



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Belfast Children’s Champion
Date:	22nd September, 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 ☐ No ☒
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 ☐ 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	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes ☒ No ☐

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 October, 2026 in relation to Belfast Children's Champion.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members are asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or falls within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report. At this time Members are only asked to note that the Notice of Motion has been received and that a subsequent report will be brought to Committee, if that Committee so agrees, outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications. The Committee is asked to note that this motion will be referred on the first instance to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> 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>

3.2	(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> The following motion has been received: <u>Belfast Children's Champion</u> "This Council recognises that children and young people are a vital part of our City, and that decisions taken by Belfast City Council can have a significant impact on their lives, opportunities, wellbeing and future. This Council believes that the interests of children young people and their families should be considered at every level and across all relevant areas of Council policy, service delivery and partnership working. Council recognises the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda - Belfast's community plan - and the importance of giving all children and young people the best possible start in life and tackling inequalities from an early age. Alongside the Belfast Agenda, this Council welcomes and supports the adoption of 'The Belfast Child', by both this Council and the city's Community Planning Partnership. This document envisions creating a seamless pathway plan to support the needs children and young people of this city. It also reflects the importance of further developing partnership working, if we are to improve outcomes for children and young people across the city. Accordingly, this Council: 1. Requests that we agree to the creation of a Children's Champion and that a report be brought to the appropriate Council committee setting out options for establishing the role, including its responsibilities, governance arrangements, resources, accountability and mechanisms for engaging directly with children and young people. 2. Agrees that the establishment of a dedicated Belfast City Council Children's Champion, will focus on advocating for the interests, rights, wellbeing and best outcomes of all children and young people across the City of Belfast. 3. Calls for the Belfast Children's Champion to act as a strong voice for children and young people within and across Council, helping to ensure that the vision of good outcomes and seamless support in meeting their needs as laid out in the Belfast Child are reflected in the delivery of the Belfast Agenda, as well as in Council policies, programmes and major decisions. 4. Calls on Council to ensure that the voice of children and young people is considered at the earliest appropriate stage in the development of relevant Council policies, strategies and major initiatives.
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3.3	Council believes that <u>every</u> child in Belfast, regardless of where they live or their circumstances, should have the opportunity to grow up safe, supported, healthy and able to fulfil their potential.” Proposed by: Councillor Nicola Verner Seconded by: Councillor Natasha Brennan The motion calls upon on the Council to establish a dedicated Belfast City Council Children’s Champion. It also requests that the Council ensures that the voice of children and young people is considered at the earliest appropriate stage in the development of relevant Council policies, strategies and major initiatives. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for policy and HR matters, and the motion will be referred to that Committee. <u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report but there will be finance and resource implications in relation to the substantive motion. <u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None associated with this report.
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.