



Subject:	Quarterly Update on Motions
Date:	17th Feb 2023
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
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1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress of all motions for which this Committee is responsible for.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: i. note the updates on all motion for which the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for; and ii. agree to the closure of motions 1, 2, 3, 16, 34, 56, 67, 83, 114, 130, 148, 149, 156, 157, 176, 178, 179, 181, 192, 194, 200, 201, 204, 206, 212, 214, 219, 222, 229, 233, 233, 234, 268, 271, 272, 281 as referenced in the attached appendix and paragraph 3.4 below.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	At the Committee meeting on 25th October 2019, the following motion was agreed: “That this Council notes that other councils produce a monthly status report in relation to motions and agrees that Belfast City Council adopts a similar practice and produces a monthly update on motions which will be brought to each full Council Meeting, detailing the following: 1. Date received 2. Motion title 3. Submitted by which Councillor 4. Council meeting date 5. Committee the motion is referred to

3.2	<p>6. Outcome of Committee where the motion will be debated</p> <p>7. Month it will be reported back to committee</p> <p>8. Other action to be taken.”</p> <p>Following a review exercise, a new database containing all motions and Issues Raised in Advance at Committee was created and quarterly reporting to Committee commenced in March, 2021. Attached is the latest quarterly update showing all active motions and Issues Raised in Advance which the SP and R Committee is responsible for.</p>
3.3	<p>Closure of Motions and Issues Raised in Advance</p> <p>At the Committee meeting on 20th November 2020, it was agreed that motions could be closed for one of two reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motions which contained an action(s) that has been completed; and • motions which have become Council policy.
3.4	<p>The Committee are asked to agree that the following 36 motions are now closed:</p> <p>Category 1 Recommended Closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stained Glass Window – Health Service (Ref no 1) – This motion called for the Council to agree to the installation of a stained-glass window in the City Hall to commemorate and celebrate the contribution that those working in the Health Service have made to the lives of the citizens of our city. It has been agreed that this will be progressed by the Installations Working Group. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed. • Stained Glass Window – Explosives Ordnance Disposal Company (Ref no 2) – This motion called for the Council to agree to the installation of a stained-glass window in the City Hall to acknowledge the work of the Explosives Ordnance Disposal Company, Royal Army Ordnance Corps. It has been agreed that this will be progressed by the Installations Working Group. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.

- **Fire Brigade Union (Ref no 3)** – This motion called for the Council to erect a suitable monument in City Hall or it's grounds in recognition of the service of the Fire Service and the 100th anniversary of the Fire Brigades Union. It has been agreed that this will be progressed by the Installations Working Group. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **SEND Act and Out of School Hours Provision (Ref no 16)** – This motion called for the Council to arrange a cross party delegation meeting with the Department of Education, Education Authority, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Out of School Hours Service providers to review resource challenges, share experiences, measure demand and explore best fit options of support to enable all children and young people to reach their highest aspirations. This meeting was delayed due to the 2019 local government elections and the Covid-19 pandemic but is now currently being arranged via video call. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Unregulated Car Washes (Ref no 34)** – This motion called for a report to be prepared on the number of unregulated car washes across Belfast. The Council has no responsibility for regulating or licensing hand car washes and valet services. Responsibility for Health and Safety at such car washes lies with the HSENI. The NI Environment Agency has responsibility for enforcing the requirements of the Water (NI) Order 1999 and has advised Council officers that, in line with guidance, it would recommend that vehicle washes are connected to mains sewer where possible and a suitable treatment system would be required. The NIEA currently doesn't have any vehicle wash sites in Belfast on their books which hold a consent to discharge. Further enquiries with the NIEA, HSENI and PSNI has not determined that the relevant data can be sourced from elsewhere. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Public Sector Pay (Ref no 56)** – This motion called for the Council to write to the Minister of Finance to ask him to implement fair pay for civil servants and to the British Secretary of State asking that the British Government fully funds its commitments contained within the New Decade, New Approach agreement. This action is now complete and, therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed

- **Review of Hate Crime Legislation in NI (Ref no 67)** – This motion called for the Council to write a letter to Judge Desmond Marrinan, as part of his ongoing review of hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland expressing support for the inclusion of misogyny as a standalone offence and as a category of hate crime, recognising crimes targeted at women including trans women as hate crimes based on misogyny. This action has been completed and, therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Frederick Douglass Statute (Ref no 83)** – This motion called for a letter be sent to the Department for Communities requesting it to consider the installation in Rosemary Street of a statue in remembrance of Frederick Douglass, a slavery abolitionist. The Committee agreed that this work would be progressed by Installations Working Group. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Pay Increase for Health Workers (Ref no 114)** – This motion related to the 2020 pay increase which has been settled and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Closure of Ulster Bank (Ref no 130)** – This motion called on the Council to write to relevant MPs requesting an all-party meeting about NatWest’s proposals to close Ulster Bank. Responses from MPs were logged November 20, however, implementation of closures commenced. It is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Uplift on Universal Credit (Ref no 148)** – This motion called on the Council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting it maintain the £20 uplift on Universal Credit in April 2021 and extend the £20 uplift to all legacy benefits. Responses were noted by the Committee on 19.02.21 stating that the Government rejected calls to uplift and it is now recommended that this motion is closed.
- **Black Lives Matters Demonstration (Ref no 149)**– This motion was in relation to calling on having all penalty notices rescinded and prosecutions against Black Lives Matter activists relating to 6th June protests abandoned. This motion was resolved when the PSNI dropped the charges and it is recommended that this is now closed.
- **Child Poverty Task Force (Ref 156)** – This motion called on the Council to write to the Minister for Communities to convene a child poverty task force. The response was noted by the Committee on 19.03.21 outlining that there were no current plans

to establish such a task force but that the council would be consulted on in relation to other future linked work. It is therefore recommended that this motion is now closed.

- **Student Support (Ref no 157)** – This motion requested communication with university accommodation providers and private landlords who had not provided rent waivers to do so immediately, and release affected students from private rental contracts without penalty. In addition, a letter was to be sent to Department for the Economy and Department of Finance requesting the development and funding of a Student Support Grant for all full time third level students. The requested letters were sent on 21.12.20 and responses received from the Economy Minister and, as this related to student support during the Covid 19 pandemic, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Mater Hospital Services (Ref no 176)** – This motion requested a meeting with Cathy Jack and the Minister for Health Robin Swann MLA to discuss plans for the future of the Mater, after Covid-19. The motion related to the provision of services during the pandemic. This was resolved, with services returning to normal from November 2022, and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Pay Rise for Public Sector Workers (Ref no 178)** – This motion requested that a letter be sent to the British Government asking it to review its budget allocation to the Executive and to stress to them the need for multi-year budgets with adequate resources to fund pay increases to our health and social care and public sector staff. This issue has since been settled and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Statue of Mary Ann McCracken (Ref no 179)** – This motion called on the Council to install a statue of Mary Ann McCracken in the grounds of the City Hall. The Committee approved the installation of the statue and this work is being taken forward by the Installations Working Group. It is, therefore, recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **War Years Remembered (Ref 181)** – This motion called on the Council to engage with War Years Remembered to help find a solution to their current difficulties including a possible relocation to Belfast. The Culture and Tourism team engaged with War Years Remembered and signposted to possible funding schemes. War

Years Remembered indicated that they will get back in touch if they require any further assistance. It is, therefore, recommended that this motion is now closed.

- **Marking the Centenary of the Ulster Memorial Tower (Ref no 194)** – This motion called for the Council to note the various historic connections between the Ulster Memorial Tower and Belfast City Council and agree to include recognition of this connection in their Centenary programme. The Committee granted retrospective approval for a Member to attend the Centenary Commemoration of the opening of the Ulster Memorial Tower in France on 18th November and authorised the payment of the associated costs. Therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Triple Lock Guarantee (Ref no 200)** – This motion asked for a letter to be sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, requesting him to honour the “Triple Lock Guarantee”. The response from HM Treasury was noted by the Committee on 19.11.21 and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **NHS Pay (Ref no 201)** – This motion asked for communication to be sent to the Health Minister, Robin Swann, calling upon him to refuse to bring forward the 3% pay offer, urging him, alongside the First and Deputy First Ministers, to lobby the British Government to award a substantial offer and asking him to bring forward proposals on safe staffing. The response from the Minister of Health was noted by the Committee on 19.11.21 and this motion is now recommended for closure.
- **Universal Credit (Ref 204)** – This motion called on the Council to write to the Minister for Communities to uphold the uplift for the remainder of the financial year and to write to the Prime Minister to recommend he reconsider the removal of the uplift. Responses were received from the two Ministers and we are still awaiting a response from the Prime Minister, therefore, it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Adopt a Kiosk Scheme (Ref no 212)** – This motion called for the Council to prepare a report on the feasibility of joining BT’s Adopt a Kiosk scheme, outlining the options open to the Council for the removal of the kiosks, should a decision be taken not to proceed. Officers have reviewed the BT Adopt a Kiosk scheme and have received advice from BT that whilst the old ‘red phone boxes’ can be utilised in a number of ways, modern phone boxes can only be adapted to accommodate a heart defibrillator. Whilst BCC are unable to provide a dedicated resource to identify potential sites across the city for the repurposing of phone kiosks to house

defibrillators, or to meet the potential costs associated with installation and maintenance of defibrillators, officers will be happy to direct community groups to BT and the range of organisations' who provide funding for community defibrillators. It is recommended that this motion is now closed.

- **Rent Controls (Ref 214)** – This motion called for the Executive to bring forward a rent control scheme for the city. The response was noted by the Committee on 21.12.21 in relation to future plans to be brought forward and it is, therefore, recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Publication of information on Members' attendance at meetings (Ref no 219)** – This motion requested that the Council, commencing in April 2022, would publish on an annual basis details of Members' attendance at meetings of the Council, Committees and Working Groups, as well as attendances for each year since the commencement of the current Council term. This action was implemented in April 2022 and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Insulation inspection and the provision of insulation (Ref 222)** – This motion called for the Council to write to the Minister for Communities requesting a review of the affordable warmth scheme. The response was noted by the Committee on 21.01.22 and it, is therefore, recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Pay Rise for Leisure Workers (Ref no 229)** – This motion called for the Council to meet GLL management and trade union representatives to discuss the feasibility of supporting the joint pay claim submitted by Unite the Union and NIPSA, calling for a 11.75% increase for Belfast City Council terms and conditions members and a 15.75% increase for Castlereagh Borough terms and conditions members, to address retrospective pay legacy issues. An update was provided to the Committee in September 22 and GLL continues to meet regularly with staff, the Trade Unions, and party representatives/Elected Members, on a range of issues. It is proposed that this motion is now closed.
- **Proposed Closure of Regina Coeli House (Ref no 233)** – This motion called for communication to the Department of Communities' Minister and the NIHE to meet with the owners and management Committee of Regina Coeli hostel to discuss the withdrawal of this service. Letters were issued to all mentioned within the motion on 25.01.22. The Regina House facility was closed last year and it is, therefore, recommended that this motion is now closed.

- **Irish Sea Border Checks (Ref 234)** – This motion authorised the Council's City Solicitor to commence legal proceedings to compel the Minister and the British Government to comply with protocol requirements, subject to any current derogations in the grace period. The Judicial Review was successful and a response was noted by the Committee in December 2022. It is now recommended that this motion is closed.
- **Suspension of Government Debt Recovery for those in receipt of benefits and universal credit (Ref no 268)** – This motion called upon the Council to write to the Department of Communities' Minister requesting the immediate suspension of government debt recovery for those in receipt of benefits and universal credit. The response from the Department of Communities was noted by the Committee on 21.10.22 and it proposed that this motion is now closed.
- **Freedom of the City and County Borough of Belfast (Ref no 271)** – This motion called for the Council to confer the Freedom of the City and County Borough of Belfast on healthcare workers and those who worked on the frontline during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was granted and an event took place on the evening of 25th August and, therefore, it recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Devolution of Local Transport Powers (Ref 272)** – This motion called on the Council to liaise with relevant personnel and organisations to discuss the devolution of key powers. This motion was declared lost and it is, therefore, recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Christmas Tree Charity Collection (Ref no 281)** – This motion called for the Council to place a collection box beside the Christmas tree in the City Hall and for any funds raised to be channeled through the Lord Mayor's office for distribution to appropriate charities in the city. This was actioned and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.

Category 2 Recommended Closures:

- **Paid Leave for Miscarriage (Ref no 192)** – This motion called upon the Council to bring forward compassionate, fair, and progressive proposals for bereavement leave to provide leave for miscarriage and stillbirth so employees who have been impacted do not have to use sick or annual holiday leave. Through the consultation process with the Trade Unions, enhanced provisions were agreed at JNCC on 15th December 2022, including treating miscarriage as a bereavement and offering 10 days' bereavement leave on full pay to employees who suffer a miscarriage as a day one right and offering 3 days' bereavement leave to an employee who is the partner/surrogate parents for someone who has had a miscarriage. These changes have been implemented as of 01.02.23 and it is now recommended that this motion is closed.
- **Parental Bereavement Pay and Leave (Ref no 206)** – This motion called upon the Council to undertake a review of its bereavement policy, in conjunction with the unions, that sought to establish 2 weeks statutory bereavement leave and pay for all Council workers in line with the Coalition for Bereaved Workers "Call to Action" document. Through the consultation process with the Trade Unions, enhanced provisions were agreed at JNCC, 15 December 2022, including awarding 10 consecutive days' bereavement leave, not solely in the case of a child under 18, including the case of still birth for the partner, or the death of a close relative or for those who have sole responsibility for the funeral arrangements; award 10 consecutive days' full pay, as a day one right with no qualifying service required and award 1 days paid leave to attend the funeral of an extended family member. These changes have been implemented as of 01.02.23 and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
- **Fertility Treatment Leave (Ref no 233)** – This motion called for the Council to implement a new leave provision for staff, which caters for those who need leave for fertility treatment and offers the same protections as sick leave. Through the consultation process with the Trade Unions, enhanced provisions were agreed at JNCC, 15 December 2022, including awarding 10 days full paid leave following any unsuccessful IVF treatment to employees who have undergone IVF treatment, as a day one right in addition to the paid time off for medical appointments that already exists and offering 3 days' leave to an employee who is the partner/surrogate parents

	for someone who had unsuccessful IVF treatment. These changes have been implemented as of 01.02.23 and it is recommended that this motion is now closed.
3.5	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no additional financial implications required to implement these recommendations.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.</p>
4.0	Document Attached
	Motions Live Database – Strategic Policy and Resources Committee