



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Faith-Based Organisations and Addiction Services
Date:	20th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance Coordinator.

Restricted Reports		
Is this report restricted?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?		
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Call-in		
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider a motion in relation to Faith-Based Organisations and Addiction Services, which was referred to the Committee by the Standards and Business Committee at its meeting on 27th January, 2026.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

	At this stage, the Committee is asked to note that the notice of motion has been received and that, if agreed, a subsequent report will be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 27th January, the following motion, which was proposed by Alderman McCullough and seconded by Councillor Bunting was referred to the Committee for consideration:</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>
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to review funding arrangements and eligibility criteria. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for the Community Support Plan and the motion will be referred to that Committee.

3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None at this stage as there is no commitment to proceed with the Notice of Motion. Details of any financial and resource implications will be reported at a subsequent meeting.
3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.