

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Monday, 9th February, 2026

SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Brennan (Chairperson);
Councillors Beattie, Black, Bunting, Cobain,
R-M Donnelly, Ferguson, Garrett,
Long, Maghie, I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin,
Murphy, Murray, Nelson, Ó Néill and Smyth.

Also in attendance: Councillor Groogan.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance
Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance
Coordinator.

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf Alderman McCoubrey.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports 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 following item as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Members were advised that content of 'restricted' reports and any discussion which takes place during closed session must be treated as 'confidential information' and no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2026/27

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The Director of Finance presented the report regarding the Revenue Estimates and District Rate for 2026/27.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor Nelson,

That the Committee agrees that the increase in the district rate for 2026/27 should be set 3.8%, with the reduction being made from the growth proposals and that any in-year underspends and efficiency savings achieved be added to the growth fund

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Beattie,
Seconded by Councillor Murphy,

That the Committee agrees that the increase in the district rate for 2026/27 should be 3.8% and to the removal of £500k of the Community Capacity Pilot, as agreed at by the Committee on 6th February.

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

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Long and seconded by Councillor Nelson was put to the meeting, where nine voted for the proposal and eight against and it was declared carried.

The Committee:

1. Agreed that the report should not be subject to call-in on the basis that an inability to immediately implement the decision would result in a breach of statutory duty in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2026.
2. Confirmed the cash limits agreed by the Committee at its meeting on the 6th February as follows:
 - a) A cash limit of £59,697,435 for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2026/27, including £900,000 for Belfast Investment Fund and £3,000,000 for City Deal.
 - b) A cash limit of £111,192,369 for the People and Communities Committee for 2026/27.
 - c) A cash limit of £23,958,554 for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for 2026/27.
 - d) A cash limit of £2,965,419 for the Planning Committee for 2026/27.
 - e) A Capital Financing Budget of £25,774,022 for 2026/27.

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- f) A growth fund of 2.68m.
- 3. Agreed that the increase in the district rate for 2026/27 should be **3.8%**, based on an estimated penny product of £6,652,130 meaning a non-domestic rate of 34.0145 and a domestic rate of 0.4462 and that the amount raised through the district rate in 2026/27 will be £218,945,031.
- 4. Noted the Chief Executive statement on the adequacy of the Council's reserves position and the robustness of the revenue estimates as required by the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011.
- 5. Noted the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement (Appendix 5) as required by the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (NI) 2011.

Standing Order 14 - Submission of Minutes

In accordance with Standing Order 14, the Committee agreed that, as the meeting had been held later than seven clear days before the meeting of the Council, the minutes of the meeting be submitted to the Council on 9th February, 2026, for ratification.

Chairperson