



Subject:	Physical Programme Update
Date:	19 June 2026
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	Shauna Murtagh, Portfolio Manager David Logan, Senior Programme Delivery Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information relating to any individual2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual3. 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 matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction7. 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	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	
Sometime in the future	
Never	

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	The Council's Physical Programme currently includes over 200 capital projects with investment of £150m+ via a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. This report presents a request for an approval under the Capital Programme.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to –</p> <p>Capital Programme Stage Movements -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilmont House H&S Works - Note that a satisfactory tender return has been received and that the Director of Finance has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agree that a maximum of up to £400,000 be allocated. • Fernhill House H&S Works - Note that a satisfactory tender return has been received and that the Director of Finance has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agree that a maximum of up to £350,000 be allocated. • Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) Machinery Replacement Programme 2026/27 – Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> with a maximum allocation of up to £375,000. • IT Programme - Fleet Management System - Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> as part of the overall IT Programme and held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk pending further development and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated with a contract to be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver. • IT Programme - Pitch Booking System - Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> as part of the overall IT Programme and held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk pending further development and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated with a contract to be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver. • Staff Cycle Racks Installation – Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> and held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk pending further development and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated with a contract to be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

- **Historic Cemeteries - Friar's Bush** - Agree that 'Friar's Bush Graveyard' is extracted from the overall scheme and taken forward as a stand-alone project at *Stage 2 – Uncommitted* on the Capital Programme to allow the business case and application to NHLF to be developed.
- **Depot Charging Scheme 2026/27** - Agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at *Stage 1 – Emerging* to allow a business case and funding application to be developed.
- **Belfast Castle** - Agree that the programme of works is added to the Capital Programme at *Stage 1 – Emerging* to allow a business case to be developed on a phased basis.

Project Update

- **Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann –Supporting infrastructure works** - Agree that required works at sites in support of the delivery of the Fleadh are progressed with a maximum allocation of up to £400,000.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Physical Programme

Members will be aware that the Council runs a substantial Physical Programme. This includes the rolling Capital Programme – a multimillion regeneration programme of investment across the city which improves existing Council assets or provides new council facilities. The Property & Projects Department is happy to arrange a site visit to any projects that have been completed or are underway.

3.2

Capital Programme - Proposed Movements

As outlined above, Members have agreed that all capital projects must go through a three-stage process where decisions on which capital projects progress are taken by the Committee. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. Members are asked to note the following activity on the Capital Programme:

Project	Overview	Stage movement
Wilmont House H&S Works	Remedial health & safety works to be carried out to ensure the building is made safe.	Stage 3 – Committed with a maximum budget of £400,000
Fernhill House H&S Works	Remedial health & safety works to be carried out to ensure the building is made safe.	Stage 3 – Committed with a maximum budget of £350,000
Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) Machinery Replacement Programme 2026/27	Rolling programme to replace grounds maintenance machinery which is beyond its lifespan.	Move to Stage 3 – Committed with a maximum budget of £375,000
IT Programme - Fleet Management System	A new Fleet Management System (FMS).	Move to Stage 3 – Committed
IT Programme - Pitch Booking System	A cloud-based pitch-booking system to streamline processes and improve customer access to online services.	Move to Stage 3 – Committed

Staff Cycle Racks Installation	Installation of new cycle racks in Cecil Ward Building, City Hall and other premises to improve provision.	Move to Stage 3 – Committed
Friar’s Bush Graveyard	Improvements to historic cemetery.	Add at Stage 2 - Uncommitted
Depot Charging Scheme 2026/27	Further improvements to electric vehicle (EV) charging provision on Council depots.	Add at Stage 1 - Emerging
Belfast Castle	Phased capital improvement programme for Belfast Castle with the aim of enhancing customer experience, accessibility and operational efficiency.	Add at Stage 1 - Emerging

3.3 **Wilmont House H&S Works**

Members will recall that this project was moved to *Stage 3 – Committed* in November 2025. Wilmont House is B1 listed and is on HED’s ‘At Risk’ register. The building current state of internal disrepair has meant only a visual inspection was conducted, mainly due to restriction of safe access around the internal areas. A high-level feasibility study for remedial works has been carried out and a series of immediate health and safety works are required. Members will also be aware that a feasibility study is currently underway in partnership with Golden Threads Gallery, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with the long-term ambition for Wilmont House be the home of the Gallery and a new cultural visitor destination. This is due to be completed in the Summer and a further update will be brought back to Members in due course. **Members are asked to note that a satisfactory tender return for the required health & safety works has been received and that the Director of Finance has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agree that a maximum of up to £400,000 be allocated.**

3.4 **Fernhill House and Courtyard/Stables H&S Works**

Members will recall that this project was moved to *Stage 3 – Committed* in December 2025. Both the main House and the Courtyard buildings are on HED’s ‘At Risk’ register. A high-level feasibility study for remedial works was carried out with evidence and recommendations required to proceed with essential ‘make safe’ works that will allow safe access and future decision-making on the long-term use of Fernhill House. The works include the Fernhill Estate; House, stables and former office building. Implementing these initial stabilisation, health and safety works, we can secure the building for further evaluation and preserve the opportunity for longer term restoration of a property of both historic and cultural importance. **Members are asked to note that a satisfactory tender return for these works has been received and that the Director of Finance has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agree that a maximum of up to £350,000 be allocated.**

3.5 **Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) Machinery Replacement Programme 2026/27**

This is a rolling programme to replace grounds maintenance machinery to ensure business continuity and maintain service provision across the Council’s estate. As per the three-stage approval process, the outline business case has been completed and it is recommended that

	<p>this project now progresses to delivery. The list of machinery for 2026/27 is attached at Appendix 1. Members are asked to agree that the project is moved to Stage 3 – Committed with a maximum allocation of up to £375,000. The Director of Finance has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.</p>
<p>3.6</p>	<p>IT Programme - Fleet Management System</p> <p>The current fleet management system (Tranman) is used to manage the entire lifecycle of council vehicles. It includes the processes and tools needed to ensure vehicles are maintained, managed and reported on. The current Fleet Management contract will expire in June 2027. The Council is seeking to procure and implement a modern, fit-for-purpose replacement system that introduces mobile devices for workshop and stores operations removing the existing paper processes. The project is part of the overall IT Programme/ Digital Strategy and a business case has been submitted. Members are asked to agree that the project is moved to Stage 3 – Committed and held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk, pending further development of the project and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated. A contract will be awarded based on the most economically advantageous tender received and full commitment to deliver.</p>
<p>3.7</p>	<p>IT Programme - Pitch Booking System</p> <p>The project will procure and implement a cloud-based pitch-booking system to streamline booking processes and improve customer access to online services. This has previously been identified as a Member priority. This solution will reduce manual administration, support more efficient service delivery and provide a consistent digital experience across bookable facilities. The project will replace the Council’s current ageing Dimension system and manual, fragmented pitch-booking arrangements with a modern cloud-based system that provides a fully digital, self-service booking experience for residents, clubs and community groups. The new solution will streamline how facilities are scheduled and managed, reduce administrative workload, improve accuracy and transparency of bookings, and support more consistent service delivery across all sites. The project is part of the overall IT Programme/ Digital Strategy and a business case has been submitted. Members are asked to agree that the project is moved to Stage 3 – Committed and held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk, pending further development of the project and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated. A contract will be awarded based on the most economically advantageous tender received and full commitment to deliver.</p>
<p>3.8</p>	<p>Staff Cycle Racks Installation</p>

	<p>This project was moved to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> on the Capital Programme in January 2026. It includes the installation of new cycle racks in City Hall and Cecil Ward Building and upgrading cycle parking facilities in 9 Adelaide and Duncrue. The Council is committed to reducing transport related greenhouse gas emissions through its operations and across the city and promoting travel options that promote health and wellbeing, leading by example as an employer, an organisation delivering services, and as a civic leader. As per the three-stage approval process, the outline business case has been completed. Members are asked to agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> and held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk, pending further development of the project and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated. A contract will be awarded based on the most economically advantageous tender received and full commitment to deliver.</p>
3.9	<p>Historic Cemeteries – Friar’s Bush</p> <p>Members will note that Friar’s Bush project, as part of the Historic Cemeteries programme, is currently at <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> of the Capital Programme. Historic Cemeteries is a restoration programme for heritage cemeteries in the city including Friar’s Bush, Knock Cemetery, Balmoral Cemetery and Shankill Graveyard. In parallel, an opportunity has been identified to align investment in Friar’s Bush with a bid to host the National Famine Commemoration Day in May 2027. Given the historical significance of the cemetery, particularly in the context of the Irish Famine, the site is uniquely positioned to serve as a focal point for commemoration, education and international engagement. To host this memorial event represents an opportunity to position Belfast as a place of reflection and learning in relation to a defining period of Irish history. However, this opportunity is dependent on delivering the necessary works/ improvements and associated activity at Friar’s Bush Cemetery in advance of that date. An application is being prepared for National Lottery Heritage Fund under their small grants programme. In order to meet the required timescales and to present a coherent and competitive funding application, it is proposed that Friar’s Bush be progressed as a standalone project. Members are asked to agree that ‘Friar’s Bush Graveyard’ is extracted from the overall scheme and taken forward as a stand-alone project at <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> on the Capital Programme to allow the business case and application to NHLF to be developed and submitted.</p>
3.10	<p>Depot Charging Scheme 2026/27</p> <p>To meet climate change targets and legislative requirements, the Council must consider its current fleet and the transition required to reach zero emissions. In January 2026 part funding was secured through the Cabinet Office Depot Charging Scheme to install EV chargers at Blanchflower, Duncrue, Mallusk, Ormeau, and Belfast Zoo. The project aims to improve the EV</p>

	<p>charging on Council sites, will support the fleet transition and overall decarbonisation of Council fleet. The funding stream is now open again for this year and funding is available for up to 70% of project costs with the remainder being met by the Council. Members are asked to agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at Stage 1 – Emerging to allow a business case and funding application to be developed.</p>
3.11	<p>Belfast Castle</p> <p>Belfast Castle is one of Belfast’s most recognised heritage and tourism assets. Situated within Cave Hill Country Park, the castle plays a significant role in the city’s visitor economy, civic hospitality offering, weddings and events market as well as wider community engagement activities. However, parts of the building now require targeted investment to maintain competitiveness, improve visitor experience, protect the asset, and align the venue with Belfast City Council’s current Corporate Plan priorities. A phased capital improvement programme for Belfast Castle with the aim of enhancing the customer experience, accessibility and operational efficiency has been proposed. Members are asked to agree that the project is added to Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business case to be developed on a phased basis.</p>
	<p>Project Updates</p>
3.12	<p>Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann –Supporting infrastructure works</p> <p>Supporting infrastructure works are required at a number of sites across the city which have been agreed for the Fleadh including park and ride provision at the North Foreshore and the campsite at Titanic Quarter. Due to the timelines this work needs to be taken forward urgently in order to ensure that sites are ready. Members are asked to agree that required works at sites in support of the delivery of the Fleadh are progressed with a maximum allocation of up to £400,000.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p><i>Financial Implications –</i></p> <p>Wilmont House H&S Works – capital allocation of up to £400,000. The Director of Finance has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.</p> <p>Fernhill House H&S Works – capital allocation of up to £350,000. The Director of Finance has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.</p> <p>OSS Machinery Replacement Programme 2026/27 – capital allocation of up to £375,000. The Director of Finance has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.</p> <p>Fleadh Campsites Infrastructure – capital allocation of up to £400,000. The Director of Finance has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.</p> <p><i>Resource Implications –</i> Officer time to deliver.</p>
5.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>

	The legislation requirements have been met including screening. All physical projects are designed for people and are inherently inclusive and accessible.
6.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – OSS Machinery Replacement Programme 2026/27