

# Social Policy Working Group

Tuesday, 2nd June, 2026

## MEETING OF THE SOCIAL POLICY WORKING GROUP

HELD IN THE CONOR ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Doherty (Chairperson);  
Alderman Copeland; and  
Councillors I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin  
and Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director  
of Corporate Services;  
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;  
Ms. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources;  
Mr. K. Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty;  
Mr. L. Murray, Strategic Category Manager;  
Ms. L. Armstrong, Solicitor, Legal Services;  
Ms. S. O'Regan, Employability And Skills Manager;  
Ms. C. Patterson, Policy and Programme Manager;  
Inclusive Growth;  
Ms. L. Toland, Senior Manager, Economy;  
Ms. C. Hutchinson, Strategic Planning and Policy Officer;  
Ms. D. Ferguson, City Innovation Programme Lead; and  
Mr. B. Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

### **Election of Chairperson**

It was agreed that the Councillor Doherty be elected as Chairperson of the Working Group for the period 2026/27.

### **Apology**

An apology was received on behalf of Councillor McAteer.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 16th February were adopted.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

### **Draft Sustainable Procurement Policy**

The Working Group considered a draft version of the above-mentioned policy. It was explained that the policy had been formulated to align with the Council's current strategic initiatives and policies, together with its legislative obligations. It was noted that a formal public consultation process would be undertaken prior to the policy being presented for approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Officers addressed several questions raised by Members in relation to how the policy would be evaluated once implemented; and the feasibility of the Council taking steps to implementing the Single Use Plastic policy in advance of the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and the Christmas Market in 2026.

After discussion, the Working Group noted the contents of the draft policy and the next steps to be undertaken in its development and implementation.

### **Social Value Procurement - Delivery Report**

The Working Group noted the contents of the above-mentioned report, which provided an overview of the outcomes achieved through open tender competitions in accordance with the Social Value Procurement Policy. The report provided also an update on the tenders awarded by the Property and Projects department where, due to project funding rules, social value had been included in accordance with the Buy Social Model.

### **Strategic Approach to Corporate Social Responsibility**

The Working Group noted the contents of a briefing note which provided an overview of an event entitled: 'Time To Act: Capitalising on the Potential of Philanthropic Giving', which had taken place at the former St Comgall's school on 20th May, and which had been organised by the Community Foundation Northern Ireland.

### **Belfast Business Promise - Transition Phase and Overview of Model and Next Steps**

The Working Group noted the contents of a report in respect of the above-mentioned matter.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The Working Group agreed to meet in late-August on a date to be determined in conjunction with the Chairperson.

Chairperson