



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Open Doors World Watch 2026
Date:	25th August, 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

X

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

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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

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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 1st September, 2026 in relation to Open Doors World Watch 2026.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and agree to either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	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: (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> (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> (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) <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> (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> (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>
3.2	The following motion has been received: <u>Open Doors World Watch List 2026</u> “Belfast City Council notes with profound concern that more than 388 million Christians around the world face high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith.

	The Council further notes the findings of the Open Doors World Watch List 2026, including that 4,849 Christians were killed worldwide during the reporting period because of their Christian identity, of whom 3,490 were killed in Nigeria. The Council expresses particular concern at the extreme levels of violence, persecution and displacement faced by Christians in Nigeria and recognises that these events will also be of particular concern to members of Belfast's Christian and Nigerian communities, including those with family and community connections to Nigeria. The Council further notes the recent European Parliament resolution condemning the ongoing persecution of Christians in Nigeria and calling for greater protection and accountability. Therefore, this Council notes the Open Doors World Watch List 2026 Advocacy Report and commits to: • Condemning the persecution, discrimination and violence faced by Christians around the world; • Writing to the UK Government urging it to continue to promote and protect freedom of religion or belief as a leading priority in foreign policy and diplomatic engagement; • Urging the UK Government, through its engagement with Nigeria, to press the Nigerian Government to take effective action to protect vulnerable communities, tackle the culture of impunity surrounding attacks, and ensure that those responsible for violence against Christians and other civilians are brought to justice; and • Highlighting the findings of the World Watch List 2026 and the plight of persecuted Christians on the Council's social media channels." Proposer: Alderman Dean A. McCullough Seconder: Councillor Bradley Ferguson
3.3	The motion calls upon on the Council to endorse the Open Doors World Watch 2026 Advocacy Report, the Committee can either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.
3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>

	None associated with this report.
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.