



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Ensuring Fair Access to Funding for Faith-Based Organisations Tackling Addiction
Date:	27th January, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

☐

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 2nd February, 2026 in relation to Ensuring Fair Access to Funding for Faith-Based Organisations Tackling Addiction.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>Members are asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or falls within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.</p> <p>At this time Members are only asked to note that the Notice of Motion has been received and that a subsequent report will be brought to Committee, if that Committee so agrees, outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to note that this motion will be referred on the first instance to the People and Communities Committee.</p>
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	<p>The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows:</p> <p>(m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i></p> <p>(n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i></p> <p>(o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i></p> <p>(p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i></p>

3.2	<p>(q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i></p> <p>(r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i></p>
3.3	<p>The following motion has been received:</p> <p><u>Ensuring Fair Access to Funding for Faith-Based Organisations Tackling Addiction</u></p> <p>“Belfast City Council recognises the essential role played by faith-based organisations in serving the most vulnerable members of our city, particularly those battling life-controlling issues such as drug and alcohol addiction.</p> <p>This Council acknowledges the work of Teen Challenge Belfast, a registered charity which provides critical intervention services to individuals struggling with addiction. These include on-street outreach, counselling, crisis intervention, and referrals to an 11-month residential rehabilitation programme – reportedly delivering an estimated 85% success rate.</p> <p>This Council further notes that, despite delivering life-saving services without discrimination, organisations such as Teen Challenge face structural barriers to funding due to their faith-based governance models – barriers which inhibit access to public funding streams otherwise available to comparable service providers.</p> <p>Accordingly, this Council commits to reviewing its current funding arrangements and eligibility criteria, with a view to removing unnecessary obstacles that exclude faith-based organisations from applying for and receiving support – provided their services are offered to all, without discrimination, and meet the pressing social needs of our communities.</p> <p>This Council further calls on officers to bring forward proposals to ensure that funding frameworks are inclusive of organisations with a faith ethos, in recognition of the diverse contributions required to tackle addiction, homelessness, and social vulnerability across Belfast.”</p> <p>Proposer: Alderman Dean A. McCullough</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Sarah Bunting</p>
3.4	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to review funding arrangements and eligibility criteria. The People and Communities Committee is responsible for the Community Support Plan and the motion will be referred to that Committee.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>

3.5	<p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.