written anti-social behaviour policy and that one needed to be tailored to the specific issues which existed in the Holyland and Wider University Area;

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- the overdevelopment of HMOs in the area had brought numerous social problems with it, including over-parking, criminality and drug dealing;
- the overdevelopment of HMOs had destroyed the cohesion of the community;
- the area had the highest crime rate, the highest level of Council spend on cleansing, the highest spend on security, highest level of over-parking and congestion and the highest housing density rate;
- residents were afraid to report crimes for fear of repercussions so the statistics were not a true representation;
- a riot of 100 people had taken place in the area in the past few weeks, where eight cars had been burned out and multiple other cars damaged, and it hadn't even featured on the news;
- families of 30+ nationalities resided in the area and racist abuse had increased significantly;
- Roma families self-patrolled the area for their own safety;
- there had also been a marked increase in sexist abuse;
- there was a lack of enforcement, and policies hadn't been refreshed;
- the CCTV system and wardens had been removed from the area in 2012;
- a rebalancing of the area was desperately needed as the party lifestyles of some of the younger residents conflicted with the families and young professionals living in the area, that the relationships between them were at boiling point and that this was a crisis situation;
- it was disappointing that an MLA had to leave a meeting with a local licensed premise earlier in the day, as the staff refused to discuss the concerns of the local residents;
- young people were being used as cash cows by landlords, licensed premises, fast food vendors and taxi companies;
- however, the progress which had been made by the Council in the past few weeks was promising;
- she believed a zero tolerance policy on ASB should be adopted with a complete review of current policies; and
- in relation to Planning powers, they would like to see a rebalancing of the area through a regeneration policy, in conjunction with the South Belfast Corridor.

The Committee was then advised that Ms. N. Brennan, a representative of the Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG), was in attendance and she was welcomed to the meeting. She provided the Committee with a presentation on the key local issues, including that:

- the large residential community had a busy night time economy which was more suited to the city centre, and was not conducive for families, the elderly or working people;
- the Lower Ormeau was within a Neighbourhood Renewal area;

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- according to Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the area had a high density of children and young people, a large elderly population and high levels of social need, disability and minority ethnic families;
- it was in the top 1.4% in terms of Crime and Disorder, the top 3% of deprivation in terms of Living Environment, the top 6.51% in Health Deprivation and Disability;
- up until now there had been numerous reactionary initiatives but no proactive measures to tackle the ASB and noise disturbances;
- there was an increasing use of drugs in the area;
- in terms of Student Welfare, there were vulnerable young people coming into the area with little support;
- in addition to reviewing licensing in the area, limiting the opening hours of hot food outlets in the area would make a huge difference to noise levels;
- there was a critical under-reporting of crimes;
- over the past four years there had been a 55% increase in the number of HMOs in the area and that Airbnbs were now also commonplace, with little regulation;
- raised concerns regarding the proposed 20% cap on the number of HMOs in any area, stating that this was still too high;
- the transient nature of occupants of HMOs, Airbnbs or short term private rentals meant that they added little value to the community;
- consistent resources were required to tackle noise and ASB;
- conflict resolution, or something similar, was required as relationships between students, landlords, residents and businesses were at an all-time low; and
- the area could perhaps be used as a pilot scheme, through Community Planning and by linking in with the work of the Commissioner for Resilience, and create a long term vision for the area.

Lastly, the Chairperson welcomed Mr. R. Murtagh, President of National Union of Students – Union of Students Ireland (NUS-USI), to the meeting. He outlined to the Committee that:

- he was not in attendance to defend anti-social behaviour by students and that he wanted to provide a perspective from students;
- he had genuine sympathy with all residents of the area who were affected by the ASB, highlighting that students were also victims;
- threats were being made to students which were unfounded;
- he urged others to be careful of their language and not to make sweeping statements about students;
- affordability was a key factor why a large number of students lived in the area, given the high cost of living in the newly built Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) throughout the city;

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- unfortunately most students were forced into the private rented sector as accommodation was cheaper, but that living conditions were worse e.g. mould and single glazing;
- students were not getting their deposits back from landlords for no reason;
- there was a mental health crisis, with two unfortunate student deaths earlier in the year;
- a recent survey showed that 78% of students had experienced mental health difficulties while at university;
- in addition to poor housing conditions, many students were under financial and academic pressure, and, unfortunately, drugs and alcohol were an escape for some;
- he wanted to see long-term solutions – including regeneration and investment in the area; and
- both students and landlords should be involved in the conversations.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, thanked each of the deputations for their contributions.

A Member stated that a long-term solution was clearly required, with a regeneration programme and a masterplan of the area. He highlighted that the Council should be using its powers to consider how to reduce the number of HMOs in the area and to increase the number of family homes. He added that an Anti-Social Behaviour policy was required, and that, while the Council could deal with licensing and noise disturbance issues, the PSNI should be more closely involved given the criminal nature of a lot of the activity in the area. In relation to other parts of the City, he advised the Committee that ASB increased significantly in the Falls Park in the summer months.

A Member, who was not a member of the Committee, was granted authority to address the meeting. She agreed that a regeneration plan was needed in order to rebalance the area, and that the area should be given special designated status. She explained that the recent Members' Planning training on HMOs had been useful and she highlighted the importance of the Council's forthcoming Local Development Plan for the City. She raised major concerns with the proposed 20% limit of HMOs, explaining that she still felt this was too high. She reminded the Members that the licensing of HMOs was now within the Council's remit too, as of April 2019.

A number of Members stated that a multi-agency approach to the issues was key.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Baker,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting and

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to designate the Wider University and the Lower Ormeau area as a Special Action Area under Community Planning and to develop a long term vision and development plan for the area to include a housing plan, a spatial planning approach and a regeneration

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programme. This must be jointly developed with the stakeholders and jointly agreed with the Council, DfC, NIHE, DOJ and DfI.

In response to a Member's question regarding the PSNI's graduated response towards students, Mr. Murtagh stated that he was in favour of it, as he did not believe that placing students into the criminal justice system for one offence was a good idea for anyone. He added that the trouble tended to be from visitors to the area, not residents within the area, and that students were often the victims.

A Member requested whether additional resources could be put towards more Safer Neighbourhood Officers or wardens in the area. The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised the Committee that work was ongoing to alter certain roles within his Department to allow for greater flexibility in that regard and that he was trying to expedite that process. He also advised the Members that discussions were ongoing with the DOJ and PSNI, regarding the potential for an enhanced Warden-type role to close the existing gaps in the legislation.

A further Member added that Residents' Parking Schemes should be considered for other areas within the Holylands and wider university area, given the improvement it had provided in the College Park Avenue area.

Another Member stated that the PBMSA in the city centre was too expensive for most students.

Proposal

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

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to write to the Vice Chancellors of Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University, and to the owners of privately-owned Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation throughout the city, to ask them to reduce the price of their accommodation in the city centre to make it more affordable for students.

A Member requested information on why there was such a mass concentration of HMOs in the Holylands area. The Chief Executive explained that it was an inherited problem, as planning powers only transferred to Council in April 2015. She advised the Members that a Subject Plan for the Belfast City Council area was published by the former Department of the Environment (DoE) in 2008 which introduced control limits but, by that time, the numbers of HMOs in areas such as the Holylands were far in excess of the guidance. She emphasised the need for the Local Development Plan to be formally adopted as quickly as possible.

A further Member stated that the prevalence of HMOs and Airbnbs in the Holylands area invariably raised the house prices in other areas. The Chief Executive agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on the increase in Airbnbs across the City and what enforcement powers were available to agencies for those who were operating a property as an Airbnb without the appropriate certification from the NI Tourist Board.

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A further Member added that she had major concerns relating to the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Act 2016 which stated that if the application was for a renewal, planning permission was not required. She also stated that there were health and safety concerns relating to the re-definition of an HMO, in that lot of properties which were formerly classified as HMOs were no longer, and were therefore no longer protected by the HMO legislation and safety standards. The Chief Executive agreed that a further briefing would be offered to all Members on HMOs, including the redefinition in legislation and the impact on fire safety and building control issues which had been raised.

A number of Members highlighted that the high concentration of HMOs was a key factor in the ongoing issues in the area and that the NI Housing Executive and local housing associations should be approached in relation to considering “buying back” properties in the area.

Proposal

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

Resolved – that the Committee agrees that the Department for Communities, and other agencies such as SOS Bus and Sure Start which work with vulnerable communities in the area, be invited to join the ongoing conversation; and

that the Council writes to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and to social housing operators regarding the potential of them “buying back” properties in the area.

After further discussion, a number of Members stated that the Council and its partners should review the approach towards informing a City Anti-Social Behaviour enforcement policy, given how ASB could impact upon the health and well-being of residents living in areas which were heavily impacted by it.

Chairperson

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 5th November, 2019

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Michael Collins (Chairperson);
Councillors D. Baker, Black, Bunting,
Corr, Donnelly, M. Kelly, Magee, McCusker,
McLaughlin, McMullan, Newton,
Smyth and Verner.

Also attended: Councillor O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs J. Wilson, Business Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds, Alderman McCoubrey and Councillors de Faoite and Mulholland.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 8th October were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Schedule of Meetings 2020

The Committee approved the schedule of meetings for the People and Communities Committee as outlined below and agreed that all meetings would commence at 5.15 pm:

Tuesday, 14th January
Tuesday, 4th February
Tuesday, 18th February (Housing)
Tuesday, 3rd March
Tuesday, 7th April
Tuesday, 5th May (Housing)
Tuesday, 12th May
Tuesday, 9th June
Tuesday, 4th August (Housing)
Tuesday, 11th August
Tuesday, 8th September

**People and Communities Committee
Tuesday, 5th November, 2019**

Tuesday, 6th October
Tuesday, 3rd November (Housing)
Tuesday, 10th November
Tuesday, 8th December

The Committee agreed that its meeting on 3rd December, 2019 commence at the earlier time of 4.30 p.m.

Restricted Items

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following item as, due to the 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.

Request for use of Botanic Gardens

The Committee deferred consideration of the matter to enable a further report to be submitted:

- To include a diary of events which have already been agreed by the Council on the use of Council owned-premises and facilities and other events being put on by external promoters which are not being held on Council-owned properties; and
- Providing details of the impact of such events on Council provision and staff resources and how this might impact on other parts of the city.

Matters referred back from Council/Motions

Playground Equipment for Children with Disabilities

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The Council, at its meeting on the 2nd September 2019 considered a motion which had been moved by Alderman McCoubrey and seconded by Councillor Smyth:

1.2 *‘This Council recognises the need to improve play facilities for those Children with disabilities, and undertakes to engage with those in the sector who can best advice on making play facilities more accessible.*

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

1.3 At the People and Communities Committee meeting on the 10th September 2019 it was recommended that Committee consider the motion and take such action as may be determined.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the work undertaken to date by the Council in providing playground equipment across our sites for children with disabilities as part of the Councils on-going Playground Improvement Programme.
- Agree the Council undertake a consultation exercise with relevant organisations who work closely with parents of children and young people with disabilities to gauge their thoughts and views on current playground facilities and what other improvements they would like to see, making them more accessible for their children.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the current provision with regards to playground facilities for children with disabilities and our recommendation to undertake a consultation exercise with organisations who work closely with parents of children and young people with disabilities, giving consideration to children with sensory disabilities such as ADHD. The consultation will assist the Council in identifying future improvements to playground facilities, making them even more accessible for all.

3.2 Back in January 2019 the Council undertook an audit which was conducted by an Independent Playground Inspector (Register of Play Inspector International) RPII of all our playground facilities as part of a review to changing the design of our playground signage which would more clearly identify playground equipment suitable for appropriate ages and abilities.

3.3 The RPII independent Inspector's report highlighted each individual piece of playground apparatus, manufacturer's

recommended age range and whether or not the unit would be suitable for a child with a disability however it didn't include information regarding sensory requirements. (See Appendix 1 – example of individual playground/age range report) and (Appendix 2 – Example of the new playground signage).

- 3.4 The new playground signage is now in place along with the appropriate 'Age Range' stickers being attached to playground apparatus.
- 3.5 Over the past several years the Council has made significant strides to install more inclusive playground equipment as part of the Councils Playground Improvement Programme (See Appendix 3 – Example of recently installed playground which shows the variety of inclusive playground equipment). The Council continues to install inclusive equipment and for the first time the Council will be installing a specific wheelchair friendly swing seat as part of the refurbishment programme at Ormeau Park lower (See Appendix 4– Illustration of new disability friendly swing unit).
- 3.6 Several months ago the Council began a programme of retrofitting larger disability friendly swing seats within our playground sites (See Appendix 5 – Photograph of a recently retro fitted swing seat). The timeframe to install this type of swing seat in all of our playgrounds would have been two years due to the cost to purchase this type of swing seat as we have 101 playgrounds, however the Council recently applied for a grant from the Department for Communities under its 'Access and Inclusion fund' to assist the Council in its roll out of these Inclusive swing seats and if successful we should see one Inclusive swing seat installed in each of our playgrounds by 2020.

3.7 Key Issues

Members are asked to note the Council's on-going commitment in providing inclusive playground equipment for children of all abilities.

- 3.8 To further improve playground facilities across the city, it is proposed that a consultation exercise be undertaken with relevant organisations who work closely with parents of children and young people with disabilities and implement improvements coming out of the consultations, subject to available funding etc.

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications attached to this report, however any improvements / recommendations arising from the consultation and engagement will need to be considered in terms of resource implications for the council.

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

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed also that the consultation exercise should include local community organisations which work with children with disabilities and children with special needs and the parents of the users of the facilities.

Motion – Parenting N.I’s “Parenting in the Picture” Campaign

The Committee considered the following motion which had been proposed by Councillor Mulholland and seconded by Councillor Smyth and, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), be referred to the Committee for consideration:

“Following on from the 20th year of Parenting Week last week, this Council recognises the vital importance of parents to society.

Further, it notes with concern that 82% of parents indicated in the most recent “Big Parenting Survey”, that they felt that parents do not get enough support.

In order to bring attention to this and to attempt to redress this, the Council formally supports Parenting NI’s ‘Parenting in the Picture’ campaign. This Council pledges to work towards implementing the promises and commitments contained in this campaign.

To do this, the Council commits to conduct an audit of existing initiatives it delivers to support parents with a view to working with the voluntary and community sector, as well as other partners, to explore if such initiatives may be improved as well as seek to bring forward new programmes to support our parents.”

The Committee noted the motion and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining how this might be facilitated, resourced and managed.

Motion – Action on Avoidable Winter Deaths

The Committee considered the following motion which had been proposed by Councillor McAteer and seconded by Councillor Black. The motion had been referred to the Committee by the Council in accordance with Standing order 13(f):

“In December last year, NISRA published Excess Winter Mortality figures for the period 2017/18 which revealed the second highest recorded number of excess winter deaths in the north of Ireland since data began in 1974/75. Further, these shocking statistics recorded that the number of excess winter deaths in the north had more than doubled since 2015.

2017/18 statistics record that 1,500 people died, who were classed as Excess Winter Deaths and of these 22% or 320 people, were from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. These deaths are Avoidable Winter Deaths and even one is too many. Unfortunately, it is our citizens aged over 65 who are most affected, particularly those vulnerable elderly people aged 85+.

The increase in winter deaths is widely understood to be down to the flu and spells of very cold weather - yet these deaths are avoidable. A combination of high energy prices, fuel poverty, ill health, low income and poor housing can make winter a dangerous time for many older people.

As we await the NISRA figures for 2018/19 and approach the upcoming winter, this Council will do all in its power to effectively act on avoidable winter deaths. This Council welcomes the joined up multi-sectoral approach that will focus on preventing avoidable Winter Deaths through Belfast's Community Planning Process and will also convene and facilitate a meeting of Belfast's community, voluntary and social enterprise agencies who focus on protecting and supporting older vulnerable people, to identify, develop and support innovative programmes that can be deployed and co-ordinated to prevent avoidable deaths in our city over the upcoming winter.”

The Committee noted the motion and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining how this might be facilitated, resourced and managed.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Update on Review of Open Spaces and Streetscene

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 23rd August 2019, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee noted an update report and progress achieved in relation to the City and Neighbourhood**

Service (CNS) Transition and Improvement Programme (T&IP), including the ongoing development a new Open Spaces and Streetscene Service.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a further update on the progress of the development of the Open Spaces and Streetscene, and to set out next steps.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to

- note the contents of the report and the progress achieved in relation to the creation of the new Open Spaces and Streetscene service since August 2019. The Committee is also asked to the note the further work planned in this review.
- Members are also asked to note that this report will be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for noting.

3.0 Main report

Key issues

3.1 The development of the new Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) service is a priority project in the CNS Transformation & Improvement Programme. The development of this new service directly supports the delivery of the outcomes, objectives and priorities within the Belfast Agenda, Corporate Plan and the Council's Improvement plan, reflected in the OSS vision to create:

3.2 *'A service where we see it, do it, or report it. We have pride in our work, maintain environmental standards, and work together to maintain the public realm with and for our city's residents and visitors.'*

3.3 Consultation at the Open Spaces and Streetscene Management and Trade Union Sub-group has been ongoing since February 2019, and has included detailed consultation on the draft job descriptions which were set out in a detailed proposal document. Comprehensive written information and feedback has been provided to staff and Trade Unions as part of this consultation process.

3.4 Other direct and extensive engagement has also taken place with staff at all levels in the legacy services of Parks and Street

Cleansing, as well as affected staff in Resources and Fleet. This has included:

- context briefings organised for approximately 100 managers and supervisors in August 2019;
- 19 staff briefings which took place across the city during September and October 2019, reaching approximately 500 staff and;
- five staff ‘surgeries’ which took place across the city in late October 2019, to facilitate one to one, and small group sessions with affected staff;
- a number of management and trade union representatives participated in a two day study visit to comparator councils in Nottingham and Wakefield in October 2019, supported by the Association for Public Services Excellence (APSE).
- Staff engagement will continue over the coming months, with further staff briefings being planned for the new year.

- 3.5 Consultation on the new staff OSS structure and job descriptions is now complete. Transfer mechanisms to be applied to move current posts and permanent post-holders from old to new structures, are those set out in existing Council policy. Approximately 70% of the staff currently employed in the OSS legacy services of Parks and Street Cleansing will benefit from an uplift in grade and salary following their transfer onto the new structure.**
- 3.6 Implementation of the transfer of staff will get underway in November 2019, with the structure to be fully populated by the end of March 2020, following completion all relevant recruitment processes.**
- 3.7 A key objective of the review has been to create permanent employee opportunities, ensuring that people can avail of good jobs that pay well and provide opportunity for advancement. The new staff structure includes 600 permanent posts, and will result in a significant number of new, permanent appointments at management, supervisory and front line levels. This, in turn, will see a significant reduction in the number of temporary contracts and agency assignments used across OSS. Current temporary staff and agency assignees have been facilitated with Job Application and Interview Skills training, in advance of the recruitment of these permanent roles. It is also expected that a number of the new, front line posts will be ring-fenced for recruitment as part of the council’s inclusive growth strategy, and preparatory work is ongoing in this regard.**

- 3.8 The new structure includes a wider career pathway in terms of public realm cleanliness and environmental upkeep (Open Spaces and Streetscene), and will be supported by a comprehensive learning and development framework. This framework will focus, initially, on induction of staff into the new ways of working, and which will evolve to support role enrichment, staff development and effective succession planning.

Financial & Resource Implications

3.9 **Financial**

The department has confirmed that implementation of the changes and realignment of budgets to create permanent posts has been achieved and are included within the service's revenue estimate for 2020/21

3.10 **Human Resources**

There are no adverse human resources implications.

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

There are no adverse equality or rural needs implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Next Steps to undertaking a Detailed Air Quality
Assessment for Belfast City for nitrogen dioxide and
fine particulate matter (PM2.5)**

The Committee considered the following report:

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

- 1.1 Members will recall that at the People and Communities Committee meeting of 8th October 2019, a report was presented to the Committee summarising current ambient air quality conditions and challenges across the city. The report also provided background information on the introduction of low emission zones. At the conclusion of the Committee, and having considered the content of the report, Members agreed that a report would be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee on how the council might undertake a detailed air quality assessment for the city, including measuring for PM_{2.5}.

- 1.2 This report therefore provides an overview to Members of the various requirements and components of a detailed assessment for the city for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), based upon the requirements of the government's Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance LAQM.TG(16) document and the various other technical guidance provided on the Defra Local Air Quality Management Support website.
- 1.3 This report also provides an estimate of the likely cost and duration of a detailed assessment for the city and suggests a number of elements to developing our approach to this in the recommendations.
- 2.0 **Recommendations**
- 2.1 The Committee is requested to note the contents of this report and agree to the following actions:
- This committee writes to the Permanent secretary for DAERA with an invite to address committee on the strategic policy position of the emerging concerns around air quality and on the Departmental action on achieving the Program for Government target around improving air quality in light of emerging evidence on health impacts.
 - Recommend that BCC sets its own air quality ambitions in a new Air Quality Plan, that is due to be written in 2020 and to include the review of Air Quality Management Areas in light of evidence and emerging standards and agree that officers are tasked with looking at best practice and engage with other Local authorities who are progressing this agenda and seek some expert advice on the best and most effective way to achieve actions round improving air quality, so that we seek to inform solution based outcomes linked to the Belfast Agenda. As part of this process members would be invited to participate in a workshop with input from relevant knowledgeable / experienced speakers.
 - Members are requested to note the estimated costs of commissioning an appropriately experienced environmental consultancy to undertake a detailed assessment for nitrogen dioxide and fine particulate matter, to note that there are also staff resources required internally to support this, and the timescales to deliver and agree that officers are to consider all the above steps to inform how this could be managed within

the revenue estimates. In light of the resource implications and cross cutting issues, this report will also be brought before the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1** Members will be aware that the council has a statutory requirement to complete review and assessments, updating and screening assessments and progress reports on an annual basis in order to assess ambient quality across the city and to monitor progress towards achieving ambient air quality objectives within our four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).
- 3.2** Updating and screening assessments and progress reports are undertaken in accordance with the government's policy timetable as outlined within the government's LAQM.PG(NI)09 and LAQM.TG(16) publications. These reports, covering the Belfast City Council district, provide ongoing evidence of progress towards the air quality objectives by the council and relevant authorities by comparing all new monitoring data against the various air quality objectives, evaluating the impact of road traffic and other transport sources, evaluating industrial emission sources, and assessing the impact of new commercial, domestic and fugitive sources.
- 3.3** Where these annual reports indicate that there is a risk of air quality objectives not being achieved (outside of existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)), the council is then required to undertake a detailed assessment. The conclusions from recent council air quality reports, including the 2019 Progress Report, have however been that the council is not required to progress towards a detailed assessment for the city. These conclusions have been formally accepted by DAERA, Defra and the government's technical assessors.
- 3.4** Members will be aware that the council last completed a detailed assessment in 2010 for the purposes of (i) evaluating the effectiveness of structural revisions to the M1 Motorway / A12 Westlink on ambient air quality; (ii) evaluating whether the City centre needed to be declared as a new AQMA for exceedences of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective; (iii) evaluating whether the Ormeau Road AQMA could be revoked and; (iv) determining whether the Cromac Street and Albertbridge Road Air Quality Management Area needed to be extended at Short Strand. At the conclusion of this detailed

assessment, it was determined that the air quality management provisions in place at that time were appropriate. This conclusion was formally accepted by DoENI, Defra and the government's independent technical assessors.

- 3.5 Members are advised that exceedences of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective within the council's existing AQMAs are being addressed principally via actions proposed by partner organisations such as DfI Roads, Translink, the Freight Transport Association and the Road Haulage Association, as detailed within the council's Air Quality Action 2015-2020.
- 3.6 It should be noted however, that under current LAQM legislative requirements, local authorities are not required to manage fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), although Members will be aware that PM_{2.5} is monitored in Belfast City Centre in order to assess compliance with the standards for PM_{2.5} established via Directive 2008/50/EC of 21st May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe. The 2018 monitored annual mean was 10 $\mu\text{g}\text{m}^{-3}$.
- 3.7 Members will be aware that Scotland has already adopted the World Health Organisation PM_{2.5} guideline value of 10 $\mu\text{g}\text{m}^{-3}$, monitored as an annual mean limit and to be achieved by 2020. This obligation was introduced via the Scottish government's 2015 *Cleaner Air for Scotland – the Road to a Healthier Future* Air Quality Strategy. Some of the early actions arising from the Strategy have therefore been to establish a PM_{2.5} monitoring network; to design, develop and implement a two-level modelling system for regional and local scales to provide evidence for appraising and identifying potential transport and planning solutions to local air quality issues and; to undertake detailed modelling of all four major cities in Scotland, covering areas associated with highest levels of poor air quality.
- 3.8 Members have now instructed officers to provide a report on how the council could undertake a detailed assessment for air quality for the city for current pollutants of concern; nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) to include monitoring for PM_{2.5}. The concentrations of all other pollutants included within the local air quality management regime, such as carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and particulate matter (PM₁₀), etc. have over recent years been determined to be consistently and significantly below all health based objectives and limit values to the extent that DAERA and Defra have confirmed that ambient monitoring for these pollutants in many city locations can be discontinued. For example, monitoring for sulphur dioxide (SO₂) was discontinued in the east of the city in September 2007 and particulate matter (PM₁₀) monitoring was similarly discontinued from March 2010. Moreover, the Belfast

south hydrocarbon monitoring site as discontinued in 2000 and monitoring for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon was terminated from January 2007.

- 3.9 Having regard to the government's LAQM.TG(16) guidance, it is noted that for nitrogen dioxide, locations of concern include narrow congested streets with residential properties close to the kerb, roads with a high flow of buses and/or HGVs, new roads, roads with significantly changed traffic flows, junctions and bus and coach stations. These sources would need to be considered across the city as part of a detailed assessment. Other sources that would also need to be considered include airports, railways, industrial sources and domestic and / or other biomass burning. Accordingly, as part of any detailed assessment and to enable dispersion modelling to be completed for nitrogen dioxide for the city, detailed activity and emissions data would be required for all of the abovementioned sources. This data would normally be collected, validated and aggregated as part of the development of a detailed emissions inventory for the city. It is understood however, that DfI Roads does not presently have a sufficiently detailed transport model for the entire city and so traffic data for many roads across the city may have to be obtained from direct traffic counts. Typical criteria for screening road, industrial and domestic sources for nitrogen dioxide are provided in tables 7.1 and 7.3 of LAQM.TG(16). Once a detailed emissions inventory has been collated for the city, atmospheric dispersion modelling would need to be undertaken using this data in order to generate a nitrogen dioxide pollution map for the city. This map would facilitate identification of any locations of exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide objectives, together with the geographic extent of the exceedance. The modelled exceedances might however, have to be confirmed by additional monitoring, where no nearby ambient monitoring data exists.
- 3.10 As Northern Ireland councils are not yet required to manage PM_{2.5} via the LAQM regime, it is noted that LAQM.TG(16) contains only limited information on PM_{2.5} sources and interventions. LAQM.TG(16) highlights that as PM_{2.5} is extremely small, it can travel for long distances and so as much as 50% of local concentrations may arise from sources outside the local authority boundary. Nonetheless, direct sources of PM_{2.5} within Belfast are likely to include road vehicles, industrial emissions, biomass and domestic and commercial combustion. In addition to these direct emissions sources, PM_{2.5} is also formed in the atmosphere from chemical reactions involving gases such as sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides. Measures to reduce the emissions of these precursor gases are therefore often also beneficial in reducing concentrations of PM_{2.5}.

- 3.11 It is likely therefore that to undertake a detailed assessment for PM_{2.5} for the city, an emissions inventory would need to be assembled for the above-mentioned PM_{2.5} sources so that dispersion modelling could be undertaken for the city. It is likely also that additional monitoring for PM_{2.5} would need to be undertaken at a number of residential and other locations across the city as part of any detailed assessment in order to assess monitored compliance with the annual mean targets for PM_{2.5} and to assist with the validation and verification of the dispersion modelling. As highlighted previously, dispersion modelling would enable the locations of any exceedances of PM_{2.5} targets, together with the geographic extent of the exceedance to be determined.
- 3.12 Members are reminded that the recent UK Environment Bill contains a clear commitment for government to set a legally binding target for PM_{2.5} and that DAERA will shortly commence consultation on a Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland. The Clean Air Strategy and the challenge of improving ambient air are both referenced and referred in the wider Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland Public Discussion Document.

Financial implications, timelines and options.

- 3.13 As previously advised, any decision to undertake a detailed assessment of air quality for the city would require significant investment in both staff resources and funding. It is anticipated that a suitability competent consultancy or consultants would need to be appointed via a competitive tender process. A detailed specification would also need to be agreed to inform the tender. At this time, we have sought an initial guide to the indicative costs of engaging this piece of work and have been advised that it would cost in the region of £145,000- £215,000, depending on the extent and quality of the monitoring and modelling deployed.
- 3.14 These costs are reflective of the detailed analyses that we would have to undertake for the sources highlighted in preceding paragraphs, e.g. surveys to obtain appropriate source activity data over a representative sample period, supplemented by ambient monitoring for a period of at least 12 months in order to determine compliance with annual mean targets, with this data used to inform and calibrate detailed atmospheric dispersion modelling for the city. It is anticipated that the timeframe for this project would therefore be in the order of 18-24 months, depending on the duration of the tender process. Additionally, depending on the final works

specification, and on UK Brexit progress, EU procurement thresholds may apply.

- 3.15 Members are reminded that this project has not been budgeted for in revenue estimates for the 2019/20 period or within growth estimates for 2020/21. Members are also reminded that there is no formal requirement currently from DAERA or within UK guidance for the Council to undertake this study or for DAERA to provide funding towards the study. Previous funding to support detailed and updating and screening assessments has been provided via the DAERA local air quality management or Environment Fund grant schemes.
- 3.16 We have advised this Committee, in last month's air quality report that DAERA have prepared a draft Clean Air Quality Strategy for NI, which we believe will be reflective of the direction of travel recently articulated by Members, in that it is likely to include consideration of the assessment of fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), in line with World Health Organisation standards and the government's air quality commitments articulated within the Environment Bill. We are advised that this Strategy is likely to be released for consultation early in the new year and that it will therefore fall in line with the announcement of the Environment Bill.
- 3.17 It is likely that DAERA will need to consider how it might support councils in undertaking what are understood to be Annual Status Reports. The Council would lobby, in our consultation response, that DAERA must support Northern Ireland councils financially in any new undertakings around local air quality measurement and management. Members will need to consider however, whether the council should formally engage with DAERA in order to encourage the Department to accelerate the Strategy consultation and implementation process, given our interested position. The Council could also choose to lobby DAERA for specific funding to support our aspirations for a detailed assessment of ambient air quality for the city.
- 3.18 Financial and Resource Implications
- Estimated costs for completion of the detailed assessments for nitrogen dioxide and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) for the city have been obtained from an appropriately experienced environmental consultancy. The costs has been estimated to be in the range £145,000-£215,000, depending upon the final scope and complexity of the work undertaken.

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- **Members are reminded that this project has not been budgeted for in revenue estimates for the 2019/20 period or within growth estimates for 2020/21.**
- **The duration of this detailed assessment project for nitrogen dioxide and fine particulate matter is anticipated to be in the order of 18-24 months.**
- **It is anticipated that in addition to the abovementioned financial resources, a significant staff contribution over the full duration of the study would be required from council, DfI Roads and DAERA staff. It is further anticipated that staff resource commitments and engagement would have to be formally obtained from these government Departments.**

3.19 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessments

None”

After a lengthy discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor D. Baker,
Seconded by Councillor Black,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the matter until enable it to considered in conjunction with a Motion on the Introduction of a City Tree, which was being submitted to the Council meeting on 2nd December.

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

Accordingly, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed also that the Steering Group, to develop the next Air Quality Action Plan, include representatives of sustainable transport, public health and environmental groups, rather than freight transport and road haulage associations.

Department for Infrastructure response to a Council proposal to designate Belfast as ‘car free’ 20-22 September 2020

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the matter be referred to the Working Group on the Climate Crises, given the need to ensure the interconnectedness around these agendas, with a recommendation that it host a meeting, to which all Members of the Council would be invited, to commence initial discussions with representatives of the Department of Infrastructure and other relevant organisations/stakeholders on the designation of a car free day in 2020, with such discussions to consider the impact on residential areas close to the city.

Positive Animation of Parks - Open Spaces

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 For Members information, previous People and Communities Committee requested regular updates on ongoing work to encourage positive animation of Council parks/open spaces as a way of deterring anti-social behaviour and vandalism.
- 1.2 This emerged as a result of ongoing concerns raised with Elected Members about the impact of anti-social behaviour and vandalism in parks/open spaces and the impact of this on the positive use and animation of these spaces in communities.
- 1.3 Ongoing review of reported anti-social behaviour and feedback from Elected Members identified a small number of parks, open spaces where it was agreed a co-ordinated focus with other statutory organisations, and communities would add value. These were Falls Park/City Cemetery, Orangefield Park/Avoniel Park, Marrowbone Park, Dunville Park and Ballysillan Park.
- 1.4 Additionally, at full Council in March 2019, Elected Members requested regular updates to future People and Communities Committee on the ongoing work to positively animate these parks/open spaces and how Council managed ongoing vandalism.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- note the contents of this report and support the ongoing work to positively animate parks/open spaces

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1 Ongoing review of local, regional and national best practice indicates that one of the most effective ways of addressing anti-social behaviour and vandalism is to positively animate parks/open spaces by creating a sense of ownership and empowerment amongst users. This includes young people, who often gather in parks/open spaces as a way to positively socialise. It is however, recognised that young people are often gathering in parks/open spaces at times when they are closed

and particularly after dark which can create additional vulnerabilities for those young people.

- 3.2 Ongoing review of reported anti-social behaviour, input from Elected Members and Council Officers has identified that the parks/open spaces, which are causing most concern in relation to serious anti-social behaviour at present, are Marrowbone Park, Falls Park/City Cemetery and Girdwood.

3.3 General Animation

Council Parks Outreach and Open Spaces and Active Living Teams work closely with local schools, youth and community groups throughout the year running positive events and activities in our parks/open spaces. This work helps create a positive relationship between participants and the parks/open spaces and increased respect and civic pride. Examples include:

- Outdoor Education Sessions
- Biodiversity Sessions
- Park Life Schools Programme
- Park Life Saturday Club
- Family Fun Days
- Growing Workshops
- Historical and Cultural Guided Walks
- Community Clean Ups

Council also works with a range of external organisations who support Councils' objective of positively animating our parks/open spaces. These include community and cultural events, Park Runs and music events.

Targeted Animation at Current Priority Sites

Marrowbone Park Millennium Park

- 3.4
- City and Neighbourhood Services provides ongoing co-ordination to animate Marrowbone Park, with recent animation taking place over four consecutive weekends in late summer 2019. Combined efforts involved Ardoyne Youth Enterprises (AYE), Ulster Rugby, Sustrans, Council Parks Outreach, Ardoyne GAA, Council Community Development and Council Sports Development. The event was called the 'Bonehills Takeover' and was aimed at promoting positive use of the park and to encourage families and young people to enjoy the park in a safe way.

3.5

- AYE supplied Outreach Youth Workers to engage with young people in and around the park to promote positive use of the park and address some of the risk taking behaviours. There was a range of events and activities planned including sports coaching; inflatables and a bicycle maintenance stand supplied by Sustrans to promote bike safety.

Falls Park / City Cemetery

3.6

- Council continues to coordinate the ongoing multi-agency response to Anti-Social Behaviour issues in the Falls Park and City Cemetery. This involves ongoing liaison with Elected Members, outreach/detached youth workers, PSNI and Translink to plan high visibility operations aimed at deterring anti-social behaviour. Additionally, Council has supported two requests from youth organisations to access the 3G football pitch to animate the park and divert young people into more positive activity such as a soccer tournament. This culminated in a football match between BCC Officers, youth workers and PSNI Officers to highlight the ongoing partnership approach to addressing ASB in the Park and Cemetery. This work all takes place at the times anti-social behaviour is most likely to happen.

3.7

- A recent request for use of the pitches over the next 6 weeks has been supported resulting in usage of the pitch on Friday/ Saturday evening by local youth providers.

3.8

- Members will be aware of the ongoing damage caused to War Graves in the City Cemetery. Council officers have met with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to discuss more proactive measures to deter such damage happening again. These measures have been discussed with senior PSNI Officers and will involve continued high visibility foot patrols (Council and PSNI) and maximising positive animation opportunities. Mobile CCTV has been deployed in the last two weeks and this will continue. Additional CCTV and lighting is also being considered but may not be feasible given the nature of the site. A site meeting with BCC's mobile CCTV contractor to scope out the work required will take place this week. Education Authority and community/voluntary youth workers have been briefed on the Councils' serious

concerns about damage to the graves and are proactively working to ensure young people in the area do not become involved in this activity.

Girdwood Community Hub

3.9

- Girdwood remains one of our priority areas of focus with Council Officers providing high visibility patrols, including with PSNI (along with other priority sites). The site remains complex, however Council Officers continue to work with our colleagues within the PSNI, DFC, EA and community partners to review and evaluate interventions being delivered in and around the site.

3.10

- Council also continues to provide a physical security presence with the purpose of deterring and dealing with ASB incidents inside the hub building. At present, this service is delivered 3 nights per week and we are currently engaging with the operator with a view of providing additional security across the Girdwood Site for additional visibility outside of the building and around the pitches.

3.11

- A site visit has been facilitated with the Department for Communities & PSNI to explore opportunities to design out areas being use as a 'run through' by planting additional mature trees to close these key areas. A landscape plan is currently being developed and costed and we hope to be in a position to progress this as a matter of urgency.

3.12

- Additional CCTV is currently being procured to provide additional coverage across the Girdwood site. The additional provision will be in the form of wireless CCTV and locations points have been identified in conjunction with the PSNI. The proposed solution will also allow for new CCTV cameras to be re-located should other areas around the site be identified as 'hot spot' or 'blind spots' areas.

Partnership Working

- 3.13 Promoting the positive use of parks/open spaces and reducing anti-social behaviour/vandalism is not something the Council can achieve in isolation and requires extremely high levels of partnership working. Partners involved include Council, PSNI,

Education Authority, Youth Organisations, Community Organisations, Translink, local schools and other revenue programmes (e.g. Urban Villages, Fresh Start, and PEACE IV).

3.14 Officers continue to work with all partners to maximise effectiveness of interventions, reduce duplication, protect Council assets and improve the quality of life for park/open space users and communities in the wider vicinity. Some further examples of how that partnership working is being progressed are detailed below:

3.15

- Ongoing serious anti-social behaviour in the Springfield Park, Springfield Dam and Invest NI Site was causing serious concerns for residents in the area and presented a risk to the success of the PEACE IV Shared Spaces and Services capital investment in the area ('Springfield Necklace'). Officers from across the Council worked to develop a co-ordinated plan of operations and community support in the wider area which included:**

3.16

- A pilot civic engagement project commissioned by PEACE IV and delivered by Clonard Youth Centre and Forthspring Inter-Community Group. Both groups are delivering on site outreach work to identify those involved with the anti-social behaviour and are engaging them in cross community programmes to reduce the risk those young people will become involved anti-social behaviour again. The pilot project will run until January 2020 and if evaluated as an effective model, is likely to be commissioned for a longer period.**

3.17

- In partnership with the Education Authority and PSNI, Council has begun the process of putting systems in place in West Belfast to maximise communication and partnership working between organisations. In practice, this involves weekly joined up planning of resources around priority sites at an operational level to include what quantity of resources are available, what area those resources will operate in, what times they will operate and the sharing of contact details. This has been informed by a very successful model in East Belfast (East Belfast Youth Providers Forum). This model is currently being rolled out for North Belfast with an initial cross-sectoral workshop held on 22 October 2019, which will be followed up in November 2019 with a more detailed planning workshop.**

Supporting Innovation

- 3.18 Members will recall from Committee in June 2019, Council was in the process of completing an externally funded (Department for Economy) project working with the SME sector (including community/voluntary organisations) on opportunities to use innovation and technology in encouraging positive use and deter negative use of parks/open spaces.
- 3.19 £100,000 was secured for Phase 1 and after a short period of field testing in five parks/open spaces across the city in June 2019 (2 weeks). The field testing for each SME was generally positive and following a multi-agency review process, the Department for Economy has issued a Phase 2 letter of offer for £125K for 20/21 financial year, with further funding available (subject to satisfactory performance during 20/21) for 21/22 financial year.
- 3.20 The overall aim of the project in Phase 2 has been slightly refocussed taking in to account the Phase 1 experience. It revised aim is:
- ‘To help Belfast City Council manage safe, accessible and enjoyable parks and open spaces, whilst continuing to respect the privacy of our users’
- 3.21 As in Phase 1, all SME’s were subject to rigorous Data Protection and Privacy Impact Assessments and full legal compliance was in place throughout ensuring every individuals’ right to privacy was respected and only data directly related to the project aim was gathered. Learning from Phase 1 has resulted in a new work stream within Phase 2, which will involve parks/open spaces users and communities near our parks/open spaces to become more involved with Council and the SME’s at an early stage. The purpose of this early engagement is to better understand any concerns users and communities may have about the type of data, which is being, gathered, which will ultimately inform the Phase 2 Data Protection and Privacy Impact Assessments.
- 3.22 Party Group Briefings will be offered in November/December 2019 if Elected Members would like further detail and a Phase 2 progress report will be provided to Committee at the earliest opportunity after Phase 2 project close down in March 2020.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.23 **Staff Resources**

The above approach continues to support the values and principles of the City and Neighbourhood Services and wider Corporate Change Programme.

3.24 Financial Resources

All of the above work continues to be accommodated from within existing Council and (D) PCSP revenue budgets. The work is intended to maximise existing resources, reduce duplication and facilitate joined up decision making and resource allocation in the identified parks/open spaces.

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

None have been identified at present, however, this will monitored on an ongoing basis.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting to include information such as:

- a breakdown of the animation budget for each of the parks;
- who is consulted with in terms of what animation is put on; and
- the targeted animation on key dates throughout the calendar year.

City Greenways Workshop

The Committee agreed to hold an all Members’ workshop to discuss Greenways on a city-wide basis on 16th January, 2020 at 5.00 pm, subject to availability of proposed speakers.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Parks Events Small Grants Scheme

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided information on the decisions taken by the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services, under the Authority Delegated to him, regarding the applications received in Tranche 2 for events taking place in parks between 1st October, 2019 and 31st March, 2020.

Update on Committee Financial Position

The Committee noted a report which provided details on its updated current financial position and the corrective action to support an improvement.

Operational Issues

**Proposal for naming new streets and the
Continuation of an existing street**

The Committee approved the following applications for naming new streets and the continuation of an existing street in the City:

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Proposed Name	Location	Applicant
Blacks Gate Drive	Off Blacks Road, BT10	Radius Housing Assoc
Blacks Gate Park	Off Blacks Road, BT10	Radius Housing Assoc
Blacks Gate Road	Off Blacks Road, BT10	Radius Housing Assoc
Blacks Gate Green	Off Blacks Road, BT10	Radius Housing Assoc
Blacks Gate Mews	Off Blacks Road, BT10	Radius Housing Assoc
Blacks Gate Avenue	Off Blacks Road, BT10	Radius Housing Assoc
Blacks Gate Crescent	Off Blacks Road, BT10	Radius Housing Assoc

Proposal For Dual Language Street Signs

The Committee approved the application for a second street nameplate in Irish at Slemish Way.

Reference Group on Older People

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and the recommendations from the Reference Group on Older People meeting held on 22nd August, 2019.

Community and Play Centre: Seasonal Closure

The Committee:

- i. approved a request to extend the current seasonal arrangements for BCC Community and Play Centres to be closed to the public for a defined period at Christmas 2019 and Easter 2020, subject to staff taking annual leave for any days that are not statutory holidays; and
- ii. Noted that any staff wanting to work over these periods on the non-statutory holidays would be facilitated.

Chairperson

People and Communities Committee

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SPECIAL MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Michael Collins (Chairperson);
and Councillors D. Baker, Black, Cobain,
Kyle, Magee and Newton.

Also attended: Aldermen Copeland, Kingston and Rodgers and Councillor
Brooks.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds), Alderman McCoubrey and Councillors Bunting, Corr, Donnelly, McLaughlin and Verner.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restructuring of Intermediate Football

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 10th September, it had agreed, in light of concerns which had been expressed by Members, to invite representatives from the Irish Football Association (IFA) to attend a future meeting to discuss its proposals for the restructuring of Intermediate football in Northern Ireland and associated changes to pitch criteria.

It was reported that Mr. S. Murphy, Chief Operating Officer, and Mr. L. Sillery, Club Licensing Manager, were in attendance on behalf of the IFA and they were welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. Murphy informed the Committee that the IFA's five-year strategy for 2017-2022 included a proposal for the restructuring of Intermediate football, with a view to providing a clear pathway for a club to progress from junior to intermediate to senior football and ensuring that the level at which it was competing was appropriate to its ability and ground facilities.

Mr. Sillery reviewed the format of the current Intermediate structure, which consisted of a Premier Intermediate League and four regional leagues, two of which extended to more than one division. Under the new structure, which had been approved by the Board of the IFA, a National Intermediate League, consisting of either twelve or fourteen teams, and four regional single leagues, each comprising fourteen teams, would be established.

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He then drew the Members' attention to the following changes to intermediate ground criteria and pointed out the last significant changes had come into effect in 2008/09:

- **Spectator Viewing** - it must be possible for spectators to view a match from at least the full length of two sides of the playing area, excluding any sterile area where spectator access may be prohibited;
- **Spectator Accommodation** - the football ground must have as a minimum permanent covered accommodation (covered seating/covered terracing/covered hard standing) for 50 persons;
- **Changing Room Accommodation** - the distance to the field of play from exiting the dressing room building must be no more than 55m. There must be separate changing rooms for both teams, each with a minimum surface area for changing of 15 m², each equipped with usable team/ coaching staff seating and clothes hanging facilities;
- **Access to Pitch for Players and Officials** - a permanent barrier with a minimum height of 1.2 m must be in place to safeguard the access from the changing room building to the field of play for players and officials. For the avoidance of doubt, temporary arrangements put in place on match days, such as crowd control barriers, will not satisfy this requirement;
- **Pitch Size** - the pitch must be a minimum of 90m in length with a minimum width of 55m.
- **Artificial Pitches** - any artificial grass pitch must comply at all times with FIFA quality standards or a comparable testing standard that certifies the pitch for football, in terms of playing performance, safety, durability and quality assurance. A valid, current field test certificate (pass) must be on file with the Irish Football Association at all times. Only 11-a-side football markings are permitted;
- **Obscured Viewing** - a boundary wall and/or fence and/or natural boundary must surround the football ground. The boundary wall and/or fence must be permanent, secure and of sound construction, with a recommended minimum height of 2m (measured from the exterior of the perimeter) and designed to obscure viewing into the ground from publicly accessible areas;
- **Shared Multi-Pitch/Multi-Team/Multi-Changing Room/ Multi-User Facilities** - the two Intermediate teams (home and visiting team), club and match officials have exclusive access to and exclusive use of the entire dressing room complex for at least 60 minutes prior to kick off, the duration of the match and 30 minutes following the completion of the match;

or

a dedicated external entrance to/exit from the Intermediate football dressing room area exists exclusively for the two Intermediate teams (home and

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visiting team), club and match officials and permanent internal segregation arrangements are in place to separate from other teams or facility users.

Mr. Sillery concluded by pointing out that, in order to gain entry to the new intermediate structure, clubs would be required to meet the revised ground criteria and to sportingly qualify for the top 68/70 places, based upon the hierarchy in place within the current structure at the end of the 2020/21 season.

During discussion, Members expressed serious concerns in relation to the IFA's proposals and confirmed that they had been contacted by representatives of numerous intermediate clubs who had voiced their opposition. The ensuing discussion focused primarily upon:

- the detrimental impact which the reduction in the number of intermediate clubs from 116 to 68/70 would have upon local communities, in terms of physical and mental wellbeing and the potential loss of football talent;
- the limited timeframe for clubs to prepare for the introduction of the new league structure and associated ground criteria;
- the failure by the IFA to consult at any stage with the Council and other key stakeholders and whether an Equality Impact Assessment of its proposals had been undertaken; and
- the potentially significant cost to the Council of bringing the twelve pitches/facilities which were used for Intermediate football up to the required standard and to other clubs.

In response, Mr. Sillery stated that a fourteen-team league was viewed as being the optimum model and took into account clubs' additional demands in terms of cup competitions. He stressed that those clubs which failed to gain entry initially would be eligible to compete in junior football and have the opportunity, through their sporting performance, to return to intermediate level. He added that a ground share arrangement would be permissible from the IFA's perspective.

Mr. Murphy explained that, following discussions with representatives of the Intermediate league, the Board of the IFA had agreed to increase its funding allocation for ground improvements from €500k to €1m. All intermediate clubs would be entitled to apply for a share of that funding, which would be distributed by way of a small grants scheme. Those intermediate clubs which were using the Council's pitches could apply for funding which, if approved, would be paid directly to the Council. The Board had agreed also, in light of its request for the wording of the Obscure Viewing element of the ground criteria to be reviewed, to delay the implementation of the new league structure/ground criteria until the beginning of the 2022/23 season.

He confirmed that IFA officials had already carried out a cursory inspection of most intermediate grounds and that they would, upon receiving confirmation of a club's intention

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to retain its intermediate status, undertake a more detailed inspection to identify the extent of the improvements which would be required and outline the funding process.

In relation to consultation, Mr. Murphy confirmed that IFA officials had engaged with the Intermediate league operators and, on two occasions, with the Chief Leisure Officers' Association which, as far as he was aware, included representation from local councils. He added that he was unable to confirm at this stage if an Equality Impact Assessment of the IFA's proposals had been undertaken but would seek clarification in that regard.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services pointed out that the Chief Leisure Officers' Association was a sub-group of SOLACE, a representative body for local government, and that it was his understanding that, on the two occasions referred to by Mr. Murphy, the IFA officials had attended in order to provide information on the new structure, rather than engage in a meaningful consultation process.

Mr. Murphy and Mr. Sillery were then thanked by the Chairperson and left the meeting.

The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial to hear from Mr. T. Pateman, Chairman of the Northern Amateur Football League, who was in attendance and he was welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Pateman informed the Committee that he had been involved in amateur league football for the past fifty-three years. He reviewed the league structure in place currently within the Northern Amateur Football League, which included four intermediate leagues comprising fifty-five teams in total, and pointed out that it enabled clubs to move, via a promotion and relegation system, between junior, intermediate and senior level.

He explained that the IFA's proposals were, in his opinion, unnecessary and would be unlikely to reinvigorate intermediate football and pointed to the reduction in the number of clubs, uncertainty around the funding process and ground criteria and the limited timeframe associated with the implementation process.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Pateman for his contribution.

After further discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the presentation from representatives of the Irish Football Association on its proposals for the restructuring of Intermediate football and changes to ground criteria;
- ii. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining the extent of the work which would be required to be undertaken to bring those Council-owned pitches which were used currently for intermediate football up to the required standard under the proposed restructure, together with indicative costings;
- iii. agreed that the aforementioned report should set out potential actions which, in the opinion of the City Solicitor, could be taken in

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relation to the failure by the Irish Football Association to consult with the Council at any stage in the restructuring process; and

- iv. agreed, should it be considered necessary for the Irish Football Association to attend a future meeting on this issue, that its Chief Executive and President be invited to attend in person.

Chairperson

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 6th November, 2019

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

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

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

Apologies

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9th and 23rd October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of Interest were reported.

Schedule of Meetings 2020

The Committee approved the following schedule of monthly meetings for the 2020 and agreed that it should continue to meet at 5.15 p.m.:

- Wednesday, 15th January;
- Wednesday, 12th February;
- Wednesday, 4th March;
- Wednesday, 8th April;
- Wednesday, 13th May;
- Wednesday, 10th June;
- Wednesday, 12th August;
- Wednesday, 9th September;

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- Wednesday, 7th October;
- Wednesday, 11th November; and
- Wednesday, 9th December.

The Committee agreed also that its monthly meeting on 4th December should commence at the earlier time of 4.30 p.m.

Restricted Items

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

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

Update on Strategic Site Assessments

The Committee was reminded that, in August 2018, the Council had commissioned a Strategic Sites Assessment in order to assess the regeneration potential of its fifteen publicly operated car parks within the City centre, as well as adjoining publicly owned land.

The Acting Director of City Regeneration and Development submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided an update on the findings of Phase 1 of the assessment and their context in terms of wider City regeneration. The report gave consideration also to further work to be undertaken to progress the three priority cluster sites, namely, Inner North West, Clarendon and Ormeau Avenue in phases, along with other appropriate land holdings, and to deliver a comprehensive programme of mixed use regeneration.

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the progress on Phase 1 of the Strategic Sites Assessment and the Member engagement to date;
- ii. agreed to receive at a future meeting a report on the potential to deliver a comprehensive programme of mixed used regeneration, with an overall predominance of residential use utilising these sites alongside commercial development to support job creation, to include the potential for working with adjacent landowners, funding options and potential for joint ventures;
- iii. agreed that the proposals for each of the SSA priority clusters should be progressed as follows:
 - (a) carry out further engagement with the local communities and the Department for Communities prior to preparing recommendations

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 6th November, 2019**

- for a route to delivery for the Inner North West Northern Cluster that is in accordance with the Inner North West Masterplan;
- (b) create a Development Framework for the Inner North West Southern Cluster showing desired uses and potential delivery arrangements, including the potential to re-imagine Smithfield Market;
 - (c) create a Development Framework involving adjacent landholdings at the Dunbar Cluster;
 - (d) agree that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee should consider the feasibility of taking ownership of the Department of Finance's Corporation Street site, taking into account the capital requirements to acquire the land, including the potential for land swaps with the Department of Finance;
 - (e) prepare an outline planning application for the Ormeau Avenue site and undertake further engagement with surrounding communities regarding potential mix and tenure of the site;
- iv. agreed that the Council site at Gloucester Street should be considered as part of the strategic site delivery programme;
 - v. agreed to the inclusion of the Council's Hope Street Car Park and Whitla Street Car Park within the planning and master planning considerations for Weavers Cross regeneration project and the Yorkgate Train Station Project respectively;
 - vi. agreed to complete a traffic modelling assessment of the road infrastructure surrounding Ravenhill Rest Gardens and to explore potential development opportunities through junction realignment;
 - vii. noted that work had been carried out through the Belfast Agenda to quantify the demand for residential growth in Belfast, and that the Council and DfC were currently jointly undertaking further work to understand the residential market;
 - viii. noted that work was ongoing to establish the impact that the above developments will have on car parking in the city centre, both from a revenue generation perspective and loss of space, along with any mitigation plans;
 - ix. noted that a draft Development Framework for each cluster would be presented to the Committee for approval, which would include proposals on mixed tenure, in line with the emerging policies within the Local Development Plan Draft Plan Strategy; and
 - x. noted that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would have the final decision-making responsibility for acquisition or disposal of assets, along with any joint venture proposals.

Growing Businesses and the Economy

Update on Belfast - Dublin Economic Corridor

The Director of Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on progress to date on work to support the development of the Belfast-Dublin Economic Corridor and to set out the possible way forward to progress this work.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the outcomes from the research paper undertaken by the University of Ulster's Economic Policy Centre and Dublin City University; and
- ii. endorse the emerging plans for the Belfast-Dublin Economic Corridor.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will be aware that Belfast City Council and Dublin City Council have a longstanding working relationship built up over many years and focused principally on issues relating to economic development and city growth.

3.2 More recently, at the Council meeting in May 2018, Councillor McAllister proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Long and referred to this Committee:

‘This Council acknowledges the ever growing importance of relations between Belfast City and Dublin City as the main economic drivers within each jurisdiction. Furthermore, regardless of the outcome of negotiations around Brexit, it is imperative that relations continue to flourish between both cities, to the mutual benefit of all along this increasingly significant economic corridor. Accordingly, this Council agrees to establish a joint plan around co-operation regarding working relationships within the economic corridor. Going forward, this Council commits to ensuring key areas of progress and collaboration focussing on:

- *a complementary approach to inward investment and job growth;*
- *achieving Inclusive growth; and*
- *developing Infrastructure and connectivity.'*

- 3.3 In taking this forward, officers have engaged with councils along the economic corridor. A partnership has been established including four councils in Northern Ireland and four in Rol. The council partners are: Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council; Belfast City Council; Dublin City Council; Fingal County Council; Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council; Louth County Council; Meath County Council; and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.
- 3.4 In order to shape the future direction of the partnership and identify economic opportunities along the corridor, Dublin City University and Ulster University were commissioned to carry out research on behalf of the councils.
- 3.5 The research paper has now been completed. It notes that examples of economic corridors in other locations offer learning for the Belfast-Dublin economic corridor. The key success factor for these locations is the need for a clear articulation of what additional economic growth might arise from the enhanced regional and local inter-governmental collaboration. That means articulating clearly the benefit that will accrue from enhanced levels of engagement over and above what can be expected if partners are to continue to maintain the status quo and pursue their individual economic agendas. Clearly this will involve consideration of physical infrastructure but there are also opportunities for business to business collaboration and enhanced engagement among the research institutions along the corridor.
- 3.6 The report details the current economic performance of the Corridor and the future prospects for the region based on current trends. The report also begins the work of identifying potential areas for cooperation which could create a stronger trajectory for growth. Some of the report's key findings are outlined below:

Current Economic Position

- 3.7 The Eastern Economic Corridor is seeing strong growth in population terms with a 12% increase since 2006. Over 2 million people now live in the eight Council areas. Growth in the working age population (16-64 year olds) is also strong, and stands at 1.4 million people. There are high levels of

diversity within this population, with 15% born outside the island.

- 3.8 The labour market in all parts of the Corridor is very buoyant. Unemployment rates are between 3% and 4%, close to or at historical lows. This is due to recent strong growth in employment numbers, so that around 1 million residents are currently in work. An even larger number of jobs are located on the Corridor, pulling in numbers of commuters, particularly to Belfast and Dublin at either end.
- 3.9 There is a different story for the economically inactive, those not participating in the labour market due to ill health, caring duties or other reasons. Across the Corridor there are pockets of high levels of inactivity, particularly in Belfast, Dublin, ABC and NMD. This poses the question of how to improve employability opportunities for up to a quarter of residents in some places.
- 3.10 More than a third (34%) of residents of the Corridor have educational attainments greater than NVQ Level 4, ahead of other parts of the island. Although this share varies across the corridor and within individual Council areas, the overall picture is of a well-educated and available population.
- 3.11 At present, more than 5% of the million plus jobs on the Corridor are filled by commuters onto the Corridor from other parts of the island, often with an even higher skills profile than its residents. There is a significant challenge for addressing the skills gaps in the hidden pockets along the corridor.
- 3.12 The demand for skills is partly a result of a strong inward investment pipeline in recent years. This has been especially the case in Belfast, Dublin, Louth and, to a lesser extent, Meath. These location choices are supported by the recent results from FDI Intelligence which finds that the two cities feature prominently among the cities of choice globally. Dublin is No.1 among the 'large cities' locations, while Belfast is No.2 among 'mid-sized and small cities'. Both cities score highest on what is called 'business friendliness', but less so on connectivity, suggesting one challenge to future potential. There is considerable synergy in the core growth sector strengths along the corridor and these are often linked to University Centres of Excellence.

Future prospects for the Eastern Economic Corridor

- 3.13 The outlook to 2040 is that, on current trends, population growth will continue, reaching 2.5 million people.

This projection, based on both natural increase and inward migration, means a continuation of the slow shift towards a third of the island's population living on the Corridor. All cohorts of the population will increase with working age population providing a strong labour force into the future. One pattern to note is that there will continue to be stronger demographic trends in the southern part of the Corridor, when compared to the northern section. Clearly, Belfast City Council has already identified the need to grow the city's population as part of the Belfast Agenda and this focus on increasing the city's population will be important in the context of the corridor development.

- 3.14 The current employment growth is set to continue, perhaps at a lower rate, out to 2040 with an additional 325,000 jobs added. At nearly 1.3 million jobs on the Corridor, this will be a 35% share of the island's jobs and will see the position of near full employment and inward commuting continue.
- 3.15 A tight labour market also points to strong demand for skills to continue. Between expansion demand and replacement demand (as existing jobs continue to be filled) there may be an annual net requirement of 30-40,000 people along the Corridor. Much of the demand will be in the professional occupations, such as science & technology professionals, health professionals and business & service professionals. This points to the need to create a higher educational attainment profile than exists at present in the Corridor with a focus on addressing skills inequalities. The two main cities will continue to attract the majority of these roles. While this creates employment opportunities, there is a need for continued investment in specific sectoral skills at higher levels. In order to promote inclusive growth, there is a need to consider how we can develop pathways to help those without the necessary skills to move into work in this field.

Strengths of the Corridor and Sector Priorities

- 3.16 The report identifies the sectoral concentrations and strengths in the Corridor, particularly across tradeable services (including ICT, Professional Services and Financial Services), as well as high tech Manufacturing and Construction.
- 3.17 Another sector that is important in every Council area is tourism with 68,000 jobs across the Corridor. Over 10 million trips were made in the Corridor in 2017, with access onto the island being especially beneficial. A high proportion of these numbers are in Belfast and Dublin.

Approach

3.18 Following the conclusion of the initial research piece, the senior council officials have continued to meet to consider how to move forward. At a recent meeting, the following approach was agreed:

- i. the need to undertake a detailed economic modelling exercise to provide a benchmark economic forecast for the corridor in the medium to long term. This will take account of the critical success factor from other economically successful corridors, namely a clear articulation of the vision and the additional benefits that can be accrued by undertaking this more collaborative approach to economic development;**
- ii. the need to consider alternative forecasts assuming various levels of investment in priority sectors. These forecasts will indicate the impact of any investment and provide a robust business case for funding projects along the corridor. This assessment will be critical for any engagement with government agencies on either side of the corridor, particularly where there is to be a funding 'ask' of those agencies. There is likely to be a need to develop full business cases for some of the priority projects that have the potential to lever investment from government partners;**
- iii. the priority sectors for economic collaboration are likely to include research and innovation, tourism, infrastructure and agri-food. These will be underpinned by consideration of skills development and population health;**
- iv. the collation of potential investment projects in the area of Research and Innovation to explore potential opportunities for collaboration. It is envisaged that this exercise will be rolled out across other themes such as infrastructure, tourism and health. This will educate a more detailed examination of agreed projects for inclusion in a business case for the selected joint investment proposals; and**
- v. the need to focus on how to give some focus and direction to the ongoing engagement – there is a sense that the partners need to put some 'meat on the bones' of the discussions to date and focus**

much more significantly on stakeholder engagement to build wider support for the economic corridor proposal. Partners agreed a framework for collaboration based on the areas identified above and committed to taking a collective approach to moving forward.

3.19 Financial and Resource Implications

The activities outlined within this report will be resourced from the 2019/20 Economic Development budget agreed by this Committee on 6th March, 2019.

3.20 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The Economic Development unit is currently undertaking a process of equality screening on the overall work programme, this will ensure consideration is given to equality and good relation impacts throughout the delivery of each project.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and:

- i. agreed that officers inform the other participating councils of the Committee’s request for consideration to be given to including good growth, inclusive growth, housing, just transition and a reduced/zero carbon approach within the priority sectors referred to within paragraph 3.18 (iii) of the report;
- ii. agreed that information on the good growth index score for Belfast and for the other regions along the corridor be submitted to a future meeting;
- iii. noted that the conference which had been scheduled for February 2019 to highlight co-operation opportunities along the corridor would now be delivered as part of an overall work plan; and
- iv. agreed that the pre-feasibility study on the potential Belfast - Dublin fast rail link, which had been presented to the Committee on 9th January, be circulated to Members.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

Improving City Centre Connections

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 This report provides an update on (i) the City Centre Connectivity Study (CCCS), co-commissioned with the Department for Communities and the Department for**

Infrastructure, including the proposed process and engagement to develop the City centre Future Vision, and (ii) on the emerging work programme with DfC in relation to civic spaces.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the appointment of the Jacobs consultancy team to carry out the CCCS and develop the future vision for Belfast city centre. This will include examining models of pedestrianisation and other initiatives in a way which facilitates the development of the city centre, enabling both pedestrian enjoyment and public transport access while ensuring a vibrant and inclusive space for the future city centre;**
- ii. agree to develop communication and awareness raising programme that builds interest and discussion in the city about the future shape and functions of the city centre;**
- iii. agree to progress the exploratory work to determine the impact of the proposed transfer of civic spaces from DfC to the Council;**
- iv. agree to the Jacobs Consultancy team presenting the draft Future Vision to the Committee in February, 2020.**

3.0 Main Report

City Centre Connectivity Study

3.1 The Belfast Agenda outlines the City's ambition to promote the development of sustainable transport and includes promoting walking and cycling. The support, and concept, of sustainable place-making in the city reflects one of the key policies in the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), which seeks to create a green, walkable, cycable city centre. It specifically references the lack of green space and tree-lined streets, and identifies the need for rebalancing the scales between tarmac and soft landscaping and recognises that there is no provision for children in the city centre.

3.2 As outlined at the City Growth and Regeneration Committee meeting in June, the Council, the Department for Communities and the Department for Infrastructure have agreed to jointly commission a study to examine how the City Centre could

develop in a way that is people-focused, inclusive and welcoming for all. The focus of the study is on place-making and will include an examination of models of pedestrianisation and other initiatives, which would facilitate the development of the City Centre, enabling both pedestrian enjoyment and sustainable access. The area of focus for the study will be the primary retail core of the city centre but it will also address the connectivity issues between the city centre and adjacent communities and key connectivity routes. A joint, BCC, DfC and DfI press release was issued following the meeting that reiterated the agreed commitment to undertaking an holistic and ambitious study of the city centre. Coupled with the recent council declaration of a Climate Emergency the study provides an opportunity to explore issues and solutions within, and around the city centre, and is in line with the Air Quality Action Plan and emerging Resilience Strategy.

- 3.3 The study will be delivered through a staged approach that provides analysis, addresses future growth and sets out a vision for the city centre based on stakeholder engagement and analysis. The Terms of Reference and the Specification were agreed by BCC, DfC and DfI and an open tender for Phase 1 of the study was issued on 23 August and closed on 13 September. Jacobs was successful in the tender and are proactively working with officers and departmental officials to develop the draft Future Vision for the city centre.
- 3.4 Phase 1 Sept – Dec 2019: Within this initial Phase there are three elements of work that will result in the shared Vision for the city centre. Step one, *Understanding Best Practice* will inform the debate on how Belfast could address some of the current issues through analysis of established benefits and dis-benefits of approaches that other cities with similar characteristics have implemented to transform their city centre. Step two, *Understanding Belfast City Centre*, will look at how the city centre functions to ensure a balance between the different requirements and needs of users. This section will establish a baseline in terms of access, city centre servicing, deliveries, movement and footfall, modes of transport and land use. Step 2 will also explore the changing nature of the city centre, including mapping out the emerging and built / under-construction developments that will deliver the diversification of the city centre including enhanced tourism, city centre living, working, leisure and open and green infrastructure. Building on this information and best practice, the final step will be to develop an ambitious vision of how people could better use the spaces where they live, work and play.

- 3.5 **Phase 2 April 2020:** Develop an action plan to provide options based on the delivery of the Future Vision. The action plan and options will be used to inform discussions with key city partners, statutory authorities and city leaders, and during the proposed public consultation in Phase 3.
- 3.6 **Phase 3 Apr – Sept 2020:** Carry out a 12 week, city-wide public consultation on the options to deliver the Future Vision and the emerging recommendations for action. This consultation will include a range of public events and engagement, detailed engagement with existing city centre residents and key focus groups prior to finalisation of the Future Vision and delivery plan.

Stakeholder Engagement Phase 1

- 3.7 To develop the draft Future Vision stakeholder engagement across sectors and in particular, with adjacent city centre communities, is critical to the success of the scale and ambition of this project and will take place during each phase of the project. The BCC/DfC/Dfl Steering Group meets regularly and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan is currently under-development with the following engagement proposed to inform the draft Future Vision:
- One to one engagement with key stakeholders, statutory authorities, delivery partners and focus groups;
 - A Visioning Workshop will take place in November with key civic partners and organisations to establish an agreed ambition for the Future Vision;
 - A briefing workshop will be held with Members in November to provide an update on the engagement, to test the emerging ambition and to input and contribute to the draft Future Vision
 - A programme of public engagement and communications focused on maintaining the awareness of the study and to provide the public with an opportunity to contribute the development of the draft Future Vision.
- 3.8 Members will be briefed further following the finalisation of the draft Future Vision and agreement sought prior to advancing to the next stage of the study.

Transfer of Civic Spaces

- 3.9 In 2015, a number of DfC owned Civic Open Spaces were scheduled to be transferred to BCC as part of Local Government Reform. Among these publicly-owned assets

DfC have focused on ownership of a number of civic open spaces in the city centre, including Custom House Square, Bank Sq., Blackstaff Sq., Cotton Court, Donegall Quay, Hanover Quay and Writer's Sq. A key theme of the City Centre Regeneration Task Force theme of 'Re-imagining and Diversification' of the city centre and making better use of publicly-owned assets.

- 3.10 DfC has written seeking the Council's view on whether there would be agreement in principle to transferring these particular civic open spaces into Council ownership. DfC have had preliminary discussions with the Strategic Investment Board to explore viability of transferring ownership of these civic spaces to the Council and have identified a number of issues for further consideration and to establish lifecycle costs, potential liabilities, valuations and any conditions on transfer.
- 3.11 A number of workshops have been held with DfC/BCC/SIB to progress agreement around technical due diligence and procurement of condition surveys. These surveys will be a joint commission, but fully funded by DfC, to provide visibility around cost associated with bringing the spaces up to a 'compliant' standard and also to look at whole life budgeting on enhanced specifications. SIB have provide a draft specification for a pilot survey that would test the potential transfer methodology to be adopted. A future progress report will be presented to Committee in the coming months.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 3.12 There are no negative Equality, Good Relation or Rural Needs implications at this point. The Council's Equality and Diversity Officer will be consulted during any future consultation process and any proposed approach will be subject to the Council's screening requirements to ensure that Equality and Good Relations implications and Rural Needs are fully considered.

Finance and Resource Implications

- 3.13 The costs for the proposed publicity and awareness rising will be approximately £20,000 and will be met within current budget."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that the Department for Communities be made aware of its concerns regarding the proposal to replace the granite carriageway in Queen's Square with a standard road construction, in the context of the transfer of assets, pedestrianisation and the wider connectivity study.

City Centre Revitalisation Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of the Revitalisation Programme and provide a quarterly update on the work of the City Centre Regeneration Task Force.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- i. the progress on the City Revitalisation Programme;**
- ii. the progress to date on the priority areas of the City Centre Regeneration Task Force; and**
- iii. the established governance structures and procedures to deliver the City Centre Regeneration Task Force Action Plan as business as usual.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 City Revitalisation Programme update

Since the detailed update provided to the Committee on 7th August, officers continue to engage with key stakeholders to further develop and deliver a programme of activity to enhance the vitality and sustainability of the city centre, in the context of the budget envelopes previously agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22nd February 2019. The following sections provide an update on the programme of activity being delivered across the City Revitalisation strands including:

- Physical and Environmental Improvements
- Enhanced Animation Programme
- Marketing and Communications

Physical and Environmental Improvements

i. Pop- Up Park

3.2 Work is continuing on proposals to deliver a pop-up park to Cathedral Gardens in time for Spring 2020, along with a bid to DfC for additional funding to increase the potential scope of the works. A design team (Park Hood) has been appointed and

engagement with key stakeholders to inform design development is programmed to take place during October / November. The project is expected to be in place for a period of up to two years as a pilot project for the permanent Cathedral Gardens works.

ii. Bank Square Canopy

- 3.3 A key project for the City Revitalisation Programme was exploring the creation of an outdoor covered space for retailer-led themed events and other animation activity in Bank Square. Two pilot temporary canopy structures had been put in place during July and September, with an extensive and diverse programme of animation and events delivered attracting visitors and shoppers to spend time in the area. In response to the first pilot installation in July, feedback from the public has been generally positive. Some reservations have been expressed by local businesses regarding the management and use of the canopy, in that the space was not licensed but was positioned adjacent to a number of licensed premises. This feedback was reflected during the second installation in September, with the canopy re-positioned to the north of Bank Square to make clear its function as a public space that complements local businesses rather than an extension of the businesses themselves. In the absence of sufficient consensus among local businesses it is not considered appropriate to proceed with a permanent installation at this time, however should consensus be reached on the proposal by the businesses in the area, the council will reinvestigate and provide a report back to committee setting out the proposed way forward.

iii. City Dressing and Lighting Strategy

- 3.4 Work is underway to develop a City Lighting and Dressing Strategy, including the definition of key principles and mapping of distinct character areas within the city. A number of lighting pilots are being progressed which will trial approaches and opportunities for collaborative working to inform the development of the strategy. These include an interactive projection onto shop frontages in Castle Street, and a bespoke lighting feature in Castle Arcade. Contractors have been appointed and work is underway in both locations to secure necessary permissions. Planning applications are currently under consideration, with all locations expected to be installed during November and early December.

iv. Christmas Lighting Feature (Soda and Champ's Christmas Adventure)

- 3.5 A Christmas lighting working group was established with BCC, BCCM, BID One and Destination CQ to provide additional proposals for the Christmas Lighting offer. BCC are working with specialist contractors to provide a large projected animation programme based on a theme developed in partnership with BID One, involving a dog and cat's Christmas adventure. The animation will be presented in a series of episodes to build anticipation. The main projection onto a building frontage on Royal Avenue opposite the entrance to CastleCourt, will be accompanied by a range of activities including a family activity hub, window display(s), activity booklet and themed marketing campaign. The projection will be further enhanced through an additional projection onto Bank Buildings which will build on the theme/message of the main animation.

v. Entries and Lanes Strategy

- 3.6 The procurement of a design consultant (joint venture between Aecom and Tandem Design) is now complete for Phase 1 of the Entries Project which will include a programme of works in Castle Arcade, Crown Entry, Joys Entry, Pottinger's Entry, Coles Alley, Wellington St and Winecellar Street. Design development is now well advanced with plans being developed for surface repairs, painting, enhanced lighting, de-cluttering, and wayfinding features. Design concepts will also be developed through this commission for Jubilee Gardens, Wellington Street, High Street Entry, Sugarhouse Entry and Fountain Mews, and officers will continue to explore funding opportunities to support further delivery. Additional funding from the Department for Communities has also been confirmed to deliver the initial works.

vi. Deep Clean and Graffiti Removal

- 3.7 The cleanliness and physical appearance of the city centre was a key point from the majority of stakeholders. The City and Neighbourhood Services department are now operating a hot water washer to provide a deep underfoot clean to the public realm, and have a dedicated team working on the deep clean throughout the city centre. The initial focus for this work is on the underfoot cleaning (pavements/granite) and the gable walls. Officers are currently delivering anti-graffiti

artistic shutter wrapping in College Street as a trial and will be subject to agreement with property owners.

vii. Belfast in Bloom

- 3.8 The enhanced Belfast in Bloom programme is currently being rolled-out with additional greenery and colour being introduced across the city centre including the installation of enhanced planters, hanging baskets, flower towers and floral features along a 70-metre stretch of new pedestrian railings around Bank Buildings. A new and creative floral display feature has been installed in City Hall grounds.

Enhanced Animation Programme

- 3.9 As previously agreed by this Committee, the animation programme focused on scaling up planned animation activity in order to drive additional footfall into the city centre, particularly those parts of the city that have suffered most from a reduction in footfall since the fire at Bank Buildings. Since the August report to Committee, the key activities that have been undertaken include:

- the rollout of the Summer Music programme – involving more than 56 performances in indoor and outdoor spaces across the city centre. These events attracted more than 9,000 people in total. They included the very popular ‘Mix the City’ event which took place within City Hall grounds; and
- support to enhance Culture Night and to run the first ever Culture Day event – organisers estimate that around 85,000 people attended Culture Night with up to 35,000 coming into Belfast for the first ever Culture Day. This targeted the family audience and included programming of events all across the city centre. Feedback from participants, businesses and the event organisers has been very positive and the indications are that they will continue to build on this approach to next year, seeking to extend the appeal of the event and to continue to build its reputation in order to grow the visitors from out of state.

Marketing and Communications

- 3.10 The ‘Make it Belfast’ campaign went live on Monday 13th May, with radio advertising, followed by outdoor, digital and press advertising from w/c 20 May for six weeks. Social media ran throughout May up to the end of August to ensure an ‘always

on' approach to the campaign. There was an additional burst of advertising in late July which continued up to the end of August with further radio, outdoor, regional press, digital and programmatic display and film advertising. Supporting material including a '*Make it Belfast*' campaign tool-kit was developed for use by all stakeholders to further strengthen and add value to the campaign. This campaign is to be built upon again for the Christmas period (see below).

Proposals for Christmas 2019

- 3.11 Through engagement with partners, there has been an interest in exploring additional activity to supplement the Christmas 2019 marketing and animation plans, in order to recover some of the footfall that was lost to the city as a result of the Bank Building fire and which, traders believe, they have not been able to attract back to the city.
- 3.12 In line with the overall Revitalisation Budget approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in February 2019, Council officers have worked with partner organisations to bring forward a targeted programme of investment in the lead up to and over the Christmas period. The overall expenditure from the Revitalisation budget will be £300,000. In addition to this expenditure, partners from other organisations including Belfast One Business Improvement District (BID) and the major shopping centres will be investing significant resources in city animation at this time of year.
- 3.13 Some of the initiatives that are being planned in conjunction with other partners include:
- delivery of a music programme to enhance visitor experience (2-3 large scale events) supplemented by a wider range of smaller pop up street activity to enhance the festive atmosphere across the city centre, focusing on some key dates and busiest periods;
 - delivery of the popular Christmas Market: the market will open on 16 November (aligning with the lights switch-on) remains key for the city attracting over 1 million people last year;
 - delivery of a new lighting projection project (see above – Christmas lighting feature) alongside an engagement hub/Santa's Post Box attraction which will attract family audiences and engage children in craft workshops, storytelling etc.; and

- enhanced marketing campaign: this will build on the 'Make it Belfast' strapline (see above). Consideration will be given not only to attracting visitors from other parts of NI but also from out of state, particularly ROI – given that the currency situation is currently favourable for those in the Eurozone.

Site Hoarding

- 3.15 The Department for Infrastructure continues to engage with the Primark site management and senior management regarding the location of the site hoarding on Castle Place. The Department continues to challenge Primark to review their working practices and programming to enable restoration of the operation of Castle Place. Members will be notified of any pending changes to the current position.

City Centre Regeneration Task Force

- 3.15 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 7th November 2018, agreed to the establishment of a City Centre Regeneration Task Force, jointly chaired by Council's Chief Executive and the Head of the Civil Service. The purpose of the Regeneration Task Force (RTF) was to ensure that the appropriate leadership and procedures were put in place to effectively oversee the delivery of key priority areas to enable the achievement of the objectives of the Belfast Agenda and the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS). The work of the RTF focused on three thematic priority areas, namely:

- City Resilience – medium to long-term city centre recovery plan; city centre leadership and management, and identification of catalyst development opportunities to stimulate wider regeneration;
- Re-imagining and Diversification of City Centre Land Uses – to include focused actions around increasing inclusive city centre living; use of public land to deliver on priorities and realisation of growth ambitions; enhanced open spaces and family/leisure based activities; and
- Infrastructure and Connectivity – public realm and connectivity into and around the city centre; transport strategy and connectivity etc

- 3.16** Since November 2018, the Task Force has met five times with quarterly updates reported to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.
- 3.17** The Task Force, at its meeting on 20th September 2019, reviewed progress to date and agreed that it was now appropriate to formalise its future approach to standing down the Task Force with the emerging priorities encapsulated into business as usual within the relevant statutory authorities. A Task Force in its nature is a temporary group with a focused role. As set out in the Terms of Reference, the RTF has demonstrated a collective response and resourced targeted city centre recovery efforts, it has developed focused priorities to address medium and long-term interventions with a collective public/private sector commitment to oversee the continued delivery of these actions.
- 3.18** At its next meeting in January 2020, the RTF will formalise the establishment of the governance arrangements as outlined below to oversee the continued delivery of the action plan under the key thematic areas:

City Resilience:

- the delivery of the Revitalisation Programme following the Bank Buildings fire (see above) is well advanced with appropriate systems and governance in place to complete the work-strands;
- the Joint Regeneration Group (JRG), co-chaired by the Council's Director of City Regeneration and Development and DFC's Belfast Regeneration Director will assess the progress of the agreed action plan. The progress around the action plan will be reported through the CG&R committee and the relevant departmental governance structures;
- the City Centre Reference Group is now established to provide a public/private forum to provide input and guidance to the work of the JRG; and
- the review of the BCCRIS document is complete with renewed focus established on inclusive residential and infrastructure/connectivity issues in the city centre and aligned with the City Growth and Regeneration Committee priorities as agreed in June 2019 and further discussed at the workshop in September 2019.

3.19 Re-imagining and Diversification of City Centre Land Uses:

- **The first phase of the Strategic Sites Assessment has completed the review of strategic public sector assets and appropriate governance is in place to deliver this phase and subsequent phases of the project, subject to City Growth and Regeneration Committee approval;**
- **Procedures are in place to address overcoming the obstacles to the city centre housing supply including the establishment of a city centre waiting list, piloting and testing mixed tenure development, procurement issues and the advancement of additional products for affordable housing;**
- **Procedures are in place for the review of non-domestic rates and will be overseen by the Department of Finance; and**
- **The delivery of Cathedral Gardens will be advanced to deliver enhanced open spaces and additional locations are being explored.**

3.20 Infrastructure and Connectivity:

- **Work is underway to assess the future connectivity and pedestrianisation of the city centre, with established governance across the statutory authorities for planning (BCC), regeneration (DfC) and infrastructure (DfI) to bring forward the Belfast Future Vision;**
- **Procedures are in place to develop the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan in advance of Ministerial approval; and**
- **The design development of Streets Ahead 5 is being advanced in tandem with the design for BRT Phase 2, the first phase of the entries project is expected to complete in March 2020, and procedures are established to deliver a public realm catalyst projects programme of works.**

3.21 The priority focused areas within the action plan align with the priorities of this Committee, as agreed in June, 2019, and further discussed at the workshop on 25th September, 2019. Members will therefore continue to be updated in relation to progress at future meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

3.22 Financial and Resource Implications

It is intended that the Task Force will provide a collaborative public sector approach in terms of how we collectively maximise our investment and efforts to revitalise the city centre. Staff time will be required to support the Task Force, as well as the Joint Regeneration Working Group.

3.23 All items of expenditure set out above are being delivered within the budget that was approved for the Revitalisation programme at the 22 February meeting of the SP&R Committee.

3.24 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report. The Council's Equality and Diversity Officers will be consulted on any future changes to strategies or plans that are currently in place."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Tourism, Events and International Relations

Update on Cruise Ship Business in Belfast

The Committee was informed that Mr. G. Lennon, Chief Executive, and Ms. M. J. McCanny, Director of Visitor Servicing, Visit Belfast, were in attendance in order to provide an update on the cruise ship business in Belfast and they were welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Lennon informed the Committee that Belfast was now ranked second on the island of Ireland and third in the British Isles in terms of numbers of cruise visitors. He referred to the marked increase in the number of cruise ships visiting the City since 2014 and the associated benefits and highlighted the recent investment by Belfast Harbour and Tourism NI in a new temporary quayside cruise hub, which had opened on 29th May and was being managed by Visit Belfast.

Ms. McCanny provided an analysis of the 2019 cruise season, including cruise lines, inaugural calls, overnight stays, Sunday arrivals and the country of origin of visitors and confirmed that Visit Belfast was awaiting information on cruise visitor activity. She provided also information on the 2020 cruise season and on future projections and concluded by outlining the extent of Visit Belfast's development and marketing initiatives.

Mr. Lennon and Ms. McCanny then addressed a number of issues which had been raised by the Members and were thanked by the Chairperson.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the information which had been provided;

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- ii. noted that Visit Belfast would, once finalised, forward information on cruise visitor activity for each of the past three cruise seasons; and
- iii. agreed that Visit Belfast include within its next presentation any available information on the environmental impact of cruise ships visiting the City.

Update on International Relations

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 the Committee with a six month update on the delivery of the International Relations Framework

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to note the progress of the Council’s International Relations work for the period April – October 2019, as well as the proposed programme of activity for the rest of the financial year.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 In March 2019, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the International Relations Plan for the financial year 2019/2020. This report provides an update on the high-level outputs over the last six months, focusing on activity with our Sister Cities of Boston, Nashville and Shenyang, as well as additional international delivery. It also sets out some of the priority areas of work for the coming six months.

3.2 Members will be aware that a key role for the Council is to act as an enabler to develop linkages and relationships for other partners that will bear fruit in terms of economic return for those organisations and for the city as a whole. As a result, the international relations activity focuses on areas identified as having the greatest potential for return, principally educational linkages, business linkages and civic/political connections.

3.3 The report sets out the key activities with each of the Sister Cities (Boston, Nashville and Shenyang) over the last six

months, as well as some planned activity until the end of the financial year.

Boston

3.4 Key activities with Boston partners over the last six months include:

3.5 **Education**

- Facilitation of an inward visit led by the British American Business Council of New England (BABCNE) in April 2019. This comprised mainly of academic leaders and they engaged in a series of meetings including:
 - discussions around the development of a strategic partnership between Ulster University and UMASS (the only public university in the State of Massachusetts) focussing on nursing and entrepreneurship;
 - discussions with QUB and UMASS on cooperation around QUB-led Summer Schools on Conflict Resolution;
 - discussions with Ulster University and UMASS on developing a 'Go Boston' programme for 100 Ulster University students based on the successful 'Go Philly' model for student experience and industry placements; and
 - early discussions between the NOW Group and UMASS on the roll-out of the JAM Card
- The Council facilitated a return visit in October 2019 by the Head of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Massachusetts (AICUM). The purpose of this visit was to explore a range of potential leads with both universities and Belfast Metropolitan College in order to support additional exchanges and to develop joint educational programmes. This work is ongoing; and
- The Council supported programming for three Fulbright Scholars who spent six months in Belfast at QUB from January – June 2019. One of these has led to the potential for theatre and poet links with the Harvard Poets' Theatre Boston and the Lyric and MAC theatres in Belfast. This work is ongoing.

3.6 Business

- Progress to Year 2 of the Way to Scale programme with Boston is under way with plans for 10 Belfast companies to travel to Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in January 2020, followed by an intensive business mentoring programme in Boston in March 2020. The Boston Sister Cities network is supporting this programme by providing access for the companies to key individuals and organisations within the city to complement the planned business engagement programme
- Officers continue to provide links for individual businesses wishing to explore partnerships or develop linkages with Boston-based companies. As part of this work, we also work closely with Invest NI in Boston.

3.7 Civic / Political

- The Council, led by the Lord Mayor, visited Boston from 23rd – 26th September 2019 to undertake a series of meetings. This included a meeting with Mayor Walsh to recognise the fifth year of our Sister City partnership between the two cities. It also included meetings with Boston-based companies that have investment locations in Belfast as well as visits to social projects addressing issues such as drug and alcohol dependence and projects supporting the development of cooperatives.

3.8 Youth / Culture / Sport

- The Council facilitated the second Boston Youth Empowerment programme exchange to the city. This partnership continues to develop between the Boston programme and Active Communities Network Belfast to encourage youth development and employability through sport
- The Council is a key funder of the Friendship Four Ice Hockey tournament, taking place in Belfast from 29-30 November 2019. The teams are Colgate, Northeastern, Princeton and University of New Hampshire. The project also encompasses a month-long Science and Discovery programme to promote access opportunities in the sector as well as workshops to encourage female participation in sport and science industries. The second Friendship Series will take

place from 4-5 January 2020 and includes Quinnipiac University and Merrimack College. This competition enables female sportswomen the opportunity to play in an international competition. This year Mayor Walsh will attend the November tournament and will undertake a programme of keynote speeches and meetings to underline Boston's continued support for the Sister City partnership

- Through the Council connections, Cinemagic, along with film industry professionals, produced a film that was completely written and directed by disadvantaged young people from Belfast and Boston. The film was showcased to over 500 industry professionals in Los Angeles. Further work around filmmaking and creative industries involving young people from both cities is currently being planned.

3.9 Nashville

Key activities with Nashville over the last six months include:

3.10 Business

- Within the framework of the Nashville in Belfast programme which took place from 12th – 16th June 2019, a delegation of 43 people from Nashville visited Belfast for a week. This included a number of new political representatives that had not previously been part of the civic engagement between the cities. The Nashville partners themselves invested up to \$100,000 on the programme and there are ongoing collaborations, particularly within the hospitality sector.

3.11 Education

- Belfast Metropolitan College supported a follow-up visit by the Tennessee Board of Regents (the umbrella body for all public community colleges and technical colleges in the state). The delegation of 16 College Vice-Presidents represented 60 educational institutions. The purpose of the visit was to exploring opportunities for expanding their study abroad opportunities to include Belfast partnerships. Work is still ongoing to work on the detail of this proposal
- Other schools and university links are continuing and Council officers meet regularly with the institutions to

understand how the city linkages can support their further development

- A project between the Belfast Youth Forum and the Mayor's Forum-Overton High School connecting young people in both cities is progressing and embarking on the development of podcasts highlighting pertinent issues affecting their age group.

3.12 Culture

The second Nashville in Belfast programme included 18 events over the four-day period. The programme's objective was to promote the Council's longest standing Sister City relationship. Local stakeholders were crucial to the project's development. Independent research into the collective economic impact of the programme has been estimated at more than £800,000.

3.13 Shenyang

Key activities with Shenyang since April this year include:

3.14 Education

- Both Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University continue to strengthen their work in Shenyang, and Belfast City Council hosted their respective summer schools in City Hall, providing opportunities to meet with the Lord Mayor and other councillors
- The Lord Mayor provided a Sister City video message to the China Queen's College (CQC) in Shenyang to welcome the fresher students and congratulate the graduates. He also welcomed the first cohort of 12 postgraduate CQC students to City Hall
- The Council hosted a delegation of Chinese vocational colleges led by Colleges NI to secure training contacts and partnerships. This work is in its final negotiation stages.

3.15 Business

- Plans for a November 2019 Innovation Mission to be led by the NI Executive Office and Invest NI have been deferred to Q4 2019/20 to allow for a more targeted recruitment of NI companies. The Lord Mayor will accompany the mission and lead the programme in

Shenyang in partnership with Mayor Youwei. This was previously agreed by this Committee.

- The Council connected two local companies to the Chinese Consulate office in Belfast and one of these is now opening a showroom in Shanghai and has integrated into the NI diaspora in China.
- The Council was a key stakeholder in hosting a Consulate-led business, tourism and media leaders mission from London in June 2019. The delegates were senior representatives from Chinese HQs in London who were given a detailed overview of business and FDI & capital investment opportunities in Belfast. There was extensive media coverage of the visit on mainstream and social media in China. Follow up work is ongoing to assess the impact and potential additional opportunities.

3.16 Culture

- The Council worked with the Consulate on a significant programme of events in September-October 2019, to celebrate the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival. The programme, led by Consul General Zhang and the NI Executive Office, delivered 6 large events to mark a number of anniversaries including 70 years of the creation of the People's Republic of China, 65 years of China-UK relations and 5 years since the establishment of the Chinese Consulate in Belfast.
- The Council is working with Chinese Stakeholders to prepare for Chinese New Year celebrations and directly supporting two of these in Belfast.

3.17 Tourism

The Council contributed to the research being driven by Tourism NI and the sector to develop a NI China Tourism Strategy and Action Plan. This work acknowledges the increasing volume of Chinese tourists visiting Belfast and the need to ensure that local businesses are 'China Ready' and attuned to the expectations of the visitors.

3.18 Wider Civic Engagement

Principally using the offices of the Lord Mayor as well as capitalising on the work of our business and tourism partners, the council team has hosted a number of inward visits over

this period. These have focused on the economic and investment messaging, and have included opportunities for partnerships with local businesses; potential new FDI investments and cultural/educational partnerships between Belfast-based organisations and those in the relevant locations. One of the most significant of these over the period was the hosting of the second annual City Hall Welcome for 500 international students beginning their overseas study in the city which took place at the end of September 2019. This type of engagement is particularly welcomed by our education partners.

3.18 Priority areas of work until the end of the financial year include:

- **hosting the visit to Belfast by the Mayor of Boston from 27-30 November. This visit coincides with the Friendship Four ice hockey tournament and also a business and academic mission from the Boston Irish Business Association (BIBA). Details of the attendees have not yet been confirmed but, subject to their relevance and areas of interest, we will work with our partner organisations to develop appropriate meetings and engagements;**
- **supporting the delivery of the Way to Scale programme (see additional information above), including the two Boston-based elements taking place in January and March 2020;**
- **Council officers are presently working with Invest NI (including the in-market contact point) to explore the potential of undertaking a small business-focused outward mission to Nashville early in the new calendar year. QUB, UU and the Belfast Chamber have expressed an interest in joining the City Council on this visit, subject to seeing the detail of the proposed programme;**
- **engaging with the NI Executive Office and Invest NI to scope out the detail of the deferred NI Innovation Business Mission to China. Approval has already been given for the participation of the Lord Mayor and two officers to accompany this mission. Belfast City Council will lead the programming for the Shenyang strand of the four city programme;**
- **the Council will engage with Shenyang City Council to plan an inward business and academic mission before the end of the financial year; and**

- the Council will also work with the NI Executive Office to participate in the re-scheduled UK China Regional Leaders Summit in 2020 which is to take place in Edinburgh. Approval has already been given for the participation of the Lord Mayor and one officer in this programme.

3.20 Moving Forward

While there is a substantial volume of activity under way, officers are currently undertaking a mid-term review of the International Relations Framework 2016-2021. This will review the work undertaken to date and consider how to maximise the impact of our investment, taking account of the whole range of international development, investment and promotion activity in which the council is engaged. A report on the proposed priorities for the next phase of this activity will be brought back to a future meeting of this committee.

3.21 Financial and Resource Implications

No specific financial implications. The activity undertaken as part of this International Relations Framework was approved by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 6th March 2019.

3.22 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications attached to this report.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation and agreed that the mid-term review of the International Relations Framework 2016 – 2021 referred to within the report should examine also the potential for developing relationships with cities in Europe, strengthening links with Sister Cities International and hosting a Sister Cities Europe conference in the City.

Cultural Strategy – Update on International Events

The Director of Development submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on planned and possible future commitments with regard to International Events.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the requests for funding;
- ii. note that the resources to support these requests are not available within the existing Departmental budgets; and
- iii. agree to refer any agreed funding requirement to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, with a request to give priority to these requests when considering in year re-allocations.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Background

Members will be aware that, at the special meeting of the Committee in August, the new ten-year cultural strategy for Belfast, *A City Imagining 2020-30* was agreed. *A City Imagining* sets out a long-term commitment to facilitating a new integrated phase of culture-led development for Belfast. The strategy brings together the culture, events and tourism functions within Council as well as identifying areas of cross-departmental working and opportunities for collaboration with external partners to support the Belfast Agenda.

- 3.2** In line with the Cultural Strategy, there is an intention to create strong international connectivity that supports the delivery of the Belfast Agenda and is in keeping with the priority themes and areas of focus. As part of this process, the Council has made commitments to support a number of internationally/nationally competitive events which move to various cities. These events were not considered as part of the Cultural Strategy Funding proposal given the high level of uncertainty as to whether they would actually progress beyond bid stage and ultimately be successful in those processes. These include:

3.3 2021 UEFA Super Cup (winners of the 2021 UEFA Champions League versus winners of the 2021 UEFA Europa League)

In January 2019, the Committee agreed to provide support for the Irish Football Association's bid to host the 2021 UEFA Super Cup. It was further agreed that a report was to be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee to update members on progress, including details on the financial implications of hosting the event. Members will be aware that, in early October 2019, it was announced that Belfast has been successful in securing the 2021 UEFA Super Cup event.

The requested contribution from Council is £200,000. This funding would need to be in place for the start of the 2021/2022 financial year.

3.4 2021 FIA World Rally Championship

In January 2019, the Committee agreed to provide support to the Circuit of Ireland Rally in their bid to stage this event. Initially the event was to be staged in 2020 but the organisers have requested that this is postponed. Members should note that Tourism NI are still evaluating this event, therefore there is no certainty on the event being staged or in which year it may take place. An update will be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee to update members on progress. No financial contribution has been requested nor agreed.

3.5 Additional Requests

In addition to these commitments which had been previously reported to Committee, there has been a further request to Council to make a financial contribution to the 2020 UEFA Men's Under 19 Euro Championship.

3.6 2020 UEFA Men's under 19 Euro Championship

The Irish Football Association (IFA) has engaged with the Council to ask for assistance in staging the 2020 UEFA Under 19 Men's Euro Championship. The costs associated with hosting the event are likely to be in the region of £2million and the IFA has asked the Council to make a contribution of £150,000 towards the overall costs. The IFA estimates that the tournament will have a £9 million direct economic benefit on the host region, £6.75m for Belfast and £2.25m for surrounding region, with main expenditure on accommodation and participant attendance. Council officers were not involved in the bidding process and, as a result, there has not been any engagement to identify where the Council's possible support could be drawn from and hence no financial planning. Given the lack of early engagement and absence of identified finance, it is recommended that this is not considered as part of any potential funding allocation from the Council towards this event. This event will happen irrespective of Council intervention or support.

3.7 It is however recommended that the Committee should consider providing in-kind support to the IFA in terms of training facilities etc. for visiting teams.

3.8 Financial and Resource Implications

The financial support required is as follows:

- **2021 UEFA Super Cup £200,000**
- **should the Committee agree, in principle, to fund the 2021 UEFA Under 19 Men’s Euro Championship there will be further financial support of £150,000 required. (It has been recommended that this is not considered for funding, given the lack of involvement and engagement around the bid)**

3.9 No other budgets exist to fund these international events and it is recommended that the Committee agrees to refer any financial support agreed to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to give priority to the funding of the international events when considering any in-year re-allocations.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

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.”

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it give priority, when considering any in-year allocations, to providing funding of £200,000 towards the hosting in the City of the 2021 UEFA Super Cup event;
- ii. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining the potential benefits to local communities and to the City generally of hosting the 2021 UEFA Super Cup event;
- iii. agreed not to recommend that funding be allocated towards the hosting of the 2020 UEFA Men’s Under-19 Euro Championships but to provide in-kind support to the Irish Football Association through, for example, the provision of training facilities; and
- iv. noted that information on a potential FIA World Rally Championship event in 2021 would be provided as further details emerged.

Strategic and Operational Issues

Update on "Belfast Canvas" Public Art Pilot Project

The Director of Development reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 27th March, it had agreed to support a pilot public art project entitled "Belfast Canvas".

He reported that the project, which was based upon a similar initiative being delivered in Dublin, focused upon enhancing utility boxes within the City's retail core and the Cathedral Quarter. To date, eighteen boxes had been painted by professional street artists. The second phase of the pilot project would involve artists engaging in the coming weeks with up to six community groups across the City to develop designs for replication on a further twenty-two boxes.

He reminded the Committee that it had discussed also the possibility of delivering a second phase of the project, which could potentially focus upon the Belfast Rapid Transit route and involve communities from the east and the west of the City working alongside the professional artists in the design process. Officers were currently assessing that proposal and would submit to a future meeting a report providing further details around the engagement process and how the project might align with other activities taking place in these areas for consideration by the Committee.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 13th November, 2019

MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor S. Baker (Chairperson);
The High Sherriff, Alderman Sandford;
Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey; and
Councillors Bunting, Donnelly, Ferguson, Groves,
Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee,
Magennis, McAteer, Smyth and Whyte.
- In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;
Ms N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Ms. D. Kiley, Barrister;
Mr. J. Cunningham, Regulatory Services Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Howard and Hutchinson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Committee Schedule 2020

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for 2020:

- Wednesday, 22nd January;
- Wednesday 19th February;
- Wednesday, 18th March;
- Wednesday, 15th April;
- Wednesday, 20th May;
- Wednesday, 17th June;
- Wednesday, 19th August;
- Wednesday, 16th September;

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- Wednesday, 14th October;
- Wednesday, 18th November; and
- Wednesday, 16th December.

All meetings to commence at 5.00 p.m.

Delegated Matters

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

Applications Approved under Delegated Authority

The Committee noted a list of licences and permits which had been issued under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

**Application for the Grant of an Amusement Permit for Onassis Amusements,
25-41 Botanic Avenue**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To reconsider an application from Hazeldene Enterprises Limited, for the grant of an Amusement Permit under the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.**

Premises and Location	Applicant
Onassis Amusements 2 nd Floor 25-41 Botanic Avenue Belfast, BT7 1JG	Hazeldene Enterprises Ltd. 6 The Willows Magherafelt BT54 5RH

- 1.2 Members are advised that an Amusement Permit was granted for Onassis Amusements at your meeting on 6 October 2014.**
- 1.3 Subsequently, Oasis Retail Services Limited, an objector to the grant of the amusement permit, sought leave to apply for Judicial Review in respect of the decision of the Council to grant the permit. The Court of Appeal decision, delivered on 24 September 2018, resulted in the quashing of the decision of the Council to grant a permit to Hazeldene Enterprises Limited for premises at Botanic Avenue.**
- 1.4 The effect of the Judgement of the Court of Appeal to quash the decision is that the Licensing Committee must now consider the application afresh and in light of the Judgement.**

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- 1.5 Mr John Gerard Burns is the applicant on behalf of Hazeldene Enterprises Limited.**
- 1.6 A location map is attached as Appendix 1 (copy available [here](#)).**
- 2.0 Recommendations**
- 2.1 The current policy, dictated by the governing Order, is that the Committee, in considering the application for the Grant of an Amusement Permit, shall have regard to:**
- a) The fitness of the applicant to hold a Permit having regard to his character, reputation and financial standing,**
 - b) The fitness of any other person by whom the business is to be carried on under the Permit would be managed, or for whose benefit that business would be carried on,**
 - c) Representation, if any, from the sub-divisional commander of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in whose sub-division the premises are situated, and**
 - d) Representation, if any, as a result of the public notices of advertisement.**
- 2.2 You are then required to make a decision based on the following options set out under the Order. You must refuse the application unless satisfied that:**
- a) The applicant is a fit person to hold an Amusement Permit; and**
 - b) The applicant will not allow the business proposed to be carried on under the Amusement Permit to be managed by, or carried on for the benefit of, a person other than the applicant who would himself be refused the grant of an Amusement Permit.**
- 2.3 Thereafter:-**
- 1. You may refuse the application after hearing any representations from third parties, or**
 - 2. You may grant the application, subject to the mandatory condition that the premises are not to be used for an unlawful purpose or as a resort of persons of known bad character, and**
- 2.4 In the case of premises, that have machines with the maximum cash prize of £25, where admission is restricted to persons aged 18 or over that –**
- no persons under 18 are admitted to the premises; and**

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- at any entrance to, and inside any such premises there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access to the premises is prohibited to persons aged under 18, and in addition
3. You may also grant the application subject to discretionary conditions outlined in the Order relating to the illumination of the premises, advertising of, and window displays on the premises and the display of information notices.
- 2.5 Should you be of a mind to refuse the application for the grant of an Amusement Permit or grant the Permit subject to any discretionary conditions you are required to advise the applicant of your intention to do so. In this case you must afford the applicant the opportunity to make representations at a specified Licensing Committee meeting on the matter before making a final determination of the application.
- 2.6 If, subsequent to hearing the applicant, you refuse the application for the Grant of an Amusement Permit or decide to grant the application subject to discretionary conditions the applicant may appeal that decision to the County Court.
- 3.0 **Main report**
- Key Issues**
- 3.1 Members are reminded that the Licensing Committee is responsible for, and has full delegated authority for, determining all applications relating to the grant and provisional grant of Amusement Permits.
- Original application**
- 3.2 Objections to the Grant of this application were received and a summary of the objection is as follows:
- The suitability of the applicant; as the objector has concerns with regards to the applicants ability to run the property having due regard to the legal requirements pursuant to the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (NI) Order 1985.
 - That there is a significant number of premises/businesses with the benefit of amusement permits in the locality of the applicant's premises and as a consequence there is no need for an additional business of this nature and in this regard we are mindful of the criteria outlined in the Belfast City

Council Amusement Permit Policy which was adopted by the council on 1 May 2013.

- That consideration of the application should be deferred in light of an application for Judicial Review.

3.3 The detail of these objections and how they were considered are set out in the Minute of the meeting on 6 October 2014 which is attached at Appendix 2 (copy available [here](#)). After consideration of the application the Amusement Permit was granted.

3.4 At a meeting on 15 February 2017, Members were advised of the outcome of a Judicial Review Application by Oasis Retail Services Ltd. regarding the decision made by Belfast City Council to grant the Permit for Onassis Amusements.

Judicial Review of Council decision

3.5 The matter was heard by His Honour Judge Maguire on the 23 and 24 June 2016 with submissions provided by legal representatives acting on behalf of the applicant and the Council. At the heart of the leave applications was the challenge from Oasis Retail Services Ltd. to the Council's Amusement Permit Policy and in particular that it did not adequately assess or consider the issue of cumulative build up nor was there account taken of the effect of larger numbers of amusement arcades on the character of the neighbourhood.

3.6 Judgment was subsequently handed down on the 13 January 2017 and the court decided that, in respect of the application:

Leave to apply for judicial review was granted but the challenge was dismissed as the court was not satisfied that the council had failed to consider the issue of cumulative impact/proliferation of permits in relation to the character and amenity of the area or of the issue of the fitness of the applicant.

3.7 Whilst dismissing the challenges His Honour Judge Maguire raised some concerns regarding the current wording of the Amusement Permit Policy.

Appeal of Judicial Review decision

3.8 Further to this decision, Oasis Retail Services Limited appealed the outcome of the Judicial Review and the Court of Appeal decision, delivered on 24 September 2018, resulted in the quashing of the decision of the Council to grant a permit

to Hazeldene Enterprises Limited for premises at Botanic Avenue.

- 3.9 The Court of Appeal found that the question was not whether the Committee had ultimately in fact considered cumulative impact, rather, it was whether the Committee had wrongly interpreted its policy, i.e. that an application met criterion 2 of the Policy simply because there was no other arcade on that commercial frontage.
- 3.10 The Court of Appeal held that it was wrong to say that the cumulative impact criterion is met because there was no other arcade on the commercial frontage. They found that the Committee is required to consider the cumulative impact of the grant of requested permits on the character of the area and that in its decision, the Committee mis-interpreted the policy.
- 3.11 Committee is required to consider the cumulative impact of the grant of requested permits on the character of the area. The existence of other arcades on the commercial frontage is one, but only one, relevant factor. The assessment of cumulative impact should not however amount to an assessment of need.
- 3.12 The effect of the Judgement of the Court of Appeal to quash the decision is that the Licensing Committee must meet again to consider the application afresh and in light of the Judgement. The Council understands that the premises are continuing to trade pending the Committee's reconsideration of the application.
- 3.13 Members are advised that a review of the Policy is overdue but has been delayed pending the outcome of the judicial review proceedings.
- 3.14 After the permit was granted at Committee on 6 October 2014 it was first issued on 1 March 2017 upon completion of works to the premises. Application to renew the permit was made in January 2018 and the permit was granted under the Scheme of Delegation for the period 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019. A further application to renew the permit was received on 10 January 2019 but, further to the Court of Appeal decision, this has not been considered.

Applicant

- 3.15 For the application considered in 2014 the applicant made a request to operate the premises on Monday to Sunday from 8am to 5am the following morning. However, at the Committee meeting on 6 October 2014 the applicant agreed to operate on

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the days and hours that were in accordance with their planning permission; Monday to Saturday from 9am to 11:30pm and Sunday from 12pm to 11:30pm.

- 3.16 The applicant has since been granted amended hours by Planning and the current opening hours are now on Monday to Saturday from 9:30am to 6am the following morning and on Sunday from 12pm to 6am the following morning.
- 3.17 The permit is for a total of 227 gaming machines, all of which are to pay out a maximum all cash prize of £25. During an inspection of the premises on 1 March 2019 the actual number of machines on the premises was 154.
- 3.18 Mr Burns and/or his representatives will be available to discuss any matters relating to the grant of the permit at your meeting.

PSNI

- 3.19 The PSNI has been consulted and, as enforcement of this legislation is a police matter, we suggested that they may wish to seek their own legal advice in relation to the continued operation of the premises in these unusual circumstances.
- 3.20 In relation to the original application we enquired if there had been any action taken by PSNI regarding the surveillance material forwarded to them from both the applicant (Hazeldene) and the objector (Oasis) prior to Committee on 6 October 2014. They have confirmed that no action was taken in response to this material.
- 3.21 Since the permit was issued in 2014 the police have not recorded any complaints regarding this establishment nor intervened in any disturbances which may be attributed to that premises.
- 3.22 The PSNI, having no other relevant information to offer, has confirmed that they have no objections to the application. The police have been invited to your meeting should you have any queries in relation the application. A copy of their correspondence is attached as Appendix 3 (copy available [here](#)).

NIFRS

- 3.23 The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has been consulted in relation to the application and confirmed that they have no objections to the application.

Health, Safety, Welfare and Technical requirements

- 3.24 After the application was granted by Committee on 6 October 2014, the applicant submitted a Building Regulations application and the works undertaken have been completed satisfactorily.

Planning matters

- 3.25 A planning application was made to the Planning Service on the 24 October 2013 for a change of use (second floor only) to an Amusement Arcade. This was granted on the 25 March 2014.
- 3.26 A copy of the planning permission is attached as Appendix 4 (copy available [here](#)).
- 3.27 The Committee may be aware that in an important Court of Appeal decision in June 1999, it was confirmed that the Council, in determining applications for Amusement Permits, may take into account planning considerations but should be slow to differ from the views of the Planning Authority.
- 3.28 The Court also confirmed that the Council can take into account matters such as location, structure, character and impact on neighbours and the surrounding area.

Amusement Permit Policy

- 3.29 Members will be aware that the Council's Amusement Permit Policy was ratified at Council on 1 May 2013. It outlines those matters which may be taken into account in determining any application and indicates that each application must be assessed on its own merits.

The key Policy objectives are to:

1. Promote the retail vibrancy and regeneration of Belfast;
2. Enhance the tourism and cultural appeal of Belfast by protecting its image and built heritage;
3. Support and safeguard residential communities in Belfast;
4. Protect children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling;
5. Respect the need to prevent gambling from being a source of crime and disorder.

3.30 The Policy consists of two components which are considered below:

1. Legal requirements under the 1985 Order

3.31 Members must have regard to the legal requirements under the 1985 Order relating to:

(a) The character, reputation and financial standing of the applicant:

3.32 References for the applicant are attached as Appendix 5 (copy available [here](#)) to the report for consideration.

(b) The nature of the premises and activity proposed:

3.33 To ensure that the nature of the premises proposed is suitable for this location Members may consider how the premises are illuminated, the form of advertising and window display, and how notices are displayed on the premises. Whilst the appearance of amusement arcades is considered a planning matter, Members may still wish to be satisfied that the façade integrates with adjacent frontages.

(c) Opinions of the Police:

3.34 The Police comments have been sought and reference is made in paragraph 3.19 of the report and attached as Appendix 3 (copy available [here](#)).

(d) Submissions from the general public:

3.35 No objections have been received as a result of the public notices placed in three local newspapers. Solicitors for the original objector have been asked whether they wish to make any further representations on several occasions and have been referred to the Committee's Operating Protocol which requires objections to be made three weeks in advance of the Committee meeting so that they can be shared with the applicant. To date no further representations have been provided.

2. Assessment criteria for suitability of a location

3.36 There are five interrelated criteria set out in the Policy that should typically be considered when assessing the suitability of a location for an amusement arcade. These are detailed below as they relate to this application.

3.37 Before considering each of these criteria it should be noted at the outset that this is a grant application because of the Judgement of the Court of Appeal and the Licensing Committee must consider the application afresh and in light of the Judgement.

(a) Retail vibrancy and regeneration of Belfast:

3.38 The application premises are on the second floor of the former Arts Theatre building on Botanic Avenue. They are located outside the Retail Core of Belfast City Centre but within the limit of the City Centre, as defined in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP). They are bordered on one side by the railway line and on the other side by office use. They do not therefore break up a continuous shopping frontage.

(b) Cumulative build-up of amusement arcades in a particular location:

3.39 In the desire to promote retailing in the City Centre the Council is keen to avoid a clustering of amusement arcades at a given location. Accordingly, it restricts the number of amusement arcades on a commercial frontage to one. There are no other amusement arcades on this commercial frontage.

3.40 In assessing cumulative build up the Committee is also required to more broadly consider the issue of the proliferation of permits and the effect of same on the character and amenity of an area.

3.41 This particular location is within the City Centre but outside its Retail Core and its character is defined by a mix of mainly commercial uses, including shops, offices, eateries and licensed premises. Some of these licensed premises include other amusement arcades operating nearby within a walking distance of 200m. These include: Oasis, 14 Shaftesbury Square; Players, 22 Shaftesbury Square; and Mavericks, 28 Bradbury Place.

3.42 A map of nearby premises and existing amusement arcades in the City Centre is attached to this report at Appendix 6 (copy available [here](#)).

(c) Impact on the image and profile of Belfast:

3.43 Whilst the Arts Theatre once performed an important role in hosting plays and various acts in Northern Ireland it was vacant for a considerable period of time until becoming operational again in recent years for use as a bingo hall and more latterly as an amusement arcade. The building is not

listed and it has lawful development consent for use as a bingo hall and the incorporation of a slot machine area. Taking these considerations on board the application premises are not considered a tourism asset. The site is also not located at a recognised Gateway location into Belfast City Centre.

(d) Proximity to residential use:

3.44 (i) - predominantly residential in character

The application premises in the former Arts Theatre are located in the City Centre but outside the Retail Core, which contains the City's prime shopping streets. The premises are situated above ground-floor retail and commercial units. A mix of uses is found in this area including shops, restaurants, offices and licensed premises.

This location can therefore be viewed as a 'mixed use' area and not one that is predominantly residential in character. Residential use is mainly found in the streets leading off Botanic Avenue.

3.45 (ii) – non-residential property that is immediately adjacent to residential property

The nearest residential property to the application premises is a first floor flat at 34 Botanic Avenue. It is located approximately 19m across from the application site on the opposite side of the road and is not immediately adjacent to it.

(e) Proximity to schools, youth centres, and residential institutions for vulnerable people:

3.46 There are no schools, youth centres, or residential institutions for vulnerable people within 200m of the application premises.

Conclusion

3.47 On balance, the application premises broadly satisfy the criteria for assessing the suitability of a location for an amusement arcade as laid down in Belfast City Council's Amusement Permit Policy.

3.48 In addition to the above legal requirements and assessment criteria Members may take into account any matter which is deemed relevant. Members may also depart from the Policy where it is appropriate to do so, although it is envisaged that this should only happen in exceptional circumstances.

- 3.49 A copy of the Council's Amusement Permit Policy is attached for your information and reference as Appendix 7 (copy available [here](#)).**

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.50 There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.51 There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report."**

The Building Control Manager provided a summary of the application and highlighted that no further objection had been received from the original objector. He advised also that no objections or complaints had been received from the PSNI. During the presentation of the application, he highlighted the Land Use Map which illustrated the nearby premises and existing amusement arcades in the vicinity.

The Divisional Solicitor clarified that it was for the Committee to decide what weight should be given to the previous objector comments which had been received in 2014, together with the counter objections in relation to the fitness of the objector. She reminded the Committee that, at its previous hearing, it had not attached any weight to these counter objections and that the Court had agreed that was the correct decision.

She also advised that, in the late afternoon, she had received an email from the objector's solicitor which stated that they would not be in attendance but wished to have it placed on record that, in their view, as the applicant had continued to trade after the Court of Appeal decision, the applicant was committing an offence under the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. She advised that it was for the Committee to decide what weight to attach to this representation.

The Barrister summarised the outcome of the Judicial Review and reminded the Committee that it was to consider the application afresh. She highlighted the Court of Appeal decision on the determination of cumulative build-up, in that the Committee must consider the impact of other permits on the character and amenity of the area, but a 'Needs Test' did not apply.

The Committee was informed that a representative of the PSNI was in attendance, however, the Committee decided that it did not wish to hear from the PSNI.

The Committee was informed that Mr J. Burns, applicant, Mr. S. Beattie QC, and Mr. I. Foster, Planning Consultant, were in attendance and they were welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. Beattie advised that the information in the email from the objector was not as straight forward as what had been suggested. In 2014, the Committee granted the application and, as a matter of law, it was presumptively valid unless quashed by the

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Court. He provided an overview of the history of the amusement permit from when it had been originally granted by Committee in 2014 and highlighted the adjournment of the court dates. He suggested that the premises initially remained closed for 3 years, despite spending three quarters of a million pounds on a fit out of the premises, whilst his client awaited the outcome of the Judicial Review proceedings that had been taken by the objector. Due to the delay in resolution of the case, it had then opened in June, 2017, as the grant of consent was presumptively valid. He stated that no action had been taken to prevent the premises from opening and that remained the case today. He advised that a renewal had been granted before the Court of Appeal decision which was valid until early 2019. Once the application was quashed by the Court of Appeal, no steps had been taken in relation to the renewal or to challenge it.

He stated that, after the Court of Appeal decision, the objector wrote to the Council to request intervention and to close the premises. He suggested that Council officers had taken advice and liaised with the PSNI, in relation to the premises being open, and the police had not taken any steps to intervene.

He informed the Committee that an application for renewal was made in November, 2018 and the Council had subsequently written to the applicant advising that, if there was no objection from the PSNI or NIFRS, they could expect the renewal to be issued in February. He submitted that his client was waiting for the renewal or for the hearing to take place. He advised that 15 people were employed at the premises and, as they were of the view that there was a presumptively valid renewal in place, the decision was taken to continue trading. He advised that, had the Council or PSNI written to his client asking them to close, they would have taken action straight away. He also reminded the Committee that the PSNI had made no objection to the premises or how they have traded.

He suggested that, in relation to the Amusement Permit Policy, the consideration of cumulative impact was wider than the consideration of only the shop frontage, it considered the impact of the proposal on the street frontage and sought to prevent the build-up of a type of frontage that would destroy footfall. He advised the Committee that there was no visible link between his client's premises and the other amusement arcades in the area. He highlighted that, as the arcade was on the first floor of the premises, the application complied with both the intention and the letter of the Council's Policy, and what it was trying to achieve, namely to keep arcades of the ground floors. He pointed out that it was a matter for the Committee to assign weight and judgement to the relevance of other arcades in the area.

He also suggested that it was relevant that the premises had traded without any complaints from the PSNI or residents, or received any complaints from any trader, business or other operation to suggest that the business was having an adverse impact on trading.

He reminded Members that he had appeared before the Committee in 2014 on behalf of Kelly Burns and provided financial information regarding the fitness of the applicant.

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He also advised that the information in relation to the objector which his client had submitted in 2014 should not be given any weight and invited the Committee to disregard it.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that it was satisfied the applicant was a fit and proper person and it was content that it would resolve not to have regard to the information which had been submitted in relation to the fitness of the objector in 2014.

The Committee also agreed in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to the grant the application for the Amusement Permit in respect of Onassis Amusements, 25-41 Botanic Avenue subject to:

- (i) the premises are not to be used for an unlawful purpose or as a resort of persons of known bad character;
- (ii) no persons under the age of 18 are admitted to the premises; and
- (iii) at any entrance to, and inside the premises, there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access is prohibited to persons under the age of 18.

Final decision on competing Stationary Street Trading Licence applications for Fountain Street site.

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 18th September, it had considered three separate applications for the grant of a Stationary Street Trading Licence for a designated site in Fountain Street. The Committee, having considered the representations made in respect of the applications, had agreed that it was minded to grant to Mr. S. Donnelly, a Stationary Street Trading Licence, on a one-year trial basis, permitting him to sell tour tickets and tour memorabilia on a Monday to Sunday between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., in Fountain Street, at a site which had been designated previously for the sale of those commodities, subject to:

- i. the applicant providing all necessary documentation;
- ii. the receipt of the appropriate licensing fees; and

As a consequence of the decision to grant the Licence to Mr. Donnelly and the fact that there was only one designated site available, the Committee had agreed that it was minded to refuse the applications which had been submitted by Mr. Brown and Mr. Kerr, on the grounds set out in Sections 9(1) (a) (i) and (iv) of the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, namely, that the location at which they wished to trade was unsuitable and that there were sufficient traders trading at that location in the articles, things or services in which they wished to trade.

The Building Control Manager reported that the unsuccessful applicants had been advised that, as required under Section 12(2)(b) of the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, they would be permitted to make written representation to the Council within twenty-one days of being notified of the Committee's decision. He confirmed that representations had been received from Mr. Brown and Mr. Kerr as outlined in the report.

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After consideration, the Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to affirm its decision of 18th September to grant to Mr. S. Donnelly, a Stationary Street Trading Licence, on a one-year trial basis, permitting him to sell tour tickets and tour memorabilia on a Monday to Sunday between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., in Fountain Street, at a site which had been designated previously for the sale of those commodities, subject to:

- iii. the applicant providing all necessary documentation;
- iv. the receipt of the appropriate licensing fees; and

As a consequence of the decision to grant the Licence to Mr. Donnelly and the fact that there was only one designated site available, the Committee agreed to refuse the applications which had been submitted by Mr. Brown and Mr. Kerr, on the grounds set out in Sections 9(1) (a) (i) and (iv) of the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, namely, that the location at which they wished to trade was unsuitable and that there were sufficient traders trading at that location in the articles, things or services in which they wished to trade.

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.

Non-Delegated Matters

Member Training

Members were reminded that the Committee has received training in the following areas to date:

- Overview of the different types of regulatory functions for which the Committee is responsible;
- Committee protocol and representation process;
- Legal principles governing the decision-making process;
- Alcohol licensing matters and its relationship to entertainments licensing; and
- Belfast City Council's Amusement Permit policy.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that a further training session be organised on Houses in Multiple Occupation Act NI 2016 and its application.

Chairperson

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Planning Committee

Tuesday, 12th November, 2019

MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Brooks, Canavan,
Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey, Hussey,
McKeown, McMullan, Murphy
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

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Collins.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 15th October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th November, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Murphy declared an interest in Item 8h, namely LA04/2019/2153/F - Section 54 application to vary conditions 4 and 6 (related to ground remediation) and condition 8 (related to provision of hard and soft landscaping) of planning permission reference LA04/2018/1832/f (community led mixed use regeneration scheme comprising community hub, retail units and residential units) to facilitate the commencement and completion of the approved development in phases Lands at and surrounding St. Gemma's School and the Flax Centre Ardoyne Avenue, in that he was a Member of the Ardoyne Bone Community (ABC) Trust and he left the room for the duration of the discussion on the item.

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Schedule of Meetings 2020

The Committee agreed to the following schedule of meetings for the year 2020:

- Tuesday, 21st January;
- Thursday, 23rd January (for training);
- Tuesday, 11th February;
- Thursday, 13th February (for training);
- Tuesday, 10th March;
- Thursday, 12th March (for training);
- Tuesday, 21st April;
- Thursday, 23rd April (for training);
- Tuesday, 19th May;
- Thursday, 21st May (for training);
- Tuesday, 16th June;
- Thursday, 18th June (for training);
- Tuesday, 18th August;
- Thursday, 20th August (for training);
- Tuesday, 15th September;
- Thursday, 17th September (for training);
- Tuesday, 13th October;
- Thursday, 15th October (for training);
- Tuesday, 17th November;
- Thursday, 19th November (for training);
- Tuesday, 15th December; and
- Thursday, 17th December (if required).

Matters referred back from Council

**Motion - Management of Communal Areas and
Open Space in Developments**

The Committee considered the undernoted motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Murphy and seconded by Councillor Beattie at the Council meeting on 4th November, and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting on the issues raised:

“This Council is concerned by the impact on new and long term homeowners of property management fees for the upkeep of open spaces and communal areas in housing estates.

We recognise that the Council has a role to play in this through the planning process and call upon it to develop a framework around the management of open space and communal areas and explore the possibility of how we can regulate the property management sector.

We further call upon the Council to engage with relevant parties such as the Law Society in the carrying out of this work.”

Request for Member Briefing/Site Visit and Pre-Determination Hearing for planning application LA04/2017/2341/O – lands bounded by Royal Avenue, York Street, Church Street, North Street, Rosemary Street, High Street and Donegall Street (former Royal Exchange)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The Council is currently considering an application for outline planning permission for lands bounded by Royal Avenue, York Street, Church Street, North Street, Rosemary Street, High Street and Donegall Street (former Royal Exchange) (LA04/2017/2341/O). The proposals are for mixed use development including retail, office, café/restaurant, residential, hotel, cultural/community space, public realm and landscaping.

1.2 The application is for Major development and this is a regeneration scheme of significant importance to the city. Members are asked to agree a Committee briefing and site visit. Officers also advise that a pre-determination hearing should be held so that the Planning Committee can consider the views of consultees and third parties in advance of its full consideration of the planning application at a separate meeting.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Planning Committee is asked to agree the following:

- Member briefing and site visit – Friday 06 December, 12pm to 3pm**
- Pre-determination hearing – Monday 16 December, 5pm**

3.0 Main Report

Background

3.1 In October 2017, the Council received a planning application in respect of land bounded by Royal Avenue, York Street, Church Street, North Street, Rosemary Street, High Street and Donegall Street (former Royal Exchange) (LA04/2017/2341/O).

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The application has been subject to amendments and seeks outline planning permission for the following:

‘Outline planning permission for demolition, redevelopment and part change of use to create a mixed use development comprising retail, offices, cafe/restaurant, residential, hotel, cultural/community space, parking, servicing, access and circulation arrangements, the creation of new streets, the configuration of Writers Square, public realm works, landscaping and associated site and road works. The proposal includes works to alter listed buildings, restoration of retained listed buildings and facades, and partial demolition of North Street Arcade, retaining its facades. Details of the retained elements of the Listed Braddells building, Former Assembly Rooms and North Street Arcade facades are provided along with the layout of the new Arcade.’

- 3.2 The mix and quantum of development is shown in the table below.

Proposed Uses	Floorspace (sqm)/No. of Units
Retail	Max. 10,000sqm
Café/Restaurant	(5,000sqm retail and 5,000sqm restaurant/café)
Office	Max. 45,000sqm
Residential	Max. 36,000sqm/367 units
Hotel	Max. 6,000sqm/54 beds
Cultural/Community	Max. 695sqm
Car parking	25 disabled spaces/6 car club spaces
Services/Plant	4,000sqm
Total sqm	101,695 sqm

- 3.3 The application site is within a Conservation Area. It includes proposals that affect a number of listed buildings, full demolition of buildings and partial demolition of buildings with façade retentions as part of the proposed development. These aspects are the subject of separate listed building and conservation area consent applications.
- 3.4 Significant amendments were made to the application in August 2019 following lengthy negotiations with officers and engagement with consultees and communities. The amended application has been subject to re-consultation. It is expected to be brought before the Planning Committee for determination in January 2020.
- 3.5 17 representations were received in 2017/2018 to the application as originally submitted. These comprised 16 objections and 1 letter of support. During that same period, 85

related objections were received in response to the associated application for Phase 1B of the wider development (LA04/2017/2126/F). Those objections raised issues relating to the outline planning application and have been transferred for consideration under the current planning application.

3.6 Member briefing and site visit

Given the scale, complexity and strategic importance of the application, the Planning Committee is asked to agree a Member briefing and site visit. It is proposed that this takes place at 12pm on Friday 6th December 2019.

3.7 Pre-determination hearing

In view of the number of representations to the application as originally submitted, together with the complexity of the issues that the application raises, officers advises that a non-mandatory pre-determination hearing should be held in accordance with Section 30(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. A pre-determination hearing gives opportunity for the Planning Committee to consider the views of consultees and third parties in advance of the Planning Committee meeting at which the planning application will be considered and determined.

3.8 Paragraph 3.6 of the Department for Infrastructure's *Development Practice Guidance Note 17: Pre-determination Hearings*, states:

'In non-mandatory cases, it would be for an individual council to judge when a significant body of relevant planning objections was a sufficient material consideration to warrant a pre-determination hearing, taking account of:

- *the relevance of the objections in planning terms;*
- *the extent to which relevant objections are representative of the community, particularly in the context of pre-application community consultation;*
and
- *the numbers of representations against the proposal in relation to where the proposal is and the number of people likely to be affected by the proposal.'*

3.9 These provisions are replicated in the Committee's Operating Protocol. It goes on to state that representations at a pre-determination hearing should be dealt with in the same way as those at a regular Committee meeting, i.e. speakers only have 5 minutes to address the Committee.

3.10 The process of pre-determination hearings is designed to deal with highly complex issues, large numbers of objections or to allow interested parties, including members of the public, to address members directly.

3.11 In this particular case, there are a range of complex issues to be considered in the assessment of this strategic application including the planning history, regeneration, vitality of the city centre, job creation, housing, impact on listed buildings and heritage assets, urban design considerations including proposals for taller buildings, traffic generation and parking.

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

The organisation of a Member briefing, site visit and pre-determination hearing will have a minor impact on resources.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None identified at this stage.”

The Committee agreed that:

- a Members’ Briefing on the application, followed by a site visit, be held on Friday, 6th December at 12noon; and
- a Pre-Determination hearing be held on Monday, 16th December at 5p.m.

Committee Site Visits

It was noted that the Committee had undertaken site visits on 1st November in respect of the following planning applications:

- LA04/2019/1615/F - Erection of mixed use development consisting of an 82no. bed hotel and 46no. apartments with associated car parking and landscaping at lands adjacent and East of No. 43 Stockmans Way;
- LA04/2019/1598/F - Proposed 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, off Boucher Road;
- LA04/2019/1614/F - Redevelopment of existing all-weather playing field to provide new 3G flood-lit sports pitch, redevelopment of former tennis courts to provide new flood-lit multi use games area

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(MUGA pitch), pitch side fencing and ball-stop nets, renovation of existing outbuildings to provide new changing accommodation, car parking, landscaping and associated site works at existing all-weather sports pitch at Stranmillis University College, Stranmillis Road;

- LA04/2019/0914/F – New pavilion for Community Boxing Club on site 50m South East of 30 Kingsland Park; and
- LA04/2019/1636/F – Erection of hotel comprising 276 beds, conference facilities, restaurant /café/bar uses (including roof top bar), landscaped public realm, car parking and associated site and road works at lands directly south of Titanic Belfast and North-West of Hamilton Dock located off Queens Road Belfast.

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 pre-emptive site visits to the following three sites:

- LA04/2018/0022/F - Community, cultural and sporting hub for the Upper Andersonstown area incorporating; a community hub building accommodating a multi-functional hall, handball court, fitness suite, health and well-being suite and associated ancillary accommodation. Replacement of floodlit grass pitch with floodlit synthetic pitch. Two floodlit multi-use games areas. Pre-nursery building housing 1 no. classroom and a small outdoor play area, landscaping and a new footpath link from the Shaw's Road and associated car parking at Rossa Park, Shaw's Road;
- LA04/2018/0471/F - Upgrading of playing fields to include new 3G surfaces, floodlights, fencing, dug outs, 2No. 200 seater stands, toilet blocks, turnstiles, additional car parking and associated ground works at The Boys Brigade Recreation Centre, 108 Belvoir Drive; and
- LA04/2017/1991/F - Construction of a new 5 storey office development for science and I.T. based business and associated car parking and public realm works at Land adjacent to Concourse Buildings, Queens Road, (Catalyst Building).

Certified Location Notification

The Committee noted the Certified Location Certificate which had been issued in respect of a site on Shorts Sports and recreation Club, Aircraft Park, Hollywood Road, which was valid until 26th September 2020.

Planning Appeals Notified

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission.

Planning Decisions Issued

The Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Director of Planning and Building Control, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 8th October and 4th November 2019.

Planning Applications

(Reconsidered item) LA04/2019/0914/F - New pavilion for community boxing club on site 50m South East of 30 Kingsland Park

(Alderman Rodgers left the meeting at this point)

The Case officer reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 15th October, it had agreed to defer consideration of the application in order to undertake a site visit to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposals at first hand, particularly with regards to the proposed impact on green spaces. She added that the site visit had taken place on 1st November.

The Members were provided with the key aspects of the application. The Case officer explained that Environmental Health, NI Water, HED Historic Monuments, Rivers Agency and DFI Roads had all been consulted on the application and that all statutory agencies had confirmed that they had no objections.

She advised the Committee that eight letters of support from community organisations had been received, and two letters of objection from third parties. The Members were advised that the objections cited issues with an increase in noise and traffic, inadequate public consultation, loss of green space and the opening hours of the property. She explained the officers' response to the issues which had been raised.

She explained that an additional planning condition was recommended regarding the hours of operation for the new pavilion, where it would only operate between 8am and 10.30pm Monday to Saturday, and between 10am and 5pm on Sunday.

She explained that no further letters of objection of additional information had been received.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the Case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

LA04/2018/2835/F - Four restaurant units with associated parking, access, servicing, site and landscaping works on lands between McDonalds and Railway Line Rear of 233-263 Shore Road

The Case officer provided the Members with the principal aspects of the application for the development and of the key issues in the assessment.

She explained that the application was before the Committee for its consideration as it comprised 682 metres² of gross floorspace retail outside of the city centre. The Committee was advised that the existing access to McDonald's on the site would be used.

The Committee was advised that NIEA, HED and NI Water had been consulted and that they had no objections subject to conditions. The Case officer drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items report, where DFI Roads had submitted its response offering no objections subject to conditions. She explained that, if approval was granted, the suggested conditions would be added to the decision notice.

The Members were advised that two objections had been received in respect of the development, citing that anti-social behaviour and impact on the residential amenity had increased in the area since McDonalds had opened, potential overlooking issues and inadequate boundary treatments amongst others.

The Case officer provided the Members with the response to the issues raised and explained that the units would be conditioned to be a single storey in order to prevent overlooking.

The Case officer advised the Committee that the site was undesignated white land in the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) and that it was designated as a major area of existing Employment/Industry in dBMAP 2004. She added that, in the 2015 version of dBMAP, the site had been re-zoned for housing.

She advised the Members that the site was constrained by existing development which might deem it unsuitable for housing, such as the McDonalds, ASDA supermarket, electricity substation and railway line in close proximity. She explained that there might be a significant detriment to residential amenity of potential residents and that a potential housing site would have to share the existing access with McDonalds.

It was reported that a Contaminated Land Risk Assessment (Phase II GQRA) had been submitted in support of the proposal and that the proposal would effectively mitigate against potential detrimental impacts on residential amenity.

The Case officer explained that Rivers Agency had advised that the proposal was contrary to Policy FLD1 of PPS15, but that it was considered that the proposal constituted an exception to the policy, as the proposal involved the replacement of buildings previously located on the site. The developer had also identified the sources of flood risk and proposed adequate measures to manage and mitigate any increase in flood risk arising from the development.

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The Chairperson then welcomed Ms. C. McDonagh, agent, to the meeting. She explained that the proposal was located on what had been a plumber's merchant and which had been vacant for a significant period of time. She highlighted a number of the site's constraints, including the contamination, a substation at the back corner, a railway line to the rear and that two major sewer lines transversed the site. The Members were advised that the scheme had worked around those constraints.

She outlined that the plans which were in front of the Committee had taken into account the objections which had been received and sought to address the issues which the representations had raised. The Members were advised that the proposal included a new 1.8metre high rendered wall along the boundary at the end of Oakmount Drive. She explained that the opening hours would be limited to 11p.m., as was normal for restaurants.

In response to a number of questions from a Member, the Case officer explained to the Committee that:

- the BUAP was the extant plan, where the site was designated as white land;
- the housing zoning was now back to draft;
- regarding the exception to FLD1, the site was still a brownfield site as it was still in hard standing and that Rivers Agency was content;
- in relation to separation distances, specifically relating to issues with noise and odour, that Environmental Health was content that detailed reports had been submitted and that any issues could be mitigated against with conditions; and
- on balance, the officer's recommendation was to approve the application.

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

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

LA04/2019/1903/F - Conservation led redevelopment and restoration of Bank Buildings, including reinstatement of previously removed upper floor structures from Bank Street, Royal Avenue and Castle Street façades and reinstatement of 1970s wall on Bank Street, for the erection of a retail store connecting to existing Primark store on Castle Street with ancillary café and associated site works Bank buildings (bound by Castle Street, Bank Street and Royal Avenue)

The Planning Manager (Development Management) presented the details of the conservation-led scheme to redevelop and restore Bank Buildings. He advised the Members of the key issues in the consideration of the application, which included the principle of redeveloping the site, acceptability of a fourth floor café, demolition within

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the City Centre Conservation Area, impact on built heritage, impact on historic monuments and design.

He explained that consent had previously been granted for the removal of the 1970s wall.

He outlined to the Committee that both HED and DFI Roads welcomed the scheme and had no objections.

The Chairperson then welcomed Mr P. Stinson, Mr. S. Douglas and Mr. J. O'Conner, representing the agent, to the meeting. Together, they explained that the application marked a significant milestone in restoring the property to its former glory. They added that they were working closely with Planning and Building Control to minimise traffic disruption during the construction works.

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.

LA04/2019/1066/F - Zip line facility incorporating a single (803.75m long) and parallel zip line (227.04m long), 3No. towers and associated lighting, pathways, site and access works at Collin Glen Forest Park

(Alderman Rodgers returned to the meeting at this point)

The Committee was provided with the principal aspects of the application for a zip line, with three associated towers, in Collin Glen Forest Park.

The Case officer explained that the site was currently designated as "existing open space" in the BUAP 2001 and Draft BMAP. She advised the Committee that the principle of development and the proposed use was in keeping with the designation, as the zip line could be facilitated in an area of open space. The Members were advised that the area of the park would continue to be used as recreational space and that the zip line would enhance it and be of wider public benefit.

She advised the Members of the key issues in the assessment of the proposal, which included the principle of development and use, open space provision, visual impact, impact on trees, impact on the Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLINCI), impact on the Colinglen River and on the Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) and Urban Landscape Wedge, and on parking provision and access.

She explained that nine objections had been received raising concerns with the impact of the proposal on priority habitats, biodiversity, protected species and loss of woodland. The Committee was advised that loss of visual amenity and noise concerns had also been raised.

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The Committee was advised that Environmental Health, NIEA NED, NIEA drainage and water, NI Water, DFI Rivers, the Tree Officer and Shared Environmental Service had all been consulted and had no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions. The Case officer outlined that, while DfI Roads had not yet responded, given that the zip line would share the access with the Allotments from Colin Glen Road, which was acceptable for the previously approved toboggan application at the same location, it was unlikely that it would have any issues in principle. She added that technical matters could be dealt with by conditions.

The Case officer explained that 72 trees would be felled as part of the proposal but that 121 locally sourced, native trees were proposed to be planted on the site instead. The Members were advised that the Council's Tree Officer was satisfied with the proposals.

The Committee was advised that one tree within the site might contain bats and that it would be inspected 24 hours before it was to be felled.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the Case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

LA04/2018/1219/F & LA04/2018/1056/LBC - Residential development for the erection of 79 residential units in total, comprising new build apartments ranging from 3-4 stories, inclusive of underground parking, amendments to previously approved conversion and extension/alteration of listed buildings, conversion of listed mortuary, parking, landscaping and associated site works at Former Belvoir Park Hospital Site

(Councillors Hussey and McKeown left the meeting at this point)

The Case officer presented the principal aspects of the application to the Committee.

She explained that the application formed Phase IV of the residential scheme and involved the conversion of several listed buildings, including the former administration building, the former nurse's accommodation, the former mortuary and two gate lodges.

She outlined the main issues which had been considered in the consideration of the proposal, which included the principle of new build and conversion of the listed buildings to residential use, the principle of demolition of the modern extension to the listed Administration building, the impact on traffic, parking and on amenity and the consideration of site drainage.

The Members were advised that, in draft BMAP, the site was located within the Metropolitan Development Limit, the Lagan Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a Committed Housing Site, a Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLINCI), a Local Landscape Policy Area and an Area of Mineral Constraint.

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The Committee was advised that DFI Roads, Environmental Health, NIEA, Rivers Agency, Historic Environment Division, NIHE and NI Water had all been consulted in addition to the Urban Design officer and the Tree Officer within the Council. She added that they were awaiting the response from NIEA Natural Environment Division in relation to bats.

The Case officer advised the Members that no third party representations had been received.

She explained that, having regard to the consultation response and representations, it was considered that the proposals met the policy tests set out in the SPPS and PPS6 to permit the conversion and extensions to the listed buildings. She added that the proposed scheme met the requirements of PPS7, PPS8 and Creating Places with regards to creating a quality residential environment.

In response to a Member's query regarding the amount of open space within the proposed scheme, the Case officer explained that it was considered that there was adequate usable open amenity space within the rest of the development as a whole.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the report and to resolution of the final response from NIEA NAD, and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

LA04/2019/0683/F - Demolition of existing industrial warehouse buildings and erection of warehouse distribution facility, associated ancillary office, van storage, yards, car parking and accesses on Lands at Kings Works, Channel Commercial Park, Queens Road Titanic Quarter

The Case officer provided the Committee with the key aspects of the proposal at Kings Works.

He outlined to the Members the key issues which had been considered in the assessment of the proposed scheme, including the acceptability of a storage and distribution facility on the site, scale, massing and design, the impact on built and archaeological heritage, contaminated land, flooding and traffic and parking.

He advised the Committee that the site was located within an established industrial area within the wider Titanic Quarter, which formed part of the mixed use Titanic Quarter zoning. He outlined that the proposed storage and distribution use was appropriate to the area. The Members were advised that the main distribution building was smaller than the existing industrial building on the site by approximately 3,000m² and by approximately 1 metre in height and would subsequently have no greater impact on the setting of nearby listed structures and monuments.

The Case officer advised the Committee that, given the scale of the existing building on the site and its potential to accommodate an industrial use, together with consideration of the applicant's Transport Assessment, it was considered that on balance there would not be harmful impact on existing road infrastructure.

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The Committee was advised that DAERA, DFI Roads, Rivers Agency, NI Water and the Health and Safety Executive had no objection to the proposals. The Case officer outlined that a response was still outstanding from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. He advised the Members that, as detailed in the Late Items pack, Environmental Health had responded with a number of conditions. He explained that, in the event of an approval, the conditions would be added to the decision notice.

The Case officer advised the Committee that no third party objections had been received.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. B. Kelly, Turley, and Mr. C. O'Hara, Technical Director at RPS, to the meeting. They welcomed the Planning Department's recommendation to approve the application. They reiterated that no objections had been received and that the proposal would bring new employment opportunities to the area. They advised the Committee that a robust traffic assessment had taken place as part of the application.

A Member stated that, as the plans were for a base for delivery vehicles, she was uncomfortable making a decision given that the Committee did not have access to a key document which was referenced in the report. She explained that the Committee was being informed that DFI Roads had no objections but that their opinion appeared to have substantially changed based on information which the Committee had not been provided with. She stated that the most recent document which was available to Members, with regards to DFI Roads' opinion on the application, was August 2019.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. L. Walsh, Department for Infrastructure, was in attendance and he was welcomed to the meeting. Mr Walsh confirmed that DFI Roads did have initial concerns about the transport assessment which had been submitted by the applicant. He explained to the Members that they challenged a number of the assumptions, such as the arrival and departure profile, the number of trips generated on the site and the modal split. He advised the Committee that DFI Roads had gone through a rigorous challenge of the application, including worst case scenario testing and modelling. He confirmed that, in response to a recent Technical Note from RPS, DFI Roads now considered the application to be acceptable.

In response to a Member's question, the Case officer explained that he would need to confirm whether the document referenced had been uploaded onto the Planning Portal.

After further discussion, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application to Thursday, 14th November, to allow the Technical Note from RPS to be uploaded.

(Councillors Hussey and McKeown returned to the meeting at this point)

LA04/2019/1100/F - Mixed use commercial and residential development providing 79 apartments with associated amenity space, retail floorspace in 6 units, Gym, 67 car parking spaces, bin storage and assoc. site and access works and public realm improvements 721-739 Lisburn Road

(Councillors Brooks, Garrett and McMullan left the meeting at this point)

The Case officer presented the Committee with the principal aspects of the application for 79 apartments, retail space, a gym and 67 car parking spaces. He outlined the key issues which had been considered in the assessment of the application which included the acceptability of housing at the location, scale, massing and design, traffic and parking, impact on the Lisburn Road Area of Townscape Character, flooding, drainage and noise.

He explained that the site was located on a main arterial route from the City Centre and was poorly defined in terms of land use and built form, with a large area of hard standing and commercial/industrial units set back from the road. He advised the Committee that the mix of retail, leisure and residential uses would add to the diversity of the area and create a quality built form on a site which was, at present, poorly defined architecturally.

The Members were advised that Environmental Health, DAERA, HED, Building Control, NI Water and NI Transport Holding Company had been consulted and had no objection to the proposals. The Case officer added that DFI Roads had requested further information and that a response from Rivers Agency was outstanding.

He reported that no third party objections had been received.

He drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items pack, where NI Transport Holding Company had raised a number of issues in their consultation response, including a request for a buffer zone between the built form and their land, and a demolition plan and schedule to including exclusion zones and protection methods, if required. He outlined to the Members that assurances had been sought from the applicant that there would be sufficient space to allow the construction and maintenance of the building without encroaching onto NITC land. He added that, in the event of an approval, a condition would be attached requiring a demolition plan to be agreed prior to commencement of site clearance.

The Members were advised that, having regard to the extant development plan, the draft development plan, relevant planning policies and approvals in the area, economic benefits and other material considerations, the proposed scheme was considered, on balance, to be acceptable.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. E. Loughrey, representing the agent, to the meeting. He advised the Committee that:

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- the scheme represented a significant investment of over £12million which would contribute to the housing and retail demands in the area;
- Pre-Application community consultation had taken place with the local community and public representatives;
- all technical reports had been submitted;
- design amendments had been made in response to Planners' concerns; and
- while some matters were still in discussion with statutory consultees, they were not significant and were thought to be resolved quickly.

In response to a Member's question regarding the parking provision within the site, Mr. Loughrey advised the Committee that the car parking spaces would be available for residents only.

In respect of a Member's query regarding the trees in the site, Mr. Loughrey advised the Committee that NI Railways had confirmed that it would rather that the trees along the railway line were removed. He added that the trees within the back corner of the site were not felt to provide any contribution to the amenity of the site.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the Case officer's report; to resolve DFI Roads and Rivers Agency issues with regards to transportation and drainage respectively; to resolve design issues relating to the depth of reveals and articulation of the building; and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

(Councillors Brooks, Garrett and McMullan returned to the meeting at this point)

(Councillor Murphy left the room at this point)

LA04/2019/0112/F - 4 units - Change of use from retail/office space to 2 HMO's & residential dwellings at 163 -169 Donegall Road

The Committee was provided with the principal aspects of the application for a change of use and extension to a former commercial unit to create two Houses in Multiple Occupation and two residential dwellings.

She explained the issues which had been considered in the assessment of the scheme, including the principle of development, the design and impact on the character and appearance of the area and the acceptability of HMO accommodation.

The Members were advised that the site was located within the existing development limits in both BUAP and dBMAP and was designated as being within the Donegall Road Area of Townscape Character (ATC) and Arterial Route 03/07 within dBMAP. The site also fell within the Donegall Road HMO Policy Area, as stipulated within the HMO Subject Plan for the Council area.

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The Case officer explained that the proposal was considered to represent overdevelopment of the site, being of an inappropriate design, mass and appearance. She added that it failed to respect the surrounding character context with the introduction of a raised ridge height within the terrace. It was reported that it failed to provide a design and layout which promoted safety and security.

The Members were advised that the proposal would result in a further increase in the number of dwellings converted to HMO use in excess of the 30% threshold, resulting in an oversupply of HMO accommodation within the Policy Area.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Late Items pack. The Committee was advised that amended plans had been received from the applicant the previous week to overcome Policy QD1 of PPS7 issues, including the creation of a yard area to address the security concerns and a reduction to the ridge height. The Case officer explained that the amended plans also included box dormer windows which were untypical to the area.

The agent for the application had disputed the HMO figures within the Policy Area and had requested the attendance of the Council's HMO Manager at the Planning Committee meeting. The Case officer explained that the published figures within the HMO Subject Plan were adopted and that the agent had been advised of that.

It was reported that Environmental Health and NI Water had both been consulted in respect of the application and had no objections.

The Case officer outlined that six neighbouring properties had been notified of the application and that no third party representations had been received.

The Chairperson advised the Members that a late request to address the Committee had been received from the applicant, Mr. G. Hughes. The Committee acceded to receive a deputation from Mr. Hughes and he was welcomed to the meeting. He advised the Committee that:

- he disputed that the Donegall Road Policy Area was at saturation point;
- he had submitted a request for information to the NIHE, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, and he advised that NIHE's response stated that there had been no complaints in relation to HMOs in the area;
- he stated that he believed that more up to date figures were held by the NIHE, which illustrated that there were only 13 HMOs in the area and no suspected HMOs and, given that there were 410 properties in the area, there was a 3% saturation in the area, not 30%;
- the Planning Department did not use an updated list;
- the HMO Subject Plan and the Planning Appeal Commission stated that the NIHE list was the best list to use;
- the ridge height had been reduced in the amended plans and that the dormer windows could be made pitched;
- no objections had been raised; and

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- there was a huge demand for good quality accommodation in the city, and that house sharing was important in providing affordable accommodation.

In response to a Member's question, the applicant advised that he envisaged that four persons would occupy a four bedroom HMO.

In relation to the disparity between the NIHE figures and the figures which the Planning Department used, the Case officer explained that the Licensing register served a different purpose to the Planning register and that in some times the two did not marry up. She advised the Committee that the Planning and Policy Unit was actively working to try to bring together a complete picture of the situation across the city, but that the adopted policy was the 2004 database and that, until that work had been completed, those figures would be used. The Director added that a training session on HMOs, which had been carried out a few months ago, would be repeated.

The Committee agreed 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.

(The Committee adjourned for a ten minute break at this point)
(Councillor McKeown left the meeting at this point)

LA04/2019/2153/F - Section 54 application to vary conditions 4 and 6 (related to ground remediation) and condition 8 (related to provision of hard and soft landscaping) of planning permission reference LA04/2018/1832/F (community led mixed use regeneration scheme comprising community hub, retail units and residential units) to facilitate the commencement and completion of the approved development in phases Lands at and surrounding St Gemma's School and the Flax Centre Ardoyne Avenue

(Councillor Murphy declared an interest, in that he was a Member of the ABC Trust, and he left the room for the duration of the discussion on the item.)

The Planning Manager (Development Management) provided the Committee with the details of a technical application to vary conditions 4, 6 and 8 of a previously approved application. He advised the Members that the application was before the Committee as it related to a major development.

He explained that the varying of the conditions would allow for a phased approach to the development of the site.

The Committee was advised that DAERA Land and Groundwater Team, Environmental Health and Tree Officers had all responded with no objection to the proposed variations.

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The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the Case officer's report.

LA04/2019/2113/F - Application to vary condition 7 of LA04/2017/2776/F from " a noise verification report must be submitted prior to the operation of the restaurant and drive thru" to within one month of the occupation of the restaurant and drive thru a noise a verification report must be submitted on lands to a section of existing Tesco car park, Knocknagoney Road

(Councillor Murphy returned to the meeting at this point)

The Case officer explained that the application was before the Committee as it had been called-in by an Elected Member. She explained that the application was to vary condition 7 of approval LA04/2017/2776/F from "a noise verification report should be submitted prior to the occupation of the restaurant and drive thru" to "a noise verification report should be submitted within one month of the occupation of the restaurant and drive thru" to allow for an accurate representation of the plant and equipment noise measures.

She explained that the main issue which was considered was the impact on neighbouring residents.

One objection had been received in response to the application. It cited concerns with the times that the surveys had been carried out, noise and anti-social behaviour, cracking of internal and external walls as a result of ongoing development and queries over the rationale.

The Committee's attention was then drawn to the Late Items Pack, where two additional objections had been received in relation to the use of the generator at the site.

The Case officer outlined Environmental Health's comments in relation to the objections, and that they had no objection to the proposal. She advised the Committee that an Environmental Health Officer was in attendance if Members had any specific questions.

A Member queried how the application to vary the condition was valid, given that the McDonald's restaurant and drive thru were already in operation. In response the Case officer explained that the variation of such a condition was not untypical and that it had been submitted by the applicant on 23rd September. She added that the application had been delayed as it had been called-in to be brought before the Committee, as, had it not, a decision would already have been issued under delegated authority.

After further clarification, the Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the Case officer's report.

**LA04/2018/2076/F - Residential scheme consisting of 39
apartments in 3 blocks varying in height from 3 to 4 storeys
at 40-50 Townsend Street**

(Councillor McMullan left the meeting at this point)

The Case officer presented the principal aspects of the application to the Committee. She explained that the site was currently a vacant brownfield site with unmanaged vegetation.

She provided the Members with the main issues which had been considered in the assessment of the proposals, including the impact of the development on listed buildings nearby, the impact of the development on terraced housing opposite Greenland Street, the impact on traffic and parking and the consideration of third party objections.

The Committee was advised that the site was within the development limits in both the extant and draft plans and was in keeping with white land designation in dBMAP. The Case officer explained that the principle of housing was acceptable and compatible with the surrounding context.

The Members were advised that the design was considered acceptable and would have a positive impact on the character of the area. The Case officer highlighted that a Shadow Analysis had been undertaken which illustrated that Greenland Street would not be cast in shadow and that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.

She explained that the size standards and the amenity space proposed were acceptable.

The Committee noted that no statutory consultees had offered any objection to the proposals. HED had confirmed that it was satisfied that the proposals would not affect the setting of the listed buildings nearby.

The Case officer advised the Members that three third party objections had been received in addition to one letter of support. The objections cited concerns with overshadowing and loss of light in classrooms of a listed school house and in Greenland Street, and over-dominant impact on adjacent listed church and Townsend Street. The response to the issues raised had been addressed within the Case officer's report.

In response to Members' questions relation to parking in the area, the Case officer advised the Committee that DFI Roads had verbally confirmed that it was content with the application, in principle, subject to the submission of Private Streets Determination drawings. She added that when DFI Roads formally responded, the Travel Plan would be secured through conditions.

A Member queried why NIHE had not been consulted in respect of the application. The Planning Manager advised that it was because it was a local application. The Director of Planning and Building Control added that, when the Council secured a different policy

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framework, it would then seek to consult NIHE on local applications, as it would be seeking to secure a percentage of social/affordable housing in smaller schemes in addition to major applications.

In response to a further Member's question regarding Air Quality, the Case officer confirmed that a dust Management Plan was required to be submitted for Council approval prior to the commencement of construction on site.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the Case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

LA04/2019/2352/F - Temporary installation of neon artwork on external façade of building (1 year) at 6-18 Castle Arcade

The Committee was advised that the following three applications were all applications made by Belfast City Council and were all of a temporary nature.

The Case officer explained that the first application was seeking permission for the temporary installation of neon artwork on the external façade of the building for one year. She advised the members that it was part of a citywide lighting strategy undertaken by the Council to improve Belfast Entries to create more welcoming, vibrant and safer places.

The Committee was advised that two years was felt to be more appropriate.

She outlined the key issues in the assessment of the proposal. She explained that the site was located within the Belfast City Centre Conservation Area. Overall, she advised the Committee that the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the area and that it would not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties or harmful to highway safety.

The Members were advised that the application had been neighbour-notified and advertised in the local press and that no comments had been received.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the Case officer's report, and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

LA04/2019/2385/F - Temporary Installation of 7 projector units to create on interactive lighting installation along ground floor facades (2 years) at Norwich Union House (1-7 Fountain Street), IPHIX (46 Castle Street), Pound Stretcher (56 Castle Street)

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application for seven projector units along ground floor facades for a temporary period of two years.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 12th November, 2019**

The Members noted that the site was located within the Belfast City Centre Conservation Area and that it was felt that the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the area and would not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties or harmful to highway safety.

She explained that, while the consultation response from Environmental Health was still outstanding, it was considered that there were no issues of principle and that any technical matters could be dealt with through conditions.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, where the Historic Environment Division (HED) had advised that they had no objection to the proposal on the condition that it would be a temporary period of two years. A late response had also been received from DFI Roads, which had requested a number of additional conditions in relation to highway safety.

The Case officer advised the Committee that the proposal had been assessed against, and was considered to comply with, SPPS, BUAP, Draft BMAP, PPS3 and PPS6.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions as set out within the Case officer's report and as proposed by DFI Roads, and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, subject to no objection from Environmental Health.

LA04/2019/2386/F - Temporary Installation of 8 projector units to create an interactive lights installation along ground floor facades (2 years) at Discount store (77 Castle Street) Kids store (79-81 Castle Street) Castle Hoarding (83-87 Castle Street) Castle Rugs (89 Castle Street) Castle Home Trends (103-105 Castle Street) Old Oven Bakery (90 Castle Street)

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application for eight projector units along ground floor facades for a temporary period of two years.

The Members noted that the site was located within the Belfast City Centre Conservation Area and that it was felt that the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the area and would not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties or harmful to highway safety.

The Committee was advised that the application had been neighbour-notified and advertised in the local press and that no comments had been received.

The Case officer drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items Pack, where DFI Roads had proposed some additional conditions to mitigate against any highway safety concerns.

She advised the Committee that the proposal had been assessed against, and was considered to comply with, SPPS, BUAP, Draft BMAP, PPS3 and PPS6.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 12th November, 2019**

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions as set out within the Case officer's report and as proposed by DFI Roads, and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions, subject to no objection from Environmental Health.

LA04/2019/2232/F - Change of use from dwelling to House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) at 99 Alexandra Park Avenue

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application for a change of use from a single dwelling to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

She clarified to the Members that policy HMO 5 applied, given that the area was outside a designated HMO Development Node or Policy Area as designated in the HMO Subject Plan for the Belfast City Council Area 2015.

She explained that the Land and Property Pointer database illustrated that there were 115 domestic properties on that section of Alexandra Park Avenue, which would allow 11 HMOs before the 10% threshold was exceeded. She explained that, according to records held by the Local Development Plan Team, 3 HMOs were currently registered on that section of the Avenue. The application was therefore acceptable.

The Committee was advised that no objections had been received.

The Chairperson put the Case officer's recommendation for approval to the Committee for its consideration.

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

LA04/2019/2104/F - Change of use from dwelling to HMO at 232 Duncairn Gardens

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the change of use application from a residential property to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

She clarified to the Members that policy HMO 5 applied, given that the area was outside a designated HMO Development Node or Policy Area.

She explained that the Land and Property Pointer database illustrated that there were 107 domestic properties on that section of Duncairn Gardens, which would allow for 10 HMOs before the 10% threshold would be exceeded. The Members were advised that, according to records held by the Development Planning and Policy Team, there were currently five HMOs on that section of Duncairn Gardens.

The Members were advised that three objections had been received, citing issues including parking impact, existing problems for parking, antisocial behaviour concerns and a lack of family homes in the area.

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The Case officer explained that DFI Roads, Environmental Health and the Council's internal Development Planning and Policy Team had been consulted in relation to the proposal and all had offered no objection.

In response to a Member's question regarding streets which were particularly long, such as Duncairn Gardens, the Case officer explained that officers considered dwellings 300metres either side of the property.

The Chairperson put the Case officer's recommendation for approval to the Committee for its consideration.

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

LA04/2019/2103/F - Retrospective change of use from dwelling to a HMO at 230 Duncairn Gardens

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application for a retrospective change of use from a single dwelling to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

She advised the Members that policy HMO 5 applied, given that the area was outside a designated HMO Development Node or Policy Area.

She explained that the Land and Property Pointer database illustrated that there were 107 domestic properties on that section of Duncairn Gardens, which allowed 10 HMOs before the 10% threshold was exceeded. She explained that, according to records held by the Local Development Plan Team, that 5 HMOs were currently registered within that section.

She explained that four third party representations had been received, raising issues with parking impact, existing problems for parking, antisocial behavioural concerns and a lack of family homes in the area. She advised the Committee that DFI Roads, Environmental Health and the Council's internal Development Planning and Policy Team had been consulted in relation to the proposal and that all had offered no objection to the proposal.

The Chairperson put the Case officer's recommendation for approval to the Committee for its consideration.

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

LA04/2019/2051/F - Retrospective change of use from a dwelling to HMO at 4 Easton Crescent

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application for a retrospective change of use from a residential dwelling to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), with minor changes to the rear elevation.

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She clarified to the Members that policy HMO 5 applied, given that the area was outside a designated HMO Development Node or Policy Area.

She explained that the Land and Property Pointer database illustrated that there were 22 domestic properties on Easton Crescent, which allowed 2 HMOs before the 10% threshold would be met. She explained that, according to records held by the Local Development Plan Team, that there was currently 1 HMO registered on that street.

The Committee was advised that one letter of objection had been received, citing issues with parking in the area. The Case officer advised that the issue had been addressed within the body of the report.

The Committee was advised that the property was currently subject to an enforcement case, relating to the unauthorised use as an HMO, and that the application sought retrospective permission in order to remedy the breach.

A Member raised concern stating that the register of HMO licences showed that there were four HMOs operating on Easton Crescent, and that the 10% threshold had therefore already been exceeded.

The Director of Planning and Building Control advised the Committee that, based on the fact that there was a discrepancy between the figures, he would recommend the application be deferred to allow officers to check the use of the properties.

After discussion, the Committee accordingly agreed to defer consideration of the application to allow officers further time to compare the data held on the number of HMOs in the area.

Chairperson

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Planning Committee

Thursday, 14th November, 2019

SPECIAL MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Brooks (Deputy Chairperson);
Alderman McCoubrey; and
Councillors Collins, Garrett,
Groogan and Hussey.
- Also attended: Councillor Corr (did not participate in the vote).
- In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning
and Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development
Management); and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor Brooks, Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were received from Councillors Carson, Canavan, Murphy, McMullan, McKeown and O'Hara.

Declarations of Interest

Alderman McCoubrey advised the Committee that, in relation to item 2, namely LA04/2019/0683/F - Demolition of existing industrial warehouse buildings and erection of warehouse distribution facility on Lands at Kings Works, Channel Commercial Park, Queens Road Titanic Quarter, he was on the Belfast Harbour Commissioners Board but that he had sought legal advice and it had been confirmed that there was no conflict of interest in relation to the application.

(Reconsidered item) LA04/2019/0683/F - Demolition of existing industrial warehouse buildings and erection of warehouse distribution facility, associated ancillary office, van storage, yards, car parking and accesses on Lands at Kings Works, Channel Commercial Park, Queens Road Titanic Quarter

The Divisional Solicitor advised the Committee that, as there was not a quorum of Members present who had also been in attendance for the initial presentation of the application at the meeting on 12th November, the Committee could either suspend paragraph 21 of the Committee's Operating Protocol, namely, that "Members must be present for the entire item, including the officer's introduction and update; otherwise they cannot take part in the debate or vote on that item" or, given that all speakers were

**Special Planning Committee,
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present, that the Case officer could present the application to the Committee in its totality, in order that a determination could be made.

The Committee agreed that the Case officer should present the entire application again in order that a decision could be made on the application.

The Case officer provided the Committee with the key aspects of the application at Kings Works.

He outlined the key issues which had been considered in the assessment of the proposed development, including the acceptability of a storage and distribution facility on the site, scale, massing and design, the impact on built and archaeological heritage, contaminated land, flooding and traffic and parking.

He advised the Committee that the site was located within an established industrial area within the wider Titanic Quarter, which formed part of the mixed use Titanic Quarter zoning. He explained that the proposed storage and distribution use was appropriate to the area. He highlighted to the Members that the main distribution building was smaller than the existing industrial building on the site by approximately 3,000m² and was 1metre lower in height and would therefore have no greater impact on the setting of nearby listed structures and monuments.

The Committee was advised that, given the scale of the existing building on the site and its potential to accommodate an industrial use, together with consideration of the applicant's Transport Assessment, it was considered that, on balance, there would not be detrimental impact on the existing road infrastructure.

The Case officer outlined that DAERA, DfI Roads, Rivers Agency, NI Water and the Health and Safety Executive had offered no objection to the proposals. He explained that a response was still outstanding from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. He advised the Members that, as detailed in the Late Items pack, Environmental Health had responded with a number of conditions. He explained that, in the event of an approval, the conditions would be added to the decision notice. He advised that no third party objections had been received.

He reminded the Committee that consideration of the application had been deferred at its meeting on Tuesday, 12th November, in order to allow further information to be circulated to Members, specifically the response from RPS to the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) Consultation response, dated 27th September 2019. The Members noted that the information had since been circulated and was in front of the Committee for its consideration in conjunction with the original case officer's report. He explained that the recommendation remained as an approval, subject to conditions.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. B. Kelly, Turley, and Mr. C. O'Hara, Technical Director at RPS, to the meeting. They welcomed the Planning Department's recommendation to approve the application. They reiterated that the application complied with planning policies and that no third party objections had been received. Mr. Kelly advised that the proposal would bring additional employment to the area. They advised the Committee that a robust traffic assessment had taken place as part of the application.

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(Councillor Harvey joined the meeting at this point
and did not participate in the vote)

A Member queried how DFI Roads' response had changed from considering the application unacceptable to then being acceptable.

The Committee was advised that Mr. L. Walsh, Department for Infrastructure, was in attendance and he was welcomed to the meeting. He explained that DFI had initial concerns regarding the application and that there had been a significant engagement with the applicant and agent. He stated that DFI challenged the modelling work, the departure profile and the modal split and that it was a rigorous process. He advised the Members that DFI Roads was now content that there was capacity at the M3 junction, even at peak times.

In response to a Member's query, Mr. Walsh confirmed that, if the application was to be approved at the site, the Practical Reserve Capacity would still be just under 10%.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report, subject to resolving any outstanding issues in relation to archaeology and built heritage on the site and providing the necessary remediation for ground gases within the site, and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

Presentation - NIHE

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. C. Bailie, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), and Mr. R. Hawe, Belfast City Centre Projects Manager, NIHE, to the meeting.

Mr. Hawe advised the Committee that, over the last few years, through the work on the Belfast Agenda and the Local Development Plan (LDP), the NIHE had strengthened its working relationship with the Council and particularly with the Planning Department.

He outlined that the main roles of the NIHE were to assess the housing need and demand across Northern Ireland, provide its customers with good quality and affordable homes and to act as a Statutory Consultee for Local Development Plans (LDPs) and for residential planning applications.

The Members were apprised of the strategic context within which the NIHE worked. He explained that there 11,000 households on the housing waiting list, 8,000 of which were classified as "in urgent need". The Committee was advised that, last year, the NIHE had delivered 386 additional social homes in Belfast but that this number needed to increase. Mr. Hawe pointed out that housing associations struggled to secure sites to deliver social housing and that it was therefore important to look at new and innovative ways of meeting the social need.

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The Committee was informed that existing social housing tended to be largely segregated, unlike other forms of housing tenure, and that the Housing Executive firmly believed that social housing should be integrated with all other tenures, as it facilitated choice, widened housing options, increased community cohesion and created sustainable neighbourhoods.

Mr. Howe advised the Members that delivering additional social and affordable housing would contribute towards the aims of the Belfast Agenda, such as increasing the City's population by 66,000 and allocate land for 31,000 new homes by 2035. He emphasised to the Committee that the NIHE hoped that the new residential developments coming forward within the City would include social and affordable housing to help promote balanced and sustainable communities.

He reported that there was some confusion as to what constituted affordable housing. He explained that the SPPS defined affordable housing as the social rented sector and intermediate housing, such as co-ownership, but that the definition was currently under consultation by the Department for Communities.

The Committee was advised that applicants for social housing currently selected two Common Landlord Areas (CLAs) to indicate where they would like to be housed, with Belfast being divided into 122 CLAs. Mr. Howe advised that allocations from the waiting list were made to newly built developments as well as through the re-letting of existing stock. He outlined that, annually, 2,000 allocations were made and, unfortunately, that left a large shortfall of unmet need.

The Chief Executive of the NIHE explained that good community planning, integrated thinking and future proofing were crucial in tackling the housing waiting list. He explained that a fundamental review of the housing selection scheme had taken place two years ago but that it was awaiting Ministerial sign-off. He emphasised to the Committee that the NIHE wanted to move away from asking applicants for just two areas to much broader areas of choice.

The Members were advised that the NIHE produced a Commissioning Prospectus to provide housing associations and developers with detailed information on the requirements for new social and affordable housing across NI.

Mr. Howe explained that there were not a lot of large brownfield sites available in the city and that higher density sites were therefore inevitable. He added that, apartment living wasn't historically common in NI and that a cultural change would have to take place in order that the aims in the Belfast Agenda were met.

He provided the Committee with an overview of a pilot scheme which NIHE would operate for the recently approved mixed-use Waterside development at the former Sirocco site. The Members were reminded that there would be 650 new homes on the site, 77 of which would be social housing. He explained that the 16 acre site would be a pilot for the NIHE's city centre waiting list, whereby they wanted to see all types of households on site, not just single person apartments, where the dwellings would have greater interior space standards. He added that all of the ground floor apartments would be designed to be suitable for wheelchair users.

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In terms of the NIHE providing evidence to the Local Development Plan, Mr. Hawe explained that it undertook a Housing Needs Assessment, which amalgamated a number of CLAs into 18 broader social market geographies. He outlined that, through analysis of past trends, NIHE then tried to predict what the demand would be over the next five years. The Members were advised that the calculation showed a requirement for 4,500 additional homes throughout Belfast over the next five years.

A Member queried the recent change in planning consultation responses from the NIHE, whereby it had recently stated for the first time that it would like to see 20% social and affordable in residential developments. In response, Mr. Hawe explained that the NIHE wanted to promote mixed tenure housing. He outlined that the NIHE would support a minimum of 20% social and affordable housing in the vast majority of cases but that there would be some rare cases where the social need was being met elsewhere. He added that the NIHE would provide reasons if it did not feel that there was a need for social or affordable housing in a residential scheme.

The Director of Planning and Building Control advised the Committee that, currently, unless a voluntary agreement was reached, developers were not required to provide a certain percentage of social housing despite NIHE requesting it, as there was no policy basis for it.

In response to a Member's query regarding the draft policy of "a minimum of 20% social/affordable housing", and as to whether NIHE would consider requiring more than 20% in some developments, Mr. Hawe explained that they would look at applications on a case by case basis, but suggested that it might put some developers off.

A Member stated that Housing Association rents priced out many people from the market. A further Member stated that it was unfortunate that the NIHE did not borrow significant finances which it had access to in order to build more homes.

In response to further Members' questions, Mr. Bailie explained that the NIHE had a strong ambition to build new homes again, particularly through the use of modern methods of construction. However, he outlined that there were significant financial constraints for the NIHE in terms of borrowing, whereas housing associations received more than half the capital costs through grants and were then able to borrow the rest. He advised that, in practice, the NIHE could not borrow in the same way as it would be scored against the NI block grant.

A Member queried a number of occasions where a NIHE consultation response had stated that there was no need for social housing in certain areas when representatives of local communities would say otherwise. The Member stated that there was an issue of undocumented housing stress throughout the City, with large numbers of single people who had not applied for social housing, as it was common knowledge that there was next to no availability for one person dwellings within their chosen areas.

Mr. Bailie explained that the NIHE carried out "Latent Demand" tests to determine whether anyone would be interested in applying to live in an area, if housing was to be built. He added that the NIHE had discussed the issue at the Housing Council earlier that

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day and that they would certainly consider ways in which they could make their demand assessment process more accurate.

Mr. Hawe added that the evidence used by NIHE was usually the waiting list but that they were aware of the issues and were trying to proactively engage with people who hadn't come forward to NIHE yet. He provided an example of the upcoming Hope Street scheme, whereby they were going to carry out a major household survey with 1000 people in the surrounding area to determine who might be interested but had not previously applied for social housing.

After further discussion, the Director of Planning and Building Control thanked Mr. Bailie and Mr. Hawe for their contributions. He explained that the Council's Planning Department, particularly the Local Development Team, continued to work well with the NIHE and that he was hopeful that they were moving towards the new policy framework as the adopted Policy through the Local Development Plan.

Chairperson

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

Monday, 18th November, 2019

MEETING OF BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Flynn (Deputy Chairperson);
The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford);
Aldermen Copeland and Haire; and
Councillors Cobain, Magee and McAteer.

In attendance: Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Ms. C. Toolan, Chief Executive, Belfast Waterfront
and Ulster Hall Ltd.;
Mr. I. Bell, Business Support Director, Belfast Waterfront
and Ulster Hall Ltd; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor Flynn, Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Mulholland (Chairperson) and Councillors Canavan, Groves and Kelly.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 3rd October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Schedule of Meetings 2020

The Committee approved the schedule of meetings for the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee as outlined below and agreed that all meetings would commence at 5.15 pm:

- Monday, 20th January;
- Monday, 17th February;
- Monday, 18th May;
- Monday, 15th June;
- Monday 19th October; and
- Monday 16th November.

Presentations

Catering at BWUH Ltd.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Mr. A. Dougan, Hospitality Belfast, to the meeting.

Mr. Dougan advised the Committee that he was delighted that the company had signed a four year catering contract with BWUH Ltd. He highlighted the importance of using local Northern Ireland produce, from local producers, in such a high profile business within the city, which would ensure that tourists and conference delegates to the city were given a true Belfast experience.

The Committee thanked Mr. Dougan for his presentation and he retired from the meeting.

Digital First Approach

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Ms. S. Geddis, Business Development and Client Marketing Manager at BWUH Ltd., to the meeting.

Ms. Geddis provided the Committee with a detailed overview of the significant changes which the business had carried out in terms of marketing its events. She highlighted that significant engagement had been carried out with key stakeholders, with a core focus on the customer.

As a result of the changes, she advised the Committee that the business had seen a significant increase in online ticket sales as a result of customer engagement through the company's digital platforms.

The Members were provided with a recent example of how the business worked with clients to ensure that their aims were met, by way of a personalised digital campaign.

The Committee thanked Ms. Geddis for her presentation and she retired from the meeting.

RESTRICTED ITEM

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

BWUH Ltd. Quarter 2 Performance Report

The Chief Executive of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. (BWUH Ltd.) confirmed to the Committee that a new catering contract for the company had been signed, with Hospitality Belfast, in October 2019 for four (plus two) years.

The Business Support Director advised the Committee of the Company's performance during July, August and September 2019, and provided a detailed analysis

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of actual performance against the budget, in relation to sales and overhead costs. The Members were advised that the company was on target to achieve its goals.

The Members were advised of the company's strategic goals and how it was achieving, or surpassing, the targets in relation to the number of conferences held, the number of delegate days and the economic return to the City by 2020/2021. The Chief Executive advised the Committee that the company was on track to achieve its economic return aim one year early.

The Committee was given an overview of the sales pipeline for conferences and entertainment for the coming years.

She reminded the Members that 2020/2021 remained a challenging year for the company, and added that the continued uncertainty surrounding Brexit was a contributing factor.

She provided the Committee with an update on the company's Corporate Social Responsibility programme. She reported that a team of BWUH staff had recently taken part in a Dragon Boat Race for the Mary Peters' Trust and that the team barbecue had been held in aid of Autism NI. She also outlined that the company had initiated a corporate "step challenge" to encourage health and wellbeing amongst staff.

The Committee was advised that the ICC Belfast had been Highly Commended in the Best Venue and that Visit Belfast had won the Best Events Destination at the recent C&IT Awards.

It was reported that the Conditions Survey had since been completed, to establish the priorities for the capital programme, and that it was currently being reviewed.

The Chief Executive explained that the company had recently employed two marketing students on a casual basis to gain experience within the BWUH Marketing Team and that it had also approached the Ulster University and Queen's University to fill a one year student placement within the Sales and Marketing Team, commencing June 2020.

She also advised that a number of Event Management students from the Ulster University had been invited to attend the ICC Belfast later that week to gain first-hand knowledge of how the team prepared for a major event.

The Members were reminded that the Board would be seeking two replacement Board Directors in April 2020.

The Chief Executive explained that the Board of BWUH Ltd would attend the Shareholders' Committee meeting on 17th February, 2020, and suggested that that meeting could take place in the ICC again.

The Committee noted the update which had been provided.

Deputy Chairperson

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Brexit Committee

Thursday, 7th November, 2019

MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor de Faoite (Chairperson);
Aldermen Haire and Rodgers; and
Councillors D. Baker, Brooks, Canavan,
Flynn, Hanvey, Long, Magennis, McAteer,
McKeown, McLaughlin, Newton and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Ms. K. Walsh, Business, Research and Development
Manager;
Ms. C. Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer;
and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Hutchinson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 14th and 24th October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Schedule of Meetings 2020

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for 2020 and noted that dates for additional meetings would be presented to the Committee in due course:

- Thursday, 9th January;
- Thursday, 20th February;
- Thursday, 19th March;
- Thursday, 9th April;
- Thursday, 14th May;
- Thursday, 11th June;
- Thursday, 13th August;
- Thursday, 10th September;
- Thursday, 8th October;
- Thursday, 12th November; and
- Thursday, 3rd December.

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The Committee also agreed that the meeting of 5th December, 2019 would commence at 4.30pm and the meeting of 17th December, 2019 would be cancelled.

Response from the Department for Communities

It was reported that correspondence had been received from the Department for Communities responding to questions which had been raised by the Committee at its meeting on 14th October, 2019.

The Committee agreed to review the response and submit any further questions for the Department of Communities at the next meeting.

Presentation

Prosperity UK

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. S. Singham and Mr. L. Karlsson representing Prosperity UK.

Mr, Singham presented an overview of the Alternative Arrangements Commission (AAC) which had been established by Prosperity UK to use the time after the first extension of Brexit to develop proposals for the deal. He advised that the Commission sought to develop credible and practical Alternative Arrangements relating to the Irish Border that could be delivered in a timely fashion to ensure that the UK retained full flexibility in its future negotiations with the European Union.

He outlined the AAC's recommendations for the Irish Border which included harnessing existing technologies and learning from Customs Best Practice. He pointed out that traders should be given the maximum possible choice of options.

He advised that the UK offer made use of widely used customs "simplifications" – procedures such as trusted trader schemes, Entry into Declarants Records and other customs simplifications. He stated that the AAC believed that it would be possible to develop a world class trusted trader programme.

He summarised the AAC's review of the NI protocol and what needed to happen next if the deal was completed. He suggested that a multi-tier trusted trader programme for large and medium size companies should be introduced, with exemptions for the smallest companies and that clarification was required under the Northern Ireland Protocol to ensure trade worked effectively.

He highlighted that further proposals on customs and regulation simplifications could be found on the AAC's website (available [here](#)).

Mr. Karlsson provided information from a technical perspective in relation to international best practice and trusted trader programmes, and advised there was a need to find ways to trade without extra cost via systems and capacity building which could be

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implemented quickly and efficiently. He suggested that lessons could be learned from other countries on the development and implementation of joint border action plans.

Mr. Singham concluded by stating that the NI Protocol created export platforms that would not exist anywhere else in the world, therefore created opportunities for Northern Ireland to use. He advised that Northern Ireland could benefit from UK policies but the agricultural sector would be protected under the Northern Ireland Protocol.

During discussion, the representatives explained further the protection of the Peace Process, the need for co-operation between customs units to combat smuggling, the requirement of data sharing and analysis, the need for a capacity building fund, and the AAC's recommendation for a technical adjustment fund for small businesses.

They answered a range of questions in relation to customs checks, potential trade agreements, tariff agreements and export processes.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for attending and they retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Issues raised in advance by Members

Before the second presentation on the published agenda, the following proposal to change the order of the agenda was raised:

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor Baker,

That the Committee agree to consider item 4.) Commissioning of a Report on the agenda, before item 2. b) Presentation from Our Future Our Voice.

On a vote by show of hands seven Members voted for the amendment and seven against. As there was an equality of votes, the Chairman exercised his second and casting vote for the proposal and it was accordingly declared carried,

Commissioning of a Report (Councillor McLaughlin to raise)

Councillor McLaughlin outlined a proposal for an economic report to be commissioned.

The City Solicitor reminded Members that the Committee had no budgetary provision, therefore any decision to commission a report would have to be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

During discussion, Members raised concerns in relation to the cost of the research and the similarity to the motion which had been considered by Council on 4th November.

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After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That a report be commissioned to examine the opportunities for cooperation in economic development supporting key growth structures and economic infrastructure that could be developed in an all Ireland context. This report should examine this having regard to relevant scenarios post Brexit or those that remain in play up to the date of withdrawal and also address the island of Ireland as a single economic unit.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Flynn,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

The Committee requests that a report be commissioned to examine the opportunities for co-operation in economic development supporting *good growth, inclusive growth and to outline an ambition to a just transition to a zero-carbon economy* and economic infrastructure that could be developed in an all Ireland context. This report should examine this having regard to relevant scenarios post Brexit or those that remain in play up to the date of withdrawal and also address the island of Ireland as a single economic unit.

On a vote by show of hands nine Members voted for the amendment and six against and it was declared carried.

The amendment was thereupon put to the Committee as the substantive motion and passed.

The Committee noted that the decision was subject to a budget being approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Presentation

Our Future Our Choice Northern Ireland

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Miss. D. Finn, Mr. P. Smith and Mr. A. Hughes representing Our Future Our Choice Northern Ireland.

Miss. Finn provided an overview of the campaign to represent the voices of Young People in Northern Ireland and highlighted that it was a cross community and non-party affiliated group. They summarised their work to date, which included working with a network of young activist, visiting Westminster and Brussels, and meeting with various ministers and EU officials to promote their message, together with media appearances.

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The representatives explained their concerns in relation to Brexit and advised that they sought assurance for the future of young people of Northern Ireland. They suggested that it would not be undemocratic to have another vote on Brexit and everyone had a voice and deserved to be heard.

They highlighted that their campaign would be launching further plans for the general election next week.

During discussion, Members commended the representatives for their professionalism and dedication to highlighting the issues of young people from across Northern Ireland.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for attending and they retired from the meeting.

Noted.

Update on Day 1 Preparedness

The City Solicitor provided an update on the Civil Contingency Arrangements. He advised that due to the extension and general election reporting structures had now been stood down, but continued to be ready, if required.

He informed the Committee that a review of the Business Continuity Management process would be undertaken for the Council's critical services and would be updated as necessary, to prepare for the various scenarios.

Noted.

Chairperson

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Brexit Committee

Thursday, 21st November, 2019

MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor de Faoite (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors D. Baker, Brooks, Collins,
Flynn, Graham, Hanvey, Hutchinson,
Magennis, McKeown, McLaughlin and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Haire and Councillors Canavan, McAteer and Newton.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Response from European Committee of the Regions

The Committee noted the response which had been received from the European Committee of the Regions in relation to the allocated seats of the Northern Ireland Representatives in the European Committee of the Regions.

Presentations

Federation for Small Businesses

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. D. Donnelly, External Affairs Advisor, and Ms. M. McMahon, Development Manager, representing the Federation for Small Businesses (FSB).

Ms. McMahon provided an overview of the work of FSB Northern Ireland, including its collective campaigning to ensure the policy environment was one where small businesses could thrive. She stated that the FSB had 6,000 Members in Northern Ireland and 160,000 Members across the UK.

She highlighted the term small business, meant fewer than 250 employees which accounted for the vast majority of all businesses across the UK and in terms of the FSB membership, 90% had fewer than 20 employees.

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She stated that small businesses were at the core of the local economy and employed more people in Northern Ireland than all larger businesses and the entire public sector combined and were embedded in the communities in which they operated.

She advised that the FSB highlighted small business issues, and ensured its members' interests were being represented at all levels, so that the priorities and concerns of the small business sector were being considered. She pointed out that, in relation to Brexit, they had regularly engaged with its Members to ascertain what would matter most to them, under a range of scenarios.

She summarised the findings of the Brexit Preparedness Survey which they had undertaken with its Members, in relation to trade, impact of a 'No Deal' Brexit, change to tariffs, the cost of preparedness and uncertainty, diversification, and understanding of the potential impact that Brexit might have.

Mr. Donnelly provided details of their analysis in relation to the current proposed withdrawal agreement and what it meant in practical terms to the businesses in Northern Ireland.

He highlighted concerns in relation to the potential for new barriers to the import and export market, and the level of documentation required for declarations, together with the additional cost per consignment.

During discussion, Ms. McMahon and Mr. Donnelly answered a range of questions in relation to the impact of Brexit on supply chain management, the agri-food sector, regulation checks in the Irish Sea, potential job losses, and the transition period.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for attending and they retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Additional Item – Mr. G. Gudgin, Policy Exchange

With the permission of the Committee, the Chairperson welcomed Mr. G. Gudgin, Chief Economic Adviser, Policy Exchange.

Mr. Gudgin suggested that Brexit had been made more complex by disinformation and that analysis of the impact of Brexit by the Treasury could be pessimistic.

He advised that, from the election modelling which had taken place, he believed that a Conservative majority was likely in the next election.

He described the different scenarios of potential trade agreements and advised that Northern Ireland might be affected if a Cheap Food Policy was introduced in Great Britain, as it would be more difficult to compete.

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He stated that, if a free trade agreement was confirmed, Northern Ireland's position to trade might result in no tariff barriers with some regulation checks on certain goods.

He expressed the view that the media printed a lot of inaccurate information in relation to the impact of Brexit. He suggested that the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey illustrated that support for a United Ireland was at 20%.

He advised that there were already wider interlocking trade agreements established by the EU and suggested there would be no great economic advantage for the UK to leave or remain in the EU.

During discussion, Members raised concern with the statements which had been made by Mr. Gudgin in relation to Irish Unity, potential job losses and austerity, leaving the single market and the economic impact of Brexit on Northern Ireland.

Mr. Gudgin answered a range of questions from the Committee, in regards to the alignment of regulation to the EU, the technology changes possible in a short timeframe, border controls, smuggling of goods, economic impact reports and the contradictions in the current Deal from the initial Brexit campaign literature.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Gudgin for attending and he retired from the meeting.

Noted.

Belfast - Dublin Corridor Update

The Director of Economic Development advised that the report in relation to the Belfast – Dublin Corridor (copy available [here](#)) had been considered by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee at its meeting on 6th November. He reported that the Committee had adopted the recommendations to note the outcomes from the research paper undertaken by UU Economic Policy Centre and Dublin City University and endorse the emerging plans for the Belfast-Dublin Economic Corridor, and had agreed the following:

- i. that officers inform the other participating councils of the Committee's request for consideration to be given to including good growth, inclusive growth, housing, just transition and a reduced/zero carbon approach within the priority sectors referred to within paragraph 3.18 (iii) of the report;
- ii. that information on the good growth index score for Belfast and for the other regions along the corridor be submitted to a future meeting;
- iii. to note the conference which had been scheduled for February 2019 to highlight co-operation opportunities along the corridor would now be delivered as part of an overall work plan; and

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- iv. that the pre-feasibility study on the potential Belfast - Dublin fast rail link, which had been presented to the Committee on 9th January, be circulated to Members.

He advised that the scope for the quantitative modelling research was subject to agreement by the other Council's involved in the project and would be considered at a workshop of the Partnership in December.

Noted.

Day 1 Readiness

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided an update on the Civil Contingency Arrangements which included the following:

- Due to the extension and the general election, reporting structures had now been stood down;
- Depending on the outcome of the general election, there could be a range of Brexit related outcomes so the Council needed to continue to be ready to stand up again if required; and
- A review of the Business Continuity Management process would be undertaken for the Council's critical services to prepare for the various scenarios.

During discussion, the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services confirmed that work was continuing with DAERA and the Department for Communities in relation to Day 1 Readiness.

In response to a question from a Member in relation to Vulnerable Groups, he advised that support for front line staff in dealing with vulnerable people was ongoing.

The Committee noted it would be kept updated on the Contingency Arrangements process.

Response from Simon Coveney T.D

The Committee noted the response which had been received from the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. in relation to his inability to attend a future meeting of the Brexit Committee.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Invite Europe Minister – Helen McEntee TD
(Councillor De Faoite to Raise)

The Committee agreed to invite Helen McEntee TD, Minister for European Affairs and Aodhan Connolly, Director of Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, to a future meeting of the Committee.

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The Committee also noted that it would review its work plan of future presentations in January.

Chairperson

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