

# People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 9th November, 2021

## HYBRID MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Cobain (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey; and  
Councillors Baker, Black, Bunting, Michael Collins,  
Corr, de Faoite, Flynn, Garrett, M. Kelly, Magee,  
McAteer, McReynolds, Mulholland, Smyth and Verner.

Also attended: Councillor O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;  
Mrs. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

An apology was recorded on behalf of Councillor Newton.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 12th October were taken as read and signed as correct.

It was reported that the minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st November, subject to the minute in relation to the Erection of a Dual Language Street Sign at Clifton Street being referred back to the Committee.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Verner declared an interest in relation to item 2 (b) on the agenda, Department for Community (DfC) Recovery Funding Update, as a staff member of the Greater Shankill Partnership that was named as a funding recipient. Alderman Copeland declared an interest in the same item as an organisation which her daughter worked for was in receipt of funding from DfC. Both left the meeting whilst the item was under consideration.

Councillor Black and Corr declared an interest in item 3 (e) Community Development and Capacity Building Support in that they were employees of organisations in receipt of funding and they left the meeting whilst the matter was being considered.

Councillor Smyth declared an interest in item 4 (c) Community Asset Management Pilots, in that he was a Member of Ulidia Playing Fields Steering Committee and he left the meeting whilst the matter was under consideration.

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**Schedule of Meetings 2022**

The Committee approved the schedule of meetings for the People and Communities Committee as outlined below and agreed that all meetings would commence at 5.15 pm:

- Tuesday, 11th January
- Tuesday, 25th January – Belfast City Youth Council
- Tuesday, 8th February
- Tuesday, 8th March
- Tuesday, 22nd March - Housing
- Tuesday, 5th April
- Tuesday, 10th May
- Tuesday, 7th June
- Tuesday, 21st June – Belfast City Youth Council
- Tuesday, 2nd August – Housing (Annual HIP Update)
- Tuesday, 9th August
- Tuesday, 13th September
- Tuesday, 4th October – Belfast City Youth Council
- Tuesday, 11th October
- Tuesday, 8th November
- Tuesday, 22nd November - Housing
- Tuesday, 6th December

**Item referred back from Council**

**Erection of Dual Language Street Sign  
at Clifton Street**

(Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor, and Mr. I. Harper, Building Control Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Members considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**To consider the dual language street sign application for Clifton Street.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Members are asked to:**

- 1. Reconsider the application for a dual language street sign for Clifton Street given the decision of Council on 1st November 2021;**
- 2. Consider the request for a survey form to be sent to the secretary of the Belfast Orange Hall and agree that one be provided; and**

3. Note that, having reviewed the process for this survey, two further properties are to be surveyed and a further report will be brought back to Committee for final determination.

3.0 **Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1 At Council on 1st November Members asked for a report on the dual language street sign application for Clifton Street to be brought back to committee for consideration
- 3.2 The Clifton Street application was considered under the current policy.

**Policy:**

- 3.3 In the introduction section of the policy it states:

*'2.0 Introduction*

*The legislation requires the Council, in deciding whether and how to exercise its discretion to erect a street name in a language other than English, to take account of the views of the occupiers of premises in the street.*

*For the purposes of this policy occupiers shall be taken to be any person whose name appears in the current Electoral Register plus the owners or tenants in actual possession of commercial premises, but not employees in such premises.'*

- 3.4 The procedure within the policy states:

*'3.0 Procedure*

*The procedures for seeking and assessing the views of occupiers and the criteria to be applied in deciding whether to erect a street sign in a language other than English are as follows:*

- (i) Only applications supported by a petition representing not less than one third of the people appearing on the Electoral Register of the street for which the application is made will be progressed.*
- (ii) Where the foregoing requirements have been met the Council will canvass by post all people appearing on the Electoral Register of that street and seek their views on the request to erect a street sign in a second specified language. This letter is designed so as to make the expression of views as simple as possible. Reply will*

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*be by way of a pre-paid envelope and should be returned within one month of receipt.*

*(iii) Where two thirds or more of the occupiers appearing on the Electoral Register have indicated that they are in favour of the erection of a second language street sign, then such a sign will be erected. People not returning a reply will be deemed not to be in favour of the application.'*

- 3.5 The practice is to consider all residential properties within a street, checking for those residents who are on the electoral register, and checking for commercial properties. In addition, a site visit is carried out to check all the properties on the street during the survey. Commercial properties are included in the survey, with one survey form being provided. The policy states that the method of consultation is to canvas by post. The practice is to hand deliver surveys where possible or post them using Royal Mail where this is not possible.
- 3.6 For the Clifton Street application, based on the information taken from the electoral register, and site checks of commercial properties, 12 surveys were issued, to both residential and commercial properties. Most of these were hand delivered. 2 survey forms were posted through Royal Mail as they could not be hand delivered due to no letter box or no one present.
- 3.7 On review of the processing of this application, it was noted that two properties that had signed the initial petition had not been surveyed as they were deemed to be vacant at the time Officers carried out their physical inspection of the street. However it now appears that they are in fact occupied and therefore will be surveyed and the updated results will be subsequently reported back to Committee.
- 3.8 In relation to Clifton Street Orange Hall, a survey was posted to the occupier of 82-84 Clifton Street, the address for Clifton Street Orange Hall, as there was no letter box, and no one present at the time of visit. The Service did not receive any communication from the Royal Mail that this has not been delivered.
- 3.9 This address was included in the results provided for the survey. We did not receive a response from this address therefore, as required by the current policy, this was not considered to be in favour of the dual language street sign.
- 3.10 Members are asked to note that a formal request has been made by Alderman Kingston for a survey form to be sent to the secretary of Belfast Orange Hall on Clifton Street.

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**3.11 Application details:**

<b>English Name</b>	<b>Non- English Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Persons surveyed</b>
Clifton Street	Sráid Clifton	Between Carrick Hill, BT1 and Carlisle Circus BT14	Carrick Hill Residents Association	12

**3.12 The translation was authenticated by Queens University, the approved translator for Belfast City Council.**

**3.13 Results for survey carried out for Clifton Street**

In accordance with the Council's policy for the erection of dual language street signs surveys of all persons appearing on the Electoral Register plus owners or tenants in actual possession of commercial premises carried out and the following responses were received.

12 surveys were issued, 10 hand delivered, 2 posted using Royal Mail. The results were:

- 9 people (75%) were in favour of the erection of a second street nameplate
- 1 person (8%) was not in favour of the erection of a second nameplate
- 2 people (17%) did not respond to the survey

**3.14 The Council's policy on the erection of a second street nameplate requires that at least two thirds (66.6%) of the people surveyed must be in favour of the proposal to erect a second street sign in a language other than English.**

**Provision of street signs.**

**3.15 The practice on siting the street signs is to identify those that exist on the street, and these are either added to or replaced to reflect the street name in a second language, as approved. The position of the street signs on Clifton Street are as follows:**

- Junction with North Queen Street – on metal railings
- Junction of Westlink on-slip (north) – wall mounted to bridge
- Junction of Westlink on-slip (south) – wall mounted to bridge
- A sign on railings at the junction with Carlisle Circus was damaged and is not currently in place.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.16 There is a cost of approximately £450 to cover the cost of the manufacturing and erection of the dual language street signs in the current locations. The cost for these street signs has been allowed for in the current budget.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.17 There are no direct equality/rural needs implications.”

The Committee reconsidered the application for a dual language street sign for Clifton Street, given the decision of the Council on 1st November 2021.

A Member stated that it was his understanding that the agenda item had been referred back to the Committee as there had been a query regarding the specific location as to where the sign would be erected.

Discussion ensued, during which the Building Control Manage and Divisional Solicitor addressed several queries, following which it was agreed:

- that a survey form be sent to the secretary of the Belfast Orange Hall;
- that two further properties be surveyed; and
- that an update report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee for final determination.

It was further agreed that, if possible, the report would be submitted to the December meeting and the Members noted that that this would be subject to legal advice from the City Solicitor in terms of the timeframe for the consultation and Council ratification.

**Restricted**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following 2 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.**

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following 3 items as, due to their nature, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**Request for the use of Falls Park for  
Féile An Phobail Winter Festival**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 22nd October, had granted to Féile an Phobail the use of Falls Park to hold its “Winter Festival” event between 26th November and 4th January, subject to the completion of the appropriate Event Management Plans and satisfactory terms and conditions being agreed.

Noted.

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**DfC Community Recovery Funding Update**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the Committee of additional funding that had been received from the Department for Communities (DfC) and proceeded to provide an overview of the recommended approach for the allocation of the funding.

He advised that the need for the provision of accessible funding, to enable service recovery and promote agile and responsive community development approaches within local areas, had been demonstrated as one of the key and most successful funding mechanisms introduced during the pandemic. Based on this, Council officers had submitted a high-level proposal to the DfC which had detailed that any additional award would be used to support the provision of Micro and Medium Grants and to allocate grant awards to Strategic and Thematic partners. He stated that it was felt that this approach would help enable the delivery of community development projects to meet a variety of locally identified community needs, in line with previously agreed DfC outcomes.

The Director then provided the Members with the background to the allocation of the previous micro and medium grant aid funding that had been used to support programme delivery from September 2021 – March 2022. He explained that this round of funding had provided support for a total of 350 projects across the city, representing a total investment of £990,552 and advised that it was recommended that the Council allocate £631,360 from the confirmed £1,031,360 for general Community Support towards the costs of this grant aid.

The funding that had been allocated through the August/September rounds would support activity until the end of the financial year. The community and voluntary sector had advised that managing programme delivery in the context of Covid recovery remained challenging and groups did not have the capacity to deliver projects within a short time frame. He explained to the Members that it was felt that it would not be operationally feasible to deliver another open round of funding for micro/medium grants across the city as all activity had to be delivered by 31st March 2022.

To ensure that additional support could be directed at an area and thematic level towards communities in greatest need, an allocation of £250,000 to the 9-area based strategic partners across the city was being recommended, with a further award of £150,000 to be made to the Thematic partners that had delivered services to the most vulnerable communities of interest across the city.

He advised that if organisations required short term financial support, they could contact their local community development officer to obtain information on available resources to support local programming.

In addition, officers were currently developing the grant aid application process for Medium/Micro grants to support programmes running from April – September 2022, it was likely that these would open in early 2022.

The Director explained that financial inclusion funding was provided by DfC and it was intended to support activity that provided debt, benefit, and financial education/support services. DfC had issued a funding award of £212,350 to Belfast City Council for the delivery of agreed outcomes in relation to this area of work. DfC had provided a previous award of £175,148 for financial inclusion which had been primarily awarded to the 5 generalist advice

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partners across the city. It was being recommended that, given the alignment between DfC outcomes for this fund and the ability of the advice providers to deliver eligible activity by 31st March 2022, the allocation be made to the 5 generalist advice partners. With the recommended allocation to be based on population and deprivation indicators in line with the Council's previous funding model.

Moved by Councillor Garrett,  
Seconded by Councillor Magee,

That the Committee agrees, because the allocations had already been committed, that it diverts £400k on top of the £250k onto the strategic groups to give a total of £650k; and 30k to the thematic groups giving them a total of £180k. This would enable support of real-time issues immediately and throughout the winter period around the costs associated with fuel poverty, energy price rises, Universal Credit Cuts, and the end of the furlough scheme.

On a vote, seven Members voted for the proposal and eight against and it was declared lost.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Smyth  
Seconded by Councillor Collins,

That a review of the strategic partners be undertaken, based on the monitoring information supplied by the returns and alongside the funding being issued.

On a recorded vote, six Members voted for the proposal and nine against and it was declared lost.

<b><u>For 6</u></b>	<b><u>Against 9</u></b>
Councillors Collins, Flynn, M. Kelly, McReynolds, Mulholland and Smyth.	Alderman McCoubrey, and Councillors Baker, Black, Bunting, Cobain, de Faoite, Garrett, Magee and McAteer.

The Committee:

- (i) agreed to accept the additional funding allocation of £1,243,710 from the DfC under priority areas of General Community Support and Financial Inclusion;
- (ii) agreed the following allocation model for the additional funding:

**Community Support**

£631,360 (Micro & Medium Grants Programme 21/22)  
£250,000 (Area strategic partners)

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£150,000 (City Thematic partners)

**Financial inclusion**

£212,350 (5 City generalist advice partners)

- (iii) agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it establish a specified reserve to the total of £631,360 from the Councils COVID reserve for use to top up the micro/medium grant scheme during 2022/23. This reserve would be ring fenced to allow the Council to deliver a comparable fund value for the micro/medium grant during 2022/23 to the actual funds awarded during 2021/22;
- (iv) Granted delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to allocate any additional monies that might be received by DfC in-year to relevant delivery partners based on the agreed delivery approaches as outlined within the Committee report.

**Committee/Strategic Issues**

**Update on Community Planning and  
work of Living Here Board**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on community planning with a specific focus on the work being taken forward by the Living Here Board.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to note the:**

- (i) ongoing work being progressed by the Living Here Board (LHB).
- (ii) alignment and synergies between the Board and the work of the Committee.
- (iii) ongoing opportunities for Elected Members to input and shape the work being taken forward through the Community Planning Partnership, including the refresh of the Belfast Agenda and delivery action plans, over the coming months.

**3.0 Main report**

**Background**

**3.1 The LHB is co-Chaired by the Council’s Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Health and Social Care Board’s Assistant**

**Director and Commissioning Lead for Belfast. The Board comprises Council officers and a range of its Community Planning Partners, including representation from the Statutory and VCSE sectors. The areas of collaborative focus being taken forward by the LHB, as set out below, clearly aligns with the remit of the Committee and seeks to support vulnerable people and communities as well as creating integrated approaches to improving service provision and support within the city.**

**Members will be aware of the ongoing review and refresh of the Belfast Agenda. Since the launch of the engagement programme in June 2021, we have been continuing the conversation with our city partners and stakeholders, including our delivery boards, to examine the key challenges, opportunities, and priorities for the city for the period 2022-26. To help inform the new Belfast Agenda a co-production approach was adopted with city partners and stakeholders and is being rolled out in three phases: i) a review of existing priorities, ii) planning what needs to happen next and iii) consulting on our plans.**

### **3.2 Living Here Board Workshop 7 July 2021**

**A workshop was held with members of the LHB as part of the first phase of engagement. The workshop focused on:**

- (i) Shaping and informing the refresh of the Belfast Agenda.**
- (ii) Securing collective agreement on priorities and interventions that the Board will drive forward over the next 18 months, to further support community recovery.**
- (iii) Considering how the Board could work more effectively (maximise productivity and d partners expertise and commitment).**

**The out-workings of this workshop will combine with other inputs and feed into subsequent engagement phases, allowing us to co-design action plans and a relevant, refreshed Belfast Agenda which will deliver a positive impact for everyone in the city.**

**A detailed report providing an overview of the Board workshop session is attached in Appendix 1. A number of key overarching areas for Members to note from the workshop discussion include:**

- ✓ General consensus that the priorities identified in the emerging Belfast Agenda delivery framework (2022-26) reflect the key challenges and opportunities for the city.**
- ✓ Recognition of the importance and need for strong collaboration and commitment from all partners, with resources mobilised to enable delivery.**

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- ✓ Highlighted the opportunity to consider and adopt new agile approaches taking account of lessons learned in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Advocated the need for priorities and actions to be specific, using simple and clear language.
- ✓ Supported the need for the Board to organise itself to support delivery, with well-defined sub-structures as necessary and a focus on additionality.
- ✓ Greater alignment of partner corporate/ business plans with the priorities of the LHB and the Belfast Agenda.
- ✓ Agreement on the use of a structured Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) approach and the importance of measuring success – impact.

Workshop participants agreed that the current focus and work of the LHB is relevant over the next 18 months, as Covid-19 has heightened these issues, widened existing inequalities and reinforced the need for the continued focus. There will be scope for partners to further refine the work as part of the action planning phase. The LHB work programme focuses on the following:

**i) Addressing Health Inequalities:**

- ✓ Drugs, alcohol, mental health, and homelessness – Belfast Complex Lives approach.
- ✓ Avoidable winter deaths – Belfast Warm and Well Project.
- ✓ Promoting positive emotional wellbeing.

**ii) Enabling community recovery and area planning (including the multi-agency support hub pilot in South Belfast)**

**iii) Improving outcomes for children and young people – through the Belfast Area Outcomes Group (BAOG) developing an integrated, inter-agency approach to early intervention (including children and young people fulfilling their potential, early years support and family programmes).**

**3.3 Living Here Board meeting 13 September 2021**

In addition to the planned workshop in July, the LHB also held a virtual meeting on Monday 13 September 2021, a summary note and slide-deck from the LHB is attached in Appendix 2. Whilst the Committee may have previously discussed some of the areas below, some important points for Members to note from the LHB discussion include:

**i) Belfast City Covid Research Report**

**3.4 Board members were presented with an overview, key findings, lessons learned and next steps of the research. The report (see**

attached in Appendix 3) highlighted the important role and success of the VCSE sector in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and in supporting vulnerable people in the community. The contents of the research report were also noted at the Strategic Policy and Resources meeting on 18 June 2021. Partners commended the research report and the importance of harnessing this work, to keep the focus and momentum going and influence regional and city approaches.

**Addressing Health Inequalities**

ii) Supporting vulnerable people with Complex Lives.

- 3.5 The Board received a practical overview of the ongoing work associated with the development and delivery of the complex lives whole system model in Belfast including the scope of the approach and the preparations that are underway for 'Day 1 readiness' at the end of October. The prototyping phase of the complex lives approach are due to take place from November – April 2022.

iii) Belfast Warm and Well Project

- 3.6 Board members received a short update of the project, noting the progress of year 2, limitations around the year 2 evaluation process due to Covid-19 and proposed actions planned for winter 2021/22. Board members agreed to proactively seek to raise awareness and encourage their frontline staff to promote and support the scheme.

**Area Planning and Delivery**

iv) Wider University and Lower Ormeau (WU&LO)

- 3.7 Elected Members will be aware of the significant and complex challenges in this area. Board Members were provided with a brief update on the ongoing work with government departments and local stakeholders to bring forward an integrated and targeted approach and proposal. Progress will continue to be reported through the LHB as the proposal is further developed and refined.

Within this context, Board Members were provided with an update on a proposal to re-connect CCTV cameras within the Holyland area and how this could be developed and resourced. This is just one of the many interventions to be taken forward to address issues of community concern in the area i.e. crime and ASB. Partners agreed to establish a small task and finish group of core partners to further develop and refine the proposal and report back to the LHB.

v) Department of Health – Integrated Care System (ICS) NI  
Draft Framework

- 3.8 A short presentation was made to the Board on the proposals for the new ICS model in NI, to help raise awareness amongst partners of the emerging framework and approach. Elected members will recall approving the draft council's consultation response at the People and Communities committee meeting on the 7 September 2021. Partner engagement is ongoing to ensure alignment, as work is currently underway to implement elements of the ICS model by March 2022.

As the engagement work on the refresh of the Belfast Agenda continues, the next phase will bring focus to delivery and members of the LHB will further unpack priorities and co-design action plans, to be delivered over the next four years i.e. 2022-26. Action plans will need to:

- ✓ Align to the strategic priorities agreed.
- ✓ Identify convening leads – secure partner buy-in and shared ownership.
- ✓ Comply with the principles of Community Planning (i.e. outcome focussed, create added value and isn't business as usual).
- ✓ Take account of experience and lessons emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Consider a range of inputs (e.g. feedback from phase I engagement; continuation of relevant work; feedback from Board workshops and local data and intelligence).

- 3.9 Members will continue to be engaged in this process as it develops into early 2021. Regular updates of the LHB will be brought to the Community Planning All-Party Working Group and the People and Communities Committee going forward, providing the mechanism for informing and engaging members in relation to the Living Here work programme.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.10 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Costs associated with the implementation and facilitation of the LHB are currently being met within existing council budgets.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.10 There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications and no Rural Needs Assessment required for the recommendations outlined above."

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A number of the Members welcomed the ongoing work being progressed by the Living Here Board (LHB), along with the ongoing opportunities for Elected Members to input and shape the work being taken forward through the Community Planning Partnership, including the refresh of the Belfast Agenda and delivery action plans.

Noted.

**Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021 – 2026**

(Mr. A. Curran, Scientific Unit Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues.**

- 1.1 The Committee will be aware that in accordance with the statutory provisions of Part III of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, and as a consequence of the outworkings of the first round of review and assessment of ambient air quality for the city, completed in 2004, Belfast City Council declared four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) across the city for a combination of exceedances of the hourly, 24-our and annual mean Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland objectives for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>).**
- 1.2 The four AQMAs were declared in a ‘ribbon’ manner, encompassing the (i) Ormeau Road, (ii) Upper Newtownards Road, (iii) M1 Motorway and A12 Westlink corridor, and (iv) from Cromac Street to the junction with East Bridge Street and then from East Bridge Street to the junction with the Ravenhill and Albertbridge Roads and Short Strand. The AQMAs remain in place.**
- 1.3 Source apportionment studies undertaken for the AQMAs indicated that exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) objectives were principally associated with road transport emissions. It should be noted that exceedances of the particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) objectives occurred only within the M1 Motorway / A12 Westlink corridor and that this AQMA was revoked for particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) exceedances in 2014, due to the relevant objectives being achieved over a number of preceding years.**
- 1.4 Part III of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 requires that where an AQMA has been declared, a council shall subsequently prepare an Air Quality Action Plan containing mitigation measures that the council and its Competent Authority partners intend to implement in pursuit of the achievement of air quality objectives within the AQMA.**

1.5 Accordingly, Belfast City Council, Competent Authorities and other partner organisations published the first Air Quality Action Plan for the city in 2006. A further Air Quality Action Plan was published in 2015. With the conclusion of the 2015 Air Quality Action Plan in 2020, the Council and partner organisations have now developed a new 5-year Air Quality Action Plan, covering the period 2021-2026, that is designed to address the few remaining nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) hotspots within our AQMAs and to improve ambient air quality generally for the city.

1.6 Although aspects of the new Air Quality Action Plan, including proposed mitigation measures, have already been considered by Committee during the Plan development process, this paper serves to present the completed Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 to Committee for consideration and approval.

## 2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Review and approve the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 and;
- Agree that the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 be submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) independent technical assessors for appraisal.

## 3.0 Main report

### Key Issues

3.1 The Committee is advised that the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 has been developed with regard to the various requirements of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) local air quality management technical guidance document LAQM.TG(16) and utilising the UK Regions (exc. London) Air Quality Action Plan Template 2020, amended to reflect Northern Ireland governance arrangements.

3.2 Defra have recommended that Air Quality Action Plans be periodically reviewed and whilst no time period has been explicitly established, best practice suggests that a review should take place no later than every five years, or more frequently if significant changes to sources have occurred within the council area. Accordingly, the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 has been developed with an anticipated lifespan of 5 years, but it is noted within the document that the Plan may be amended during its lifetime to reflect any additional actions necessary to address excessive concentrations of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) across the city, as identified through the detailed review and assessment

project for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), currently being delivered by AECOM consultants and scheduled to report in early 2023.

- 3.3 Progress with implementation of the new Air Quality Action Plan will be reviewed by the Action Plan Steering Group on at least an annual basis in order to comply with government reporting requirements, either via the current Progress Report or via the forthcoming Annual Status Report. As part of the public discussion into a Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland, DAERA have proposed that Annual Status Reports will replace current Updating and Screening Assessment and Progress Reports, thereby aligning Northern Ireland with ambient air quality reporting arrangements already in place in the other devolved administrations. Annual Status Reports are proposed to be submitted to DAERA by 30th September of each year.
- 3.4 In terms of the document structure, the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 includes an executive summary that also provides information concerning the roles and responsibilities of those organisations that have been involved in the Plan's development.
- 3.5 The Plan also includes an introductory section and a summary of recent local air quality management conditions for the city, including headline trend data for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).
- 3.6 The Plan includes brief summaries of various strategies, plans and policies that contribute towards improving ambient air quality for the city, including the Belfast Local Development Plan, the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan, the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and the Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan, etc.
- 3.7 The Plan provides various source apportionment information, identifying the extent to which key sources of ambient air pollution contribute to the air quality objective exceedances that have been identified within our Air Quality Management Areas. There are accompanying calculations demonstrating the emission reductions required to achieve the air quality objectives and the anticipated years when compliance will be achieved.
- 3.8 The Plan then provides details of key policy areas for improving ambient air quality in Belfast such as by encouraging the uptake of active travel and public transport. The Plan also provides a limited assessment highlighting the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns on local transport activities and ambient air pollution levels.
- 3.9 The Plan document includes details of the 12-week public consultation exercise for the new Air Quality Action Plan, in

fulfilment of the statutory requirements of Schedule 2 Air Quality: Supplemental Provisions of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, together with some key consultation summary statistics.

- 3.10 Table 5 of the Air Quality Action Plan lists all of the mitigation measures to be implemented by our Competent Authority partners and other city organisations and bodies represented on the Air Quality Action Plan Steering Group. Table 5 includes a description of the measure, the lead authority, an implementation date, an estimated completion date and an ambient air quality benefit. The table details 51 mitigation measures, including the action identified at the previous meeting of the People and Communities Committee that the Council, as part of the Air Quality Action Plan, would include greater enforcement within smokeless zones and agree to develop an awareness campaign to educate residents on the impact of polluting home fuels (Action 51).
- 3.11 Appendix 1 to the Air Quality Action Plan contains a summary of the various responses to the public consultation on the draft Air Quality Action Plan. The Committee is advised that these consultation responses have already been circulated amongst Competent Authority partners and other city organisations and bodies represented on the Air Quality Action Plan Steering Group. Where these competent authorities, organisations or bodies have provided responses to the consultation comments, they have been captured within the relevant section of Appendix 1 - Table A1.
- 3.12 Details of all of the ambient air quality and related references cited throughout the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 are included within the Reference section, towards the rear of the document.
- 3.13 The Committee is advised that in accordance with local air quality management policy guidance, the Air Quality Action Plan is to be submitted to DAERA for technical appraisal by the Department's independent assessors. The Action Plan will be brought back to Committee for further consideration should any significant revisions be required by the assessors.
- 3.14 Once formally approved, it is anticipated that the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 will be made available in printed copy and via the Council's website.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.15 There will be design and printing costs associated with the formal publication of the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications /  
Rural Needs Assessments.**

- 3.16 An Equality Screening and a Rural Needs Assessment have been completed for the draft Air Quality Action Plan for Belfast 2021-2026. These documents currently remain available to review on the Council's Your say Belfast consultation platform, via the following web link:**

**<https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/air-quality>**"

At the request of a Member, it was agreed that the following matters be considered by officers as part of the ongoing implementation and management of the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), throughout its 5-year lifespan, and noted that the Plan might need to be updated dependent upon the outworking of the detailed assessment:

- whilst best practice suggests a review every 5 years, it should be reviewed again upon completion of the detailed emissions inventory work;
- engagement be undertaken with the BHSCT in regard to its active travel plans and ensuring that these were complimentary to the proposals;
- reaffirm with DAERA that Low Emission Zones should form part of any Clean Air Strategy;
- note that progress should be benchmarked against the updated WHO standards;
- the Committee to be furnished with AQAP Steering Group reports following each Action Plan Steering Group meeting;
- the Annual Status reports to be submitted to the Committee on an annual basis, prior to submission to the Department; and
- the consultation submissions to be circulated to Committee via regular update reports.

The Committee approved the Belfast City Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026 available [here](#) and agreed that it be submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) independent technical assessors for appraisal.

**Air Quality Monitoring - update on Belfast sites**

The Committee considered the following report:

**"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 At the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 12th October 2021, and subsequent to consideration by Committee of a local air quality management update report, Members agreed that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee providing a detailed breakdown of ambient air quality monitoring across the city, including specific detail regarding the west and outer west.**
- 1.2 This report serves therefore to provide a background to the various statutory local air quality management requirements for**

ambient monitoring, established via the 2007 Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland: Volumes 1 and 2, local air quality management policy guidance documents including LAQM.PG(NI)09 and supporting technical guidance documents such as the April 2021 edition of LAQM.TG(16).

- 1.3 This report also serves to provide an overview of the approach to ambient air quality monitoring employed by Belfast City Council for those pollutants prescribed in the above-mentioned local air quality management documents, together with a detailed breakdown of current ambient air quality monitoring across the city, including specific detail regarding the west and outer west.
- 1.4 Members are reminded that in November 2020, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) undertook a public discussion exercise into a Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland, advising that the discussion document formed part of a two-stage approach to developing the first Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland. The Department further advised that all of the stakeholder responses would be carefully considered and would be used to shape future policies for Ministerial consideration. Options for ambient air quality monitoring, including expansion of the existing monitoring network, targeted monitoring based on population size and the introduction of low-cost air quality monitoring equipment were considered as part of the public discussion exercise.

## 2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of this local air quality monitoring report.

## 3.0 Main report

### Key Issues

- 3.1 The UK Government has previously advised that in relation to ambient air quality, the primary objective is to ensure that all citizens should have access to outdoor air without significant risk to their health, where this is economically and technically feasible.
- 3.2 The 2007 Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland therefore established a series of air quality objectives, which are policy targets, often expressed as a maximum ambient concentrations not to be exceeded, either without exception or with a permitted number of exceedances, within a specified timescale. In setting these objectives to safeguard human health, the UK Government and devolved administrations took account of economic efficiency,

practicability, technical feasibility and timescale for achievement. The Strategy document advises that the objectives do not have direct legal force, but their existence and attainment have to be borne in mind in designing and executing mitigation measures.

- 3.3 The Air Quality Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 do however establish a series of statutory short and longer term air quality objectives for Northern Ireland for those air pollutants identified within the abovementioned Strategy document, i.e. benzene (C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>6</sub>), 1,3-butadiene (CH<sub>2</sub>=CH)<sub>2</sub>, carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). Moreover, Part III of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 places a statutory duty on Northern Ireland councils to periodically review and assess ambient air quality within their districts against these objectives and to work with competent authorities in pursuit of the achievement of air quality standards and the objectives in designated areas of exceedance, i.e. within Air Quality Management Areas.
- 3.4 The Committee will note that fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) is not included within regulation for the purposes of district council local air quality management. The Air Quality Standards Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 do however place a duty on Northern Ireland Departments to ensure that all necessary measures not entailing disproportionate costs are taken in relation to Northern Ireland with a view to attaining the PM<sub>2.5</sub> national exposure reduction target by 2020 and ensuring that the average exposure indicator for 2015 does not exceed 20 mgm<sup>-3</sup>. The Committee will be aware that the council has proactively appointed AECOM Consultants to undertake a detailed review and assessment for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) for Belfast, that is scheduled to be completed in early 2023.
- 3.5 The government's local air quality management technical guidance document LAQM.TG(16), which provides technical guidance as to how review and assessments should be conducted, highlights the principle of public exposure, advising that for the purposes of LAQM, regulations state that exceedances of the objectives should be assessed in relation to *"the quality of the air at locations, which are situated outside of buildings or other natural or man-made structures, above or below ground, and where members of the public are regularly present"*. Accordingly, annual mean objectives are given to apply at the building façades of residential properties, schools, hospitals, care homes, etc. Annual mean objectives do not apply at building façades of offices or other places of work, hotels, gardens of residential properties and kerbside sites. 24 and 8-hour mean objectives apply at all annual mean objective locations, as well as at hotels and in the gardens of residential properties. 24 and 8-hour mean objectives do not however apply at kerbside sites or other locations where

public exposure is expected to be short term. 1-hour mean objectives apply at all locations where 24 and 8-hour mean objectives apply, as well as at kerbside sites, car parks, bus stations and railway stations or any outdoor location where members of the public might reasonably expect to spend one hour or longer. 1-hour mean objectives do not apply at kerbside sites, where the public would not be expected to have regular access. 15-minute mean objectives apply at locations where members of the public might reasonably be exposed for a period of 15 minutes or longer.

- 3.6 The ambient air pollutants detailed within the Air Quality Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 were considered through a combination of ambient monitoring and atmospheric dispersion modelling during the council's first detailed review and assessment of ambient air quality for Belfast, completed in 2004. At that time, it was concluded that all of the air quality objectives were being achieved for Belfast, with the exception of the annual and hourly mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and the annual and 24-hour mean objectives for particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). These exceedances were noted to be principally associated with road transport and gave subsequent rise to the council's four Air Quality Management Areas, declared along the M1 Motorway / A12 Westlink corridor, the Ormeau Road, the Upper Newtownards Road and the area from Cromac Street to the Ravenhill Road and Short Strand. All of the 2004 detailed review and assessment documents were reviewed and accepted by the government's independent technical assessors. It should be noted that exceedances of the particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) objectives occurred only within the M1 Motorway / A12 Westlink corridor and that this AQMA was revoked for particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) exceedances in 2014, due to the relevant objectives being achieved over a number of preceding years.
- 3.7 The Committee is advised that exceedances of the annual and hourly mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide are commonplace across both the UK and Europe, with most major cities and conurbations now focusing on addressing nitrogen dioxide emissions from road transport sources. Indeed, the DAERA NI Air website highlights that of the 19 active AQMAs declared across Northern Ireland, 17 are associated with exceedances of nitrogen dioxide objectives, associated with road transport sources.
- 3.8 Accordingly, the council's current ambient monitoring programme for the city has been focused primarily on assessing nitrogen dioxide concentrations at, or near to roadside locations. Guidance as to roads of concern is provided in LAQM.TG(16). Given that the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide has to be assessed primarily at the façades of residential properties, LAQM.TG(16) advises that ambient monitoring should take place for:

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- Roads with a high flow of traffic, i.e. at least 10,000 vehicles per day, with public exposure within 10m from the kerb;
- Roads with significantly increased flows, i.e. a 25% traffic increase in traffic on roads with a flow of at least 10,000 vehicles per day, and with public exposure within 10m of the kerb;
- At road junctions, with a throughput of at least 10,000 vehicles per day, and with public exposure within 10m of the kerb;
- Narrow congested streets with residential properties close to the kerb, at locations with at least 5,000 slow moving vehicles per day, frequent stop / start traffic activity and exposure within 2m of the kerb;
- Roads with a high flow of heavy-duty vehicles, i.e. at least 2,500 HDVs per day and public exposure within 10m from the kerb and;
- At bus or coach stations with at least 2,500 bus or coach movements per day and public exposure within 10m from kerb.

**3.9 Monitoring for the nitrogen dioxide 1-hour mean objective should additionally take place for those roads and locations meeting the annual mean criteria, and in:**

- Busy streets where people may spend 1-hour or more, close to traffic, the qualifying criteria being 10,000 vehicles per day and public exposure within 5m of the kerb, for a duration of 1-hour or more.

**3.10 Government has advised however, that exceedances of the 1- hour mean objective for nitrogen dioxide are unlikely to occur for those roads where the nitrogen dioxide annual mean is less than 60 mgm<sup>-3</sup>.**

**3.11 The council has consequently developed and implemented its ambient air quality monitoring programme for the city following current and previous versions of the government's technical guidance, dating back to LAQM.TG(03), published in January 2003.**

**3.12 Accordingly, ambient monitoring is currently undertaken at the Belfast Centre site at Lombard Street within the city centre for carbon monoxide (CO), sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), heavy metals, hydrocarbons and black carbon using a combination of 'real time' automatic reference analysers and passive analysers. Automatic 'real time' reference analysers are highly accurate and able to assess compliance with both short (down to a 15-minute mean in the case of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)) and longer-term (up to an annual mean) air quality objectives.**

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- 3.13** The council also operates ‘real time’ nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) analysers in three of our four Air Quality Management Areas; the Ormeau Road, Upper Newtownbreda Road, and at Stockmans Lane and Roden Street, both located within the M1 Motorway / A12 Westlink corridor AQMA. The Stockmans Lane site is additionally equipped with a ‘real time’ particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) analyser.
- 3.14** Data and details for all of our ‘real time’ analysers are available via the DAERA NI Air website via the following web link: <https://www.airqualityni.co.uk/>. Locations of our automatic monitoring sites have been presented within Appendix A to this report.
- 3.15** In addition to our ‘real time’ automatic analysers, we operate a significant number of passive type analysers for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) across the city. Known as diffusion tubes, this type of monitoring equipment can be installed on lampposts or on the façades of homes to assess compliance with the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide. Diffusion tubes are exposed to ambient nitrogen dioxide pollution, typically for successive periods of four weeks, and then returned to an accredited laboratory for analysis. By aggregating successive four-week periods of monitoring data, a nitrogen dioxide annual mean concentration can be derived. Even when employing an accredited laboratory however, diffusion tubes have limited accuracy and so we also co-locate them with our automatic ‘real time’ analysers, enabling a local calibration or bias adjustment factor to be derived. Corrected nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube data for all of our monitoring sites is reported annually via either the council’s Updating and Screening Assessment or Progress Reports. These reports, dating back to September 2005, are available on the DAERA NI Air website via this weblink: <https://www.airqualityni.co.uk/laqm/district-council-reports#511>
- 3.16** At present, we have installed nitrogen dioxide diffusion tubes at some 59 kerbside, roadside or background monitoring locations across the city. Maps of our various diffusion tube monitoring locations have also been presented at Appendix A to this report. The Committee is advised however that nitrogen dioxide monitoring using diffusion tubes has been undertaken by the council since significantly before the first formal detailed review and assessment for ambient air quality was completed for the city in 2004. Accordingly, when ambient monitoring data indicates sustained compliance with the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective of 40 mgm<sup>-3</sup> over a number of years, monitoring at that site may typically be discontinued and the diffusion tube relocated. The council continues to apply this iterative approach to its nitrogen dioxide and other ambient air quality monitoring for the city.

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- 3.17** In requesting this report, the Committee has asked for specific detail regarding monitoring in the west and outer west of the city. Accordingly, the Committee is advised that monitoring for nitrogen dioxide is currently undertaken at Ardmore Park, Blacks Road, at the junction of the Falls and Andersonstown Roads, in Poleglass, at the Royal Victoria Hospital on the Falls Road, at Dunmurry Lane, at Andersonstown Road and at the Monagh By-Pass, the specific monitoring locations having been chosen with regard to the various qualifying and siting criteria detailed within LAQM.TG(16).
- 3.18** The Committee will be aware that nitrogen dioxide monitoring data has been influenced significantly by the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns. We have consequently noted that 2020 nitrogen dioxide annual mean monitoring concentrations at some locations has been reduced by approximately up to 1/3 when compared to 2019 annual mean data. We have therefore provided 2019 and 2020 corrected nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube annual mean monitoring data for the above-mentioned west and outer west monitoring locations within Appendix B to this report. It should be noted that the only recent exceedance of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective for west and outer west sites was recorded at the Blacks Road site during 2019.
- 3.19** Moreover, within Section 3.4 of this report, the Committee has been advised that the council has proactively appointed AECOM Consultants to undertake a detailed review and assessment for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) for Belfast City, scheduled to be completed in early 2023. As part of this project and as highlighted to Members during a presentation by AECOM (*Agenda item 13 Presentation on the Air Quality Detailed Assessment work - AECOM in attendance*) at the 11th May 2021 Remote Meeting of the People and Communities Committee, a limited number of additional small sensor air quality monitoring systems have been installed by AECOM across the city, in locations reflective of the principal sources of PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions for the city. Monitoring data from these additional monitoring systems will be used to augment the council's existing particulate matter and other monitoring data for the city, in the calibration of the atmospheric dispersion modelling component of the detailed assessment project. The Committee is advised that one of these small sensor air quality monitoring systems has been located in the Mount Eagles area in order to characterise local concentrations of fine particulate matter, associated with local domestic and other combustion activities.
- 3.20** The additional small sensor air quality monitoring systems are scheduled to be operated by AECOM for a period one year from their dates of installation as part of the detailed review and

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**assessment project in order to help determine compliance with the annual mean standards and guidelines for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), whereupon the equipment will revert to the council so that, where necessary, it can be relocated to characterise particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) concentrations in other areas of the city. The Committee will be consulted about any revisions to the existing monitoring locations or any new monitoring locations via a subsequent paper presented in Spring 2022.**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

**3.21 None**

**Equality or Good Relations Implications /  
Rural Needs Assessments.**

**3.22 None.”**

The Committee noted the contents of the local air quality monitoring report.

**Food Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022**

The Director of City Services advised the Members that the Food Safety Unit worked with local businesses to build compliance and to ensure that food produced and sold in Belfast was safe.

The Committee was advised that The Food Hygiene Rating Act (NI) 2016 required businesses to display their food hygiene rating, improving the opportunities for consumers to make informed choices and encouraging improved compliance. This also enhanced the reputation of Belfast as a safe place to visit, with at least 95% of food businesses rated as 3, 4 or 5 (broadly compliant or better).

The Director advised that Brexit continued to pose a major challenge for the service, with the potential for additional checks on the import and export of foods. She reported that the Council was working closely with the Food Standards Agency, DAERA, government departments, local businesses and other stakeholders to plan for reasonable worst-case scenarios and to ensure that adequate arrangements were in place to facilitate trade and to protect consumers.

In addition, she advised that it was estimated that around 2 million people living in the UK had a food allergy, this required officers to ensure that food businesses provided the required (allergen) information to enable consumers to make informed choices. Recent cases of severe allergic reactions, including the tragic death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse after eating a Pret a Manger sandwich, had highlighted concerns regarding the adequacy of labelling requirements for food that was prepacked for direct sale (PPDS). She advised that new labelling legislation which had come into force on 1st October 2021, required any business that produced PPDS food to label it with the name of the food and a full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients to be highlighted within the list. She reported that these

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additional legal requirements necessitated officer time to support, monitor and ensure compliance and were likely to impact significantly on the unit.

The Director then drew the Members' attention to the Service Delivery Plan that detailed the activities, techniques and approaches to be taken during the year to support businesses in ensuring food safety, food standards and to promote informed healthy choices available [here](#). She advised that the Plan provided the basis on which the Council's regulatory activities were monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency and it was a requirement that it was presented to the Council for approval, to ensure local transparency and accountability.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) had a key role in overseeing local authority regulatory activities to ensure that official controls were delivered. Powers to enable the FSA to monitor and audit local authorities were contained in the Food Standards Act 1999. A detailed Framework Agreement on local food law enforcement had been produced by the Agency, in conjunction with local authority representative bodies, to provide guidance on how regulatory service plans should be structured and what they should contain. Service plans developed under these arrangements provided the basis on which local authorities were monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency.

The Committee approved the Food Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022.

**Community Development and Capacity  
Building Support**

The Committee considered the following report.

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**The purpose of this report is to update members on the types of support available from within the Community Provision section in the City and Neighbourhood Services Directorate in Council which local groups can avail of, and members can promote, to groups that they are working with or who approach them for advice or assistance.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**The Committee is asked to:**

- **Note the contents of the report.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Background**

**3.1 Following an amendment to the minutes of the P&C Committee meeting held in September 2021 at the full Council meeting held on 4th October 2021. Members had asked for a report to be brought to the next P&C committee meeting which outlined 'capacity**

*building and potential further funding for other groups.'*  
In response, officers have outlined within this update the community development and capacity support services that are currently provided by Belfast City Council's Community Services Unit as well as several other service areas within Community Provision. It is however worth noting that staff within Community Provision can, and often do, link in with wider Council services both within City & Neighbourhood Services Directorate (e.g. Environmental Health/Open Spaces and Street Scene/Waste Collection) as well as in other Departments across Council who can also offer a range of support services to groups and individuals.

### 3.2 The Community Services Unit

Council's Community Services unit sits within the wider Community Provision team. The Unit continues to provide a range of services to support community activity and community development across the city. Many groups and organisations require support to plan and deliver programmes, particularly in the context of Covid recovery. Council has 27 community centres with dedicated staff attached to them who will support groups to access for bookings and programmes.

Staff within the CSU are able to support groups via three main areas outlined in more detail below.

#### 1. Direct financial support through grant aid

Funding of approximately £2 million is made available annually to 100+ Belfast-based community and voluntary organisations under two main funding streams – Community Capacity and Facilities Support. Members agreed at October Council meeting that awards for 21/22 would be rolled over into the 22/23 financial year. Officers will develop a new multi annual bid that will open for applications in Autumn 2022.

During the Covid response and recovery period, a number of previous funding streams were combined to create a more accessible, less bureaucratic process to access support with smaller micro and medium grants of up to £1,500 and £5,000 respectively allocated to community projects and events. Council allocated almost £1million to 350 projects in August/September 2021 for delivery until 31 March 22. Applications for both these funding streams will open again in January/February 2022.

#### 2. Advice and information

Council officers in the Unit can provide specialist support in relation not only to funding but also in relation to issues such as

safeguarding, volunteering and child/youth development. They will also act as conduit and facilitate access to other council and external services (statutory and voluntary).

### 3. Capacity building – training and development

Community Development Officers can provide training and mentoring in a range of development areas. There are 3 hard copy toolkits which can be accessed by groups; *Running a Community Organisation, Facilities Management and Collaborative Working*. Community Development Officers can also provide group facilitation support to develop business and project plans.

Those in need of assistance should contact their local community development officer in the first instance. Groups can be directed to [community@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:community@belfastcity.gov.uk) with requests for support in relation to any of the areas of work listed below.

#### 3.3 Community Awareness & Resource Education & Promotions Team

The Community Awareness Team works to discourage litter, dog fouling and graffiti in the city through campaigns, school visits and programmes, and competitions. The Resource Education and Promotions Team promotes waste and resource awareness including waste reduction, reuse and recycling to the public, schools and businesses in the city.

#### 3.4 Community Safety Team

Officers within the Community Safety Team work with Elected Members, Statutory Agencies and Independent Representatives to identify and take forward local and citywide priority actions within the Policing and Community Safety Partnership structure. Within the Team there are also a number Anti-Social Behaviour Officers and Safer Neighbourhood Officers. ASB Officers can engage with local communities, partner agencies and via multi-agency forums to address issues of ASB, they link in with the relevant PCSP and can host community surgeries in priority areas to allow residents to report issues directly.

Safer Neighbourhood Officers offer guidance, support and advice on community safety issues. They can challenge low-level antisocial behaviour, enforce laws relating to on-street drinking and environmental crime. They work alongside Police, Youth Workers and BCC park wardens to address low level ASB mainly in BCC parks and open spaces and hotspot areas across the city including the City centre.

**3.5 Good Relations Team**

Good Relations officers provide advice and support for groups throughout Belfast in the application process for Council grants as well as for funding from other bodies such as The Executive Office's Central Good Relations Fund, Heritage Lottery, Community Relations Council, NI Housing Executive, among others. Staff within the team can provide support to local community organisations to develop relationships, networks and partnerships on an inter-community basis in order to promote the development of Good Relations at the local level. Members can direct queries to [goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk)

**3.6 Open Spaces and Active Living (OSAL) Unit**

The OSAL Unit can offer advice and assistance to groups wishing to run events or programmes in our parks and open spaces – assisting them through the application process. They also organise Council-led events and activities in our outdoor spaces throughout the year as well as administering Council's allotments allocation scheme. In addition, our Parks Outreach team works at a more area level to assist local groups and communities to make better use of, and support improvements to our local parks and public spaces and to organise, promote and deliver events, etc. The Unit can be contacted at [outdoorleisure@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:outdoorleisure@belfastcity.gov.uk)

**3.7 Sports/Leisure Development Unit**

The Sports/Leisure Development Unit can provide information, advice and support on a range of issues and initiatives such as coach education and sports development planning for clubs. The team offers funding under the 'Support for Sport' theme such as development grants for small interventions as well as larger club programmes, grants for small scale international events, and financial support for talented individuals. The team also co-funds, alongside PHA, the Active Belfast Grants administered and managed by the Belfast Health Development Unit. They work with governing bodies and clubs at local/community level to take forward priorities and actions under BCC's Boxing Strategy, the GAA Joint Management Partnership and the Stadia Community Benefits Initiative (in partnership with GAA & IFA). They work with local clubs to ensure that partner and facilities management agreements in place with Council are achieving their aims and objectives. Please contact the team at [leisure@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:leisure@belfastcity.gov.uk)

**3.8 Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU)**

Belfast Health Development Unit is co-located team comprising staff from BCC, BHSC and the Public Health Agency based in

Council. The focus of their work is on addressing health inequalities across a number of areas – currently drugs and alcohol and mental health, physical activity and nutrition, healthy ageing and lifelong learning. Staff work closely with the funding partners, Community Planning and key multi-agency partnerships and forums to identify and take forward key priorities and actions within these work areas. The Unit can be contacted by emailing [mlbt@bhdu.org](mailto:mlbt@bhdu.org)

**3.9 Community Infrastructure Pilots**

Members will recall that Council is also developing a Community Infrastructure Pilot that will work in identified areas across the city. Recent experience shows that communities require support and resources from a range of services within Council and other organisations/agencies. The development of the community infrastructure pilot will be an opportunity to take an integrated approach to identifying and responding to area needs. Further detail will be provided the next round of Area Working Groups when areas will be selected.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

**3.10 None.**

**Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment**

**3.11 The majority of the support provided in relation to advice, training, capacity building and financial aid provided by the services with Community Provision is aimed at addressing inequalities, fostering good relations and promoting equal access to services (internal and external to Council).”**

The Committee noted the report.

**Physical Programme and Asset Management**

**Coláiste Feirste: Review of Operation of Community Access to Sports Facilities**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of a request to provide financial support to An Spórtlann, Coláiste Feirste to enable the continued provision of leisure and recreational services on the site of the former Beechmount Leisure Centre,**

Falls Rd and ask for Members' consideration in undertaking a review as detailed in the unexecuted SLA.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1** Members are asked to consider if they wish to give authority for the post first year of operating review of public use provision at An Spórtlann, Coláiste Feirste (in the spirit of the unexecuted SLA) to take place to determine the scope of any financial consequences arising from public use provision at the facility and to make recommendations to the Council as to the legal liability of the Council for those consequences.

**3.0 Main report**

**Background**

**3.1** In 2009, following a strategic review of Council indoor leisure facilities, completed in 2004, the transfer of the site at Beechmount Leisure Centre to Coláiste Feirste/Fobairt Feirste was agreed, subject to detailed terms, which included public use. The transfer was initially to be at no charge, but officers subsequently negotiated a price of £2.325 million subject to appropriate terms to be included in a legal agreement to be prepared by the Director of Legal Services and agreement on the detailed terms of a service level agreement also to be prepared by the Director of Legal Services. The proposal was developed on the basis that the Council would not incur operating costs following transfer.

**3.2** The terms of a service level agreement (SLA) in respect of the public use were negotiated with the trustees at the time, to provide for the provision of public use by the trustees at the agreed times, however, that SLA was not signed by either party meaning it has not been legally executed. Following concerns about the financial viability of sustaining the public use expressed by the trustees at the time, Committee agreed the SLA should include a clause providing for a review after the first year of operating, and every three years after. The SLA was drafted to provide that should the public use prove to be uneconomical for the trustees after the review, the Council would have the option to either provide financial support to the trustees to safeguard the public use, or to release the trustees from their obligation to provide it. It did not commit the Council to the provision of any funding. The SLA was not signed by either the Council or the trustees and has not, therefore, been legally executed.

**3.3** Despite early discussions in relation to an SLA, sale of the site was only agreed in 2011, with redevelopment commencing in 2017 and completing in 2018. The sporting facilities comprise of:

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- one full sized 3G GAA floodlit pitch;
- one 3G floodlit pitch for soccer and GAA sports;
- 3 no. MUGA [multi use] areas, suitable for 7 a side soccer and basketball, etc.
- Two indoor handball courts with changing room facilities;
- One large indoor hall, suitable for basketball, indoor soccer, indoor hurling, etc
- One minor hall, suitable for group exercise sessions: Pilates, circuit training, etc
- One equipped gym
- One lecture room for video analysis, etc.
- Male and female changing facilities

- 3.4 Coláiste Feirste state that the facilities are open to the public for a total of 48 hours per week over the year as follows:

Mon – Friday 4.00 – 10.00 pm

Saturday 9.00 – 5.00 pm

Sunday 9.00 – 3.00 pm

They have provided a list of groups who use the facilities on a regular basis, which includes 24 GAA groups, 9 handball bodies, 11 soccer groups and 10 community initiatives.

- 3.5 Coláiste Feirste wrote to the Council on March 5th, 2019 (six months after the site became operational) seeking financial support to assist with the provision of public use of the Spórtlann facilities, which, it was stated, was being carried on at an unsustainable cost to Coláiste Feirste. Progress to resolve matters was delayed by the COVID pandemic and in October 2020, representatives of the Coláiste Feirste advised that the annual deficit associated with running the sporting facilities was estimated at £53,000 per annum.

**Key Issues**

- 3.6 As stated in 3.2 above, the unexecuted SLA as drafted, provides that, should the provision of public use be financially uneconomical to the trustees, the Council will have the option to either provide financial support to the trustees to safeguard the public use or to release the trustees from their obligation to provide that public use. Coláiste Feirste's letter of 2019 and subsequent correspondence confirms that this point has now been reached.
- 3.7 Members are asked to consider whether they wish to give authority for the first review to take place as detailed in the unexecuted SLA.

**Financial implications**

- 3.8 The cost of undertaking the review can be met from existing departmental budgets.**

**Equality or Good Relations Implications**

- 3.9 Officers will engage with colleagues to take forward any Equality or Good Relations implications.”**

A Member raised the fact that Coláiste Feirste was running at a deficit to ensure that the facility was available for public use and stated that this was not financially viable and needed to be addressed by the Council as a matter of urgency.

Detailed discussion ensued, following which the Committee agreed:

- that the post first year of operating review of public use provision at An Spórtlann, Coláiste Feirste would proceed (in the spirit of the unexecuted SLA) to determine the scope of any financial consequences and to make recommendations to the Council as to the legal liability of the Council for those consequences, and that in the interim (until the review had been completed) the Council would provide financial bridging support to Coláiste Feirste; and
- that the Director of Neighbourhood Services would liaise with Coláiste Feirste to scope any financial deficit incurred resulting from the public use provision at the facility from the point of their first year anniversary of operation and until such time as a review was completed. It was further agreed that a report be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to seek consideration of this as an 'ad hoc' funding request.

**Preferential Use of Blanchflower**

The Committee considered a report seeking approval to offer a Preferential Use Agreement to Glentoran Football Club at Blanchflower Playing Fields for limited access to the site for a period of two years.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Members that, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its March 2018 meeting, had asked officers to undertake research into the provision of pitch facilities for Glentoran Football Club, including its youth academy. The Committee had further accepted the East Areas Working Group's recommendation that a proposed capital programme to install a 3G pitch with floodlighting at King George V playing fields be replaced on the capital programme with a 3G pitch at Blanchflower playing fields.

In addition, at its meeting in March 2019, the People and Communities Committee, had agreed to upgrade the facilities at King George V Playing Fields and to offer a Preferential Use Agreement for five years to Glentoran Youth Academy.

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The Director advised that the King George V Playing Fields were subject to a Deed of Covenant with Fields in Trust. The Council had been advised that local residents had written to Fields in Trust in opposition to the planned development of the site and management of bookings. Local residents had approached Council officers both formally and informally to protest about the proposal on a number of grounds, including traffic management, Fields in Trust requirements and floodlighting. Northern Ireland Water had also advised that it would require a section of the site for a prolonged period in relation to works on their water treatment plant nearby.

The Members were advised that, during this period, significant investment had taken place to the football facilities in east Belfast, particularly at Blanchflower Playing Fields where the Council had developed two full size floodlit synthetic surface football pitches. He reported that one of these pitches would be directly managed by Harland and Wolff Welders Football Club and the other by the Council.

In summary, the Committee decision of March 2019 regarding the upgrade works at King George V Playing Fields had not been fulfilled, however, the availability of a new synthetic surface pitch at Blanchflower was imminent.

The Director reported that Glentoran FC had written to the Council seeking approval for the previously approved Preferential Use Agreement at King George V Playing Fields to be transferred to Blanchflower Playing Fields. He reminded the Members that officers had previously been directed to present research into the provision of suitable and convenient pitch facilities for Glentoran Football Club, including its youth academy. This report presented an option which was not available to officers at that time and therefore needed to be considered on that basis.

The Council was currently completing development of synthetic surface pitches in east Belfast including the pitches at Blanchflower playing fields and Avoniel Leisure Centre. It would likely take two years to understand the impact of these developments and how demand would be balanced across greater east Belfast. For this reason, it was proposed that the preferential use agreement should be of an interim nature and restricted to a maximum term of two years.

He reported that officers had negotiated with Glentoran Football Club representatives to agree a proposed timetable of priority use at limited times for Glentoran Football Club for the duration of the agreement. He referred to the proposed timetable, below, which was reflective of Glentoran Football Club's commitment to growing the game in an inclusive way with significant usage by groups under-represented in sport. The pitch would be available for bookings at all other times.

Proposed timetable of priority use for Glentoran Football Club:

<b>Day</b>	<b>Times</b>
Monday	6:00pm – 7:00pm 7:00pm – 8:00pm
Tuesday	6:00pm – 7:00pm 7:00pm – 8:00pm

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Wednesday	6:00pm – 7:00pm 7:00pm – 8:00pm
Thursday	6:00pm – 7:00pm 7:00pm – 8:00pm
Friday	n/a
Saturday	n/a
Sunday	n/a

Following a query from a Member in regard to pitch space for Harland and Wolf Welders Women's Junior, the Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that this arrangement afforded Glentoran Football Club the first opportunity to book at the aforementioned times but if they did not require the slots they would be made available for other Clubs to book.

The Committee:

- (i) granted approval for a preferential use agreement to be developed with Glentoran Football Club, for a term of two years, in relation to the synthetic surface pitch at Blanchflower Playing Fields; and
- (ii) agreed to afford priority use of the pitch, at limited times, as detailed and subject to Glentoran Football Club continually providing a programme of use demonstrating significant inclusive use of the facility specifically for women and girls and people with a disability.

### **Community Asset Management Pilots**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 To seek committee approval for a number of pilot projects across the city using a draft community asset management framework and toolkit to identify future management models to maximise community benefits and ensure community management council facilities can deliver on the outcomes of the Belfast Agenda.**

**The sites identified below cover a range of asset types currently being managed within the community.**

- **Clarendon Playing Fields;**
- **Ulidia Playing Fields;**
- **Hammer Pitch, changing rooms & community space;**
- **Willowbank Multi Sports Facility;**
- **Tullycarnet Park Boxing Club;**
- **Former Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre;**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Approve pilot projects at the 6 proposed sites and move forward with the agreed work streams under our draft Community Asset Framework, working with the existing groups and through a procured partner to support the development of community benefit plans and business case proposals to determine the most appropriate future management model for each of the sites. The outcomes of this will be used to update our draft framework and the development of a new Community Asset Management policy. Committee will be kept updated at all stages and any next steps will be subject to Committee sign-off.

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1** The Council has a long history of supporting community groups and third sector organisations to deliver services, doing so by permitting community management of council assets. It is believed that communities benefit not only from overall outcomes achieved but also through their direct involvement in the management and programming of community facilities. The community benefit is generally considered to be greater when achieved via this model than when the council is the direct delivery agent, however community benefit remains unmeasured in most instances. The ambition of Members in this area is also recognised and therefore it is proposed to conduct a series of pilot projects to measure and evaluate that community benefit. The pilots will cover a range of asset types with differing functions, management models and end user demographics.
- 3.2** The pilot projects will utilise a previously untested draft framework and assessment toolkit developed for Council by DTNI. Learning achieved through the application of this work to live examples will inform a future Community Asset Management Policy. It is recognised that with increasing emphasis on inclusive growth, resilience and wealth building in communities, requests for long term access to council assets will only grow in number. There is now a strong impetus to test the previous work and assess its value as a decision-making tool.
- 3.3** Pilot sites have been chosen to reflect the existing variety of management models specifically, Leases, Facility Management Agreements and Partner Agreements. The scope includes assets already managed within the community and new or vacant assets.

The range of functionality includes community programming, sports development and youth and community support.

The Proposed Pilot sites

Ulidia and Clarendon Playing Fields

- 3.4 Council is currently in receipt of requests for the transfer of the sites at Ulidia and Clarendon Playing Fields, to long term management within the community. Facilities at these sites are used to deliver community development outcomes through and alongside sports outcomes. The requests from Rosario FC and Clarendon Development Agency respectively have been the subject of ongoing engagement between officers, elected members and the organisations for some time as the organisations already have a management agreement at the sites. In the case of Ulidia PF the current Partner Agreement is approaching its final year and at Clarendon PF the Facility Management Agreement is overholding on a month to month basis.
- 3.5 In both cases the applicants are proposing that their long-term management of the site would have greater community benefit than a reversion to council management at the termination point of the current legal agreement. They also propose opportunities for capital development at both sites using external investment but neither have the security of tenure required to be successful in a funding application.
- 3.6 Officers are proposing the pilot deliver for each asset the following outputs, to inform decision making.
- A community benefits realisation plan
  - A business case to demonstrate the organisations long term sustainability
  - Recommended mechanism for of the transfer of the asset to community management assessed against the draft framework.

Willowbank Park and Hammer 3G pitch.

- 3.7 The Willowbank site is managed under an FMA of 2008 by Willowbank Multi Sports Club (Ais Spoirt Bhrúach na Saileoige), the Hammer site by Shankill United FC under a complex variety of agreements including a 10 year lease awarded in 2012 . The primary feature of each site is a pitch which the clubs manage and maintain on council's behalf. The clubs are paid a fee for their operational management and retain income from the booking of the pitches.

- 3.8 Both sites have benefitted historically from improvements financed by external capital drawn down by the managing clubs and both sites have the potential for further enhancement but are not currently on the council's capital programme. A project to upgrade the changing facilities at Willowbank has recently completed, jointly funded by council and DFC. The club is keen to see an increase in the size of the pitch at the site from the current three quarter size pitch to full size in order to drive income but has no immediate opportunity to draw funding from an external source for this as a moratorium on future FMAs has made their tenure insecure. Capital opportunities at the Hammer site are limited similarly by the approaching lease termination date.
- 3.9 The pilot presents the opportunity to evaluate what is being delivered from the sites under the current community management and quantify any benefit to the council and to the community. The pilot will use the draft framework to test options for the future vehicle by which these sites might be managed and to test the capacity of the current agreement holders to continue in a managing role under a new mechanism. Any decision on the future management option will need to take account of the financial benefit the clubs currently derive from council and consider how any future agreement for their management of the site might be sustained.
- 3.10 Officers are proposing outputs of the pilot for these sites will be:
- Evaluation of current community management arrangements and development of a community benefits realisation plan;
  - Review of community management options and a recommended mechanism for the future management of the sites
  - A business case exploring the financial sustainability of the current agreement holders against the proposed management model

**The Former Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre and TAGIT Boxing Club at Tullycarnet Park**

- 3.11 The Council, as landowner, took possession of the former Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre in 2017 on the dissolution of the company which had built it. The building had been funded by Urban II through the former North Belfast Partnership. It is located on the boundary of Ballysillan park. An expression of interest exercise for a tenant was unsuccessful and the building has been vacant for some time and the council recently carried out required work to the mechanical and electrical systems. A community organisation, *Rcity*, with a proven track record of delivering cross community outcomes in North Belfast has now expressed an

interest in using the building as a hub from which to deliver youth and community programming.

- 3.12 Ballysillan Park is the site of an Urban Villages funded environmental improvement project. UV are supportive of the installation of Rcity as anchor tenants at the facility and have awarded funding specific to the upgrade of the external spaces at the former youth centre as part of the overall project.
- 3.13 Tullycarnet Action Group Initiative Trust, (TAGIT) Boxing Club, were awarded BIF funding in 2018 for the construction of a new boxing club facility on an area of open land in Tullycarnet Park. The project aims to significantly increase the delivery of sport focused outcomes in the park and programme community activity from the building. The building has recently been completed and the club, under a condition of the funding agreement have been granted a Lease for the land.
- 3.14 Including both these facilities in the pilot presents the opportunity to explore how the DTNI framework can be used to evaluate those proposals whereby a community group or third sector organisation intends using a council facility offering community focused programme development. Whilst the BIF funding and due diligence includes assessment of project outcomes against Belfast Agenda objectives and has therefore established a baseline for the TAGIT facility no similar process has been undergone by RCity.

*Officers are proposing outputs of the pilot for these sites will include:*

- A community benefit plan aligned to the core specialism of the organisation
- A benefits realisation and monitoring plan
- Review of current community management arrangements and recommendations for the future management options.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.15 A budget for this work will come from existing resources within City & Neighbourhood Services and Physical Programmes.

#### **Equality or Good Relations Implications** **/Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.16 The final Community Asset Management policy will be screen in line with Council policy.”

Following a query from a Member, the Director Neighbourhood Services advised that the Committee would be kept regularly updated and confirmed that the next steps would be subject to Committee approval.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**Belfast Healthy Cities - Value for Money Review**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the outcome of the Value for Money Review that has recently been completed by Copius Advisory Services/Consulting of partnership funding provided annually by Belfast City Council, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Public Health Agency to Belfast Healthy Cities. It was previously agreed that this review would be undertaken separate to the broader Partnership Funding Evaluation Review given the 4-way partnership funding and monitoring arrangements.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Given the conclusions of the review outlined in section 3, alongside the recent redesignation of Healthy Cities status for Belfast to 2026, it is recommended that Committee:**

- Agree in principle to fund Belfast Healthy Cities at the same level for the 2022/23 financial year (£81,294), subject to the completion of the 2022/23 revenue estimates process;**
- Agree for council officers and partner organisation representatives to undertake a series of facilitated discussions between Nov 21-Mar 2022 namely with BHDU staff, BHC staff and Board alongside key health and community planning leads to develop and agree health priorities for Belfast to be progressed as part of the Belfast Agenda Refresh, Belfast’s Phase VII plan and the emerging ICP structure and planning process for Belfast;**
- Note that this process will include agreeing the governance structure and resources anticipated/required to progress the priority actions and will therefore take account of, and incorporate, the review’s recommendations in relation to BHC in terms of being one of the key resources/delivery agents;**
- Note a further report to be brought to Committee, as well as via the Belfast Community Planning Partnership structures, for consideration and approval.**

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 Background**

Belfast's membership to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network is facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC), an independent partnership organisation, recognised as having charitable status by The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. Belfast Healthy Cities is governed by a Board of Directors, elected annually and representing the public, university, voluntary and community sectors.

Members approved the completion of an Expression of Interest for Belfast to re-designate as a WHO Healthy City and participate in Phase VII of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 17th August 2018. Members then approved the application for submission in September 2020. On 21st May 2021 Belfast Healthy Cities confirmed that the City of Belfast had been successful in its application, has been designated in Phase VII, and thereby extended to April 2026.

Council are one of four core funders to Belfast Healthy Cities, along with the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) and Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Annual funding amounts to over 300k of which BCC contributes £89,586.

Officers engaged with the other funding organisations to outline the decision of Council and in the spirit of 'collaborative gain' as set within the Belfast Agenda, it was then agreed to widen the scope of the review of Council's partnership agreement with Belfast Healthy Cities, to also include the agreements of the other core funders.

A collective specification was agreed and, following a quotation exercise led by BCC, and Copius Advisory Services/Consulting was appointed to undertake a 'value for money' review of the partnership agreements with Belfast Healthy Cities, taking account of the direct and indirect benefits brought to the city.

Due to Covid the value for money review exercise was significantly delayed and as a result there have been several submissions to committee in 20/21 and 21/22 to extend the current funding arrangements with BHC (each partner organisation has also extended via their approval processes) – the most recent request was approved at the P&C committee's June 21 meeting and ensures funding is in place until end of March 2022. BHC has continued to provide services throughout the review period albeit the provider did raise concerns that ongoing uncertainty around

funding and future intentions did have a negative impact on staffing levels/retention at times.

### 3.2 Partnership Funding Review Terms of Reference

As per the agreed TORS, Copius were tasked with undertaking a value for money review based on the Challenge, Compare and Consult components of the 4 C's of Best Value.

1. **Challenge** – to challenge the need for continuing the contracted services;
2. **Compare** – to compare the levels of contracted services being provided against the best available, from public, private, voluntary and community sectors;
3. **Consult** – to consult with local partners, in order to give them a voice in determining the quality and type of services required.

The contractor consulted with a wide range of stakeholders including each of the funding partners, the Board of BHC, members of external partnerships where BHC are represented, providers BHC had worked in partnership with or provided services to, elected members and providers offering similar services across other cities in the UK and Ireland.

The contractor reviewed existing funding agreements and monitoring arrangements including progress monitoring returns submitted during the review period.

### 3.3 Summary findings following Challenge, Compare and Consult analysis

**Challenge** – ‘In summary therefore BHC is found to comfortably clear the ‘challenge’ tests, demonstrating that it operates in an area of growing importance, extends rather than duplicates and informs rather than copies, and does not fail any mandatory requirements. Its future alignment with those strategic drivers [Programme for Government, Belfast Agenda, Making Life Better, etc.] is considered later within considerations as to the way forward.’

**Compare** – ‘The review considers regional, national and international best practice around evaluation and assesses the performance in Belfast, concluding that innovation and learning from the wider network is clearly demonstrated, that the quality of planning, operation and communication is very high and staff are exceptionally highly regarded. Particular strengths were noted in working at the community level and in developing effective partnerships.’

**‘A number of commentators, familiar with the working of the wider HC network, have identified Belfast as a leader amongst its peers and one that acts as a role model to others. There is no directly comparable alternative, the HC network being global and backed by the World Health Organisation (WHO), an entity brought into being by the United Nations and the prime international body concerned with developing health across the world, working with a range of stakeholders from governments to NGOs.’**

**Consult – ‘From a governance perspective there was a sense that whilst flexible and agile the service level agreements which provide a framework for performance and delivery between the funders and BHC could be strengthened with the introduction of a dedicated consistent jointly managed process to agree annual activity and resulting reporting.’**

**‘At times, with multiple ‘touch points’ at various organisational levels between BHC and the funders created challenges to ensure consistent messaging and communication. Given the size and sometimes complex internal operations of the organisations involved this would require some consideration to resolve.’**

#### **3.4 Summary**

**‘Overall then the review strongly endorses the role that Belfast Healthy Cities can play in fostering a community wide and holistic approach to health promotion in Belfast. There is strong evidence of its ability to deliver practical impacts for Belfast residents across many priority issues, including for example, Health Literacy, Health Equity, Healthy Urban Environments, Older People / Healthy Ageing, etc.**

**The formative aspect of this review points at areas where development is likely to further increase effectiveness:**

- Greater clarity and accountability embedded into the process by which funders and BHC agree annual delivery targets and activity.**
- The continued ability of BHC to introduce best practice health delivery from elsewhere and implement effectively within the Belfast context in conjunction with the funding organisations – underpinned by good governance.**
- Clarity and agreement regarding the role and involvement of BHC within the Community Planning structure / any other health improvement / public health arena / structure**
- Wider consultation and engagement of stakeholders, including in particular, political representatives.**
- Greater geographical spread across the Belfast area.**

These insights should be shared beyond the funder group, facilitating a dialogue with all relevant parties to enhance future operation within a Belfast context and contributing to the global literature on best practice in health promotion.'

### **3.5 Partnership Funding Review Conclusions**

Ultimately the review concluded that the funding provided to BHC by each of the partner organisations represented good value for money based on return for investment. Chapter 5 outlines the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations and is included in its entirety at Appendix 1 for Members information. Within this section several work areas have been identified for the funding bodies to consider and progress, namely:

1. Ensuring BHC investment is strategically aligned to policy drivers including the Programme for Government, Making Life Better and the Belfast Agenda.
2. Moving performance analysis to an outcomes focused / based approach (away from output measures).
3. Establishing a clearly defined role for Belfast Healthy Cities with consistency of service across Belfast.
4. The removal of duplication in planning and reporting between Belfast Healthy Cities and the various funders involved in this process.

The funders, particularly BCC, BHSCT and PHA (who also provide joint funding to the Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU) based within Council) have been having ongoing discussions over the past two years in relation to how the population health/health inequalities agenda could be better coordinated and resourced in light of the Belfast Agenda Refresh and taking account of the emerging Integrated Care Planning model. Preliminary discussions have also taken place with staff within the BHDU, with the Board and CEO of BHC and with community planning leads.

Leads within each of the funding bodies are proposing to have a number of facilitated sessions between now and the end of March 2022 to inform how we identify and agree our health-focussed priorities, to agree the structure (linked to the Community Planning Partnership at a city level and to the local structures already in existence or planned), the resources (staffing & financial) that we need to have in place to take these actions forward over the next 5-year period.

Better alignment of existing resources and streamlining of oversight and accountability processes to include addressing the governance concerns and duplication issues identified within this review will form a key part of this exercise. It is hoped that we will

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have a new proposed operating model for approval which will then be initiated as early as possible in 2022/23.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.6 The total financial allocation from Belfast City Council to Belfast Healthy City is £81,294 which has been included in the planned budget for 2022/23, however remains subject to agreement through the 2022/23 estimates process.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.7 None identified at this stage but kept under continuous review. It should be noted that much of the work undertaken by BHC is to address, or promote awareness of, health inequalities and best practice whole population of targeted approaches to mitigate or prevent these.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Update on Review of Partnerships Evaluation**

The Committee was provided with a comprehensive update on the outcome of the review of partnership funding and asked to consider future funding for those organisations within the scope of the review.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Members that the City and Neighbourhood Services Department worked in partnership with a number of organisations that shared common strategic objectives and that some of this work had developed through the provision of annual financial support to deliver against agreed outcomes. Many of the partnership funding arrangements were historical and had been rolled on from year to year and were not dealt with as part of a mainstreamed open call or other funding process.

As such, the Committee, at its meeting held in June 2019, agreed to review the funding arrangements, with a focus on alignment with the Council’s Corporate Plan, the Belfast Agenda and overall value for money. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the completion of the review had been delayed significantly and, in February 2021, Members had agreed to carry forward the funding at the same levels as previously to the organisations within scope of the review. As follows:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Belfast Hills Partnership	£36,900
Lagan Valley Regional Park	£67,000
Outdoor Recreation NI (promotion of mountain bike trails)	£5,000
Keep NI Beautiful (Live Here Love Here and Eco Schools Project)	£55,000
Mary Peters Trust	£5,000

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Bryson Energy (previously Play Resource)*	£31,209
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£200,109</b>

\* Note – Play Resource Warehouse was no longer in existence and had merged with Bryson Energy.

The Members were advised that, as instructed, an extensive review had been undertaken with all of the above partnership funding arrangements and he drew their attention to the summary of the outcomes of the review against the specification and he proceeded to summarise the main recommendations, as follows:

**1. Continue funding**

Given the evidence of strategic alignment, added value and value for money, it was suggested that all of the partnership funding arrangements be agreed, in principle, at the same level for 2022/23, subject to the completion of the 2022/23 revenue estimates process. It was further recommended that any future review of these arrangements would be tied to the Council's overall review of community provision (which would include funding arrangements).

**2. Set SMART targets and an increased focus on outcomes**

Funded partnerships to work with the Council to design up-to-date targets/deliverables and mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting purposes. This would include SMART targets, increased focus on outcomes and a standardisation of the contractual arrangements. All of this would improve future measurement of impact.

**3. Link deliverables to Belfast Agenda and other funding partners**

It was important that future deliverables/ targets aligned to the funding arrangements were explicit in their link to the Belfast Agenda. This would ensure that collective successes of the various funded partnerships built on the Community Plan aspirations to the benefit of all Belfast City Council residents. It was also advised, for the higher value contracts, that the Council would liaise with other funders of the partnerships to collectively agree deliverables that aligned to common priorities, thereby generating better results and outcomes from the funding.

**4. Enhance promotion of partnership efforts**

The review found extensive evidence that a lot of benefits were derived from the funded partnerships, and it was therefore important that the Council allocated these resources to better promote their relationship with the various partnerships, to ensure that all residents understood the collective efforts of the Council, co-funders, partnerships, and beneficiaries in achieving the Council's priorities under the Belfast Agenda and other key policy frameworks.

**5. Longer-term funding cycle to facilitate planning**

The review recognised the annual nature of budgeting within local government, however, referred to improved forward planning and service delivery if a longer-term funding cycle was provided to these partner funding arrangements. Whilst it was recognised that this would be desirable, given the wider financial support provided to the community/voluntary

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sector on an annual basis and the Council's wider review of community provision (including financial support), it was not recommended that funding be allocated beyond the 2022/23 financial year at present to those partners.

The Committee agreed:

- in principle, to fund each of the partners at the same level for the 2022/23 financial year (£200,109 in total), subject to the completion of the 2022/23 revenue estimates process;
- to set SMART targets and an increased focus on outcomes in all contracts;
- to link deliverables to Belfast Agenda and other funding partners in all contracts; and
- to enhance the promotion of partnership efforts to increase public awareness.

**Operational Issues**

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**  
**BCC and Cavehill Mountainbikers Club**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 North Area Working Group had previously instructed officers 2019 to proceed with a number of actions in relation to taking forward a mountainbiking pilot in Cavehill Country Park in partnership with Cavehill Mountainbikers Club. In December 2020, officers secured the services/support of Outdoor Recreation NI via a quotation exercise to assist them in developing and implementing the pilot project. A Project Oversight Group has been established and a number of key actions have been achieved over the past ten-month period – including the drafting of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) document included at Appendix 1 – which if agreed by Committee/Council will enable the pilot to proceed as planned.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- 1. Note the contents of the proposed MOU document which has been drawn up following a series of focussed discussions and engagement with lead officers in CNS and Legal Services, with specialist advice provided by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland, and input from Cavehill Mountainbikers Club re. same. The document has also been shared with the Cavehill MTB Project Oversight Group**

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which also includes membership from Belfast Hills Partnership and Cavehill Conservation Group.

**2. Agree the terms of the MOU.**

**3.0 Background**

**3.1 At a meeting of the North Area Working Group in March 2019, members agreed that Council officers should take forward a number of actions in relation to mountain biking on Cavehill.**

**3.2 At the reconvened North Area Working Group meeting held on 29 January 2020 members were updated in terms of progress to date against each of these actions outlined in the table below.**

<b>Agreed action</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Update</b>
Identification and mapping of mountain bike club proposed trails	Completed	Lead officers externally commissioned commercial trail designers and mountain bikers identified and mapped trails currently in use at Cave Hill.  The Council's Outdoor Recreation & Education Officer completed a desktop survey and mapping exercise. This was compiled into a report reflecting the extent of mountain biking and cycling at Cave Hill. The trails identified through the report were confirmed by the mountain bikers.  Field visit held with Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI) 10th January 2020. ORNI have provided advice to Council in relation to potential next steps.
Externally facilitated discussions with residents group	Completed	A meeting between senior CNS officers and those residents opposed to mountain biking on Cave Hill was facilitated by an external consultant.
Environmental assessment by consultant	Completed for the Middle Trail	Allen and Mellon Environmental Assessment completed for the Middle Trail

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		– no significant environmental risks identified.
Engagement with key stakeholders	Ongoing	Engagement to date has included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cavehill Conservation Group</li> <li>• Cavehill Mountainbikers Club</li> <li>• Cycling Ireland/Ulster</li> <li>• Local residents</li> </ul>
Committee approval of routes identified as suitable by environmental consultant	Recommendation accepted at NAWG meeting on 29 Jan 20	NB Proposal is to proceed with adopting 'The Middle Trail' as an initial pilot – with work to be overseen by an external agency.
Public consultation – <i>if required</i>	Can be undertaken as part of project initiation and evaluation processes if approval given.	

- 3.3 In September 2020, Finance Oversight gave approval for non-recurrent funding of £30k to be allocated to cover the costs of securing the services of an independent consultant to assist council officers in developing and implementing The Middle Trail pilot and to cover the signage and trail adaptations/modifications costs on-site re. same.**
- 3.4 Following a quotation exercise, Outdoor Recreation NI were appointed in December 2020 and a Project Oversight Group (POG) comprising of relevant council officers, ORNI, Cavehill Mountain Bikers Group as well as representation from Belfast Hills Partnership and Cavehill Conservation Group was established and has been meeting regularly throughout 2021.**
- 3.5 Between January 2021 to date a number of pieces of work have been taken forward:**
- **Series of site visits to The Middle Trail and wider site with POG members**
  - **Review and development of trail signage and a trail management plan;**
  - **Engagement (ORNI-led) with key stakeholders;**
  - **Development of MOU in consultation with Legal (version for consideration/approval included in Appendix 1)**
- 3.6 ORNI also provided an update, by way of presentation, to the May 2021 meeting of the North Area Working Group.**

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- 3.7** ORNI liaised with the Project Oversight Group to identify organisations/individuals to participate in a series of one to one consultations during March/April 2021 as part of the stakeholder engagement process in order to provide further information on the project and gain initial feedback on project proposals. Stakeholders identified included Cycling Ulster, Grass Roots Mountain Biking, IMBA Europe, NI Orienteering / Lagan Valley Orienteers, North Belfast Harriers, UFRC (walking club), Farmer with Grazing Rights on Cavehill and a number of local residents/regular park users.
- 3.8** ORNI is currently working on an Evaluation Framework which will then be used by officers and the Project Oversight Group to monitor and evaluate the pilot.
- 3.9** Formal adoption of the MOU by committee/council will enable officers/the POG to finalise the other required elements such as the trail management plan, the new signage requirements, agreed amendments to the Middle Trail and to initiate the evaluation framework to enable the pilot to formally commence.
- 3.10** As per the MOU, the Project Oversight Group will continue to meet throughout the pilot period and the intention would be to bring a final project evaluation report through to committee/council Nov/Dec 2022.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.10** None

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/  
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.11** None.”

The Committee agreed the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Belfast City Council and the Cavehill Mountainbikers Club in respect of the pilot use of a mountain bike trail in Cave Hill Country Park available [here](#).

**Proposal for naming new streets and the  
continuation of existing streets**

The Committee approved an application for naming new streets and the continuation of existing streets, as set out below:

<b>Proposed Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
Hazel Link	Off Hazel Close, BT17	Toland House Properties
Hazel Pass	Off Hazel Close, BT17	Toland House Properties

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<b>Proposed Continuation of Existing Street</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
Hazel Drive	Off Lagmore Avenue, BT17	Toland House Properties
Hazel Close	Off Lagmore Avenue, BT17	Toland House Properties
Cairnmartin Crescent	Off Cairnmartin Road, BT13	Choice Housing

**Winter Preparedness Update**

The Committee was provided with a comprehensive update on the measures being implemented by the Council and its multiagency partners to support the people of Belfast over the winter period, specifically in terms of emergency planning and Age-friendly Belfast.

The Members noted that all local community resilience groups in Belfast had re-engaged with residents over the summer months to ensure that their contacts details had been updated and that the existing community emergency plans had been refreshed. This had also included awareness raising within the communities regarding existing resources, including sandbag containers and equipment to help assist during adverse weather, particularly during incidents of flash flooding.

The Members were advised that sandbag containers would continue to be replenished by multiagency partners including NIW, DfI Roads and DfI Rivers in preparation for the winter period. The sandbag containers had combination locks to improve the speed of access by Council staff and/or community volunteers when required. The locations of the sandbag containers were available on the Council's website, available [here](#)

DfI Roads were currently restocking the community grit boxes in preparation for winter. The Committee was reminded that there was an ongoing agreement between DfI Roads and the Council, permitting Council resources to be used to treat predefined areas when a prolonged cold period was expected or experienced. The agreed areas included arterial routes into the city and streets in and around the city centre.

The Members were also reminded of a previous agreement regarding the provision of salt for the Members' use in communities during prolonged severe winter weather, where small quantities of salt would be made available in Council owned premises. Existing stocks of salt (25kg bags) would be made available at the appropriate Council community/leisure centres or other Council sites. In addition, higher elevated residential areas would also be prioritised.

In terms of information and outreach, the Committee was advised that links were in place with Age-friendly Belfast's multiagency group and homeless support groups to raise awareness when weather warnings were issued.

The Committee was advised that a briefing paper, 'Elected Member Information on Major Emergencies' would be emailed to all the Members, this would include a hotline number

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for Members' use during an emergency. They were also advised that winter emergency information was available on the Council website, which also contained a link to the NI Direct page available [here](#). Corporate Communications also had specific winter advice pages, which would be highlighted on the website and via the Council's social media channels as required.

In terms of Age-friendly Belfast, it hosted two interagency winter planning meetings in August and November each year, where Partners from community, voluntary and statutory organisations shared their plans for the winter, raised any issues of concern and updated their contacts for the communication of information in extreme weather.

The following key projects to support older people over the winter were then highlighted:

- National Energy Action (NEA) were co-ordinating winter warmth packs provided by the Public Health Agency for Belfast. Referrals could be made for those at risk of fuel poverty, a particular concern this year with rising energy costs by calling National Energy Action on **028 9023009909**;
- Local Community and Voluntary groups were hosting walks and other small-scale face-to-face activities with older people during Autumn/Winter 2021. The ongoing Age-friendly activities also provided a mix of virtual and in-person activities to help tackle loneliness and isolation. Check-in schemes such as the Good Morning scheme and local phone befriending would continue to provide important support for older people in the winter period; and
- Age-friendly Belfast and the Belfast PCSP had distributed 15000 'safe seniors' packs across Belfast in October via community centres and community voluntary organisations. This contained information on keeping well at home, scams, staying safe and preparedness for emergencies. The Affordable Warmth Scheme (AWS) continued to operate as normal and referrals could be made via the Affordable Warmth Coordinator.

The Committee noted and welcomed the update and agreed to forward any suggestions/additional improvement measures via email directly to the Director of City Services.

**Communities Committee NIA –  
Private Tenancies Bill**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 To provide an update to members regarding the Department for Communities draft Private Tenancies Bill which was introduced by the Minister for Communities on 6 July 2021. The Department for Communities Committee has indicated that they are keen to receive a written submission from Belfast City Council before the end of November. (Appendix 1)**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Note the draft proposals and comments and agree to submit the response, including a request for the resource implications for District Councils to be evaluated, to the Committee for Communities.
- Note the response will be issued by the deadline of 30th November as a draft and will remain subject to Council approval.

**3.0 Main report**

**Key issues**

- 3.1 The Bill has now reached its Committee Stage, and the Committee for Communities has responsibility for the Committee Stage of the Bill.**
- 3.2 The Committee has issued its call for written evidence and views on the Bill, which is due to close on Friday 29th of October 2021. The Bill consists of 11 substantive clauses and three schedules. The stated aim of the Bill is to make the private rented sector a safer and more secure housing option for a wider range of households. The Bill introduces a series of amendments to The Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, which is the main legislative framework for the private rented sector in Northern Ireland.**
- 3.3 Belfast City Council has a very long tradition of involvement in the private rented sector, primarily through its role as a regulator of housing standards but also in respect of its statutory duties under the Public Health Acts. The enhanced powers recently devolved to district councils under the Private Tenancies (NI) Order 2006 (PTO) along with the transfer of the regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in 2018, confirms the importance of the evolving role that district councils have in regulating the private rented sector. The Council therefore has been seen as a key consultee in this process.**
- 3.4 Following on from this Committee's call for evidence, the decisions taken by the Department relating to areas that impact in the development of a long term strategy for the private rented sector, will have a significant impact on the existing and evolving regulatory and advisory roles of the Council and other stakeholder in relation to its statutory housing functions.**
- 3.5 The Department's landlord registration database has indicated that one third of the privately rented sector properties in Northern**

Ireland are located in the Belfast City Council area. Belfast City Council also has 70% of all HMOs in Northern Ireland and Belfast City Council coordinates the delivery of the HMO function for all 11 district Councils.

In summary the Bill contains the following provisions:

- Re-introduction of a written statement of tenancy terms for tenants
- Tenants to be provide with rent receipt if payment in cash
- Tenancy deposit to be limited to one month's rent
- Increase time limit for landlord to secure a deposit
- Continuing offence for tenancy deposits
- Rent increases to be restricted to once per year
- Landlords must maintain fire, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- The power to make energy efficiency regulations
- The power to make regulations concerning electrical safety standards
- Changes to the notice to quit period and process

3.6 Therefore, whilst the additional regulation of the privately rented sector is to be welcomed, the resourcing of these additional powers, potentially being granted to Councils, will require to be evaluated in advance by the Department before commencement. There is no indication from the Department than any additional funding will be made available to Councils and that the introduction of the ability to issues fixed penalty notices is an appropriate model to adequately resource the monitoring and resourcing of these powers. There will be additional and new work for Councils if they are required to undertake this role. A properly evaluated analysis impact on Councils would need to be undertaken and a suitable funding model identified and agreed before these can be facilitated and commenced so that there is no impact on the rate payers due to additional burdens to DCs.

3.7 Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has advocated on previous occasions for a review to the statutory fitness standard which would have encompassed some of these matters. Thus we, are waiting on the Department's proposals to introduce a new standard which has been in in the planning stage for a considerable period of time. The current Fitness standard dates from 1981 and is considered outdated. Therefore whilst he Council welcomes the introduction of some tenancy management standards, as the regime for assessing the suitability of the property as a whole is outdated, our concern is that Bill will only address the electrical installation, energy efficiency( at a later date, yet to be determined) and a working fire, smoke and carbon monoxide alarm.

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- 3.8 The Bill is currently at the second stage of the Bill process which involves the Department for Social Development Committee requesting written submissions by interested parties on the content of the Bill. The Council has been asked by the Committee to provide a written submission. Officers have prepared a draft submission, attached as Appendix 2 for consideration by the People and Communities Committee. Responses were due on 29th October however we have written to the assembly committee and sought an extension on Councils behalf. (see appendix 1)**
- 3.9 Each of the clauses and our draft comments to the consultation are contained in Appendix 2. We would ask the committee to review and agree this as the BCC response.**
- 3.10 The details of the Private Tenancy Bill are contained in Appendix 3 for members information.**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.11 The Private Tenancies Bill when enacted will give local councils additional enforcement powers to deal with issues in the Private Rented sector. These additional new powers will mean more enforcement officers will be required to deal with the additional workload. There will be fixed penalties introduced for some of the offences, but fixed penalty income will not cover the additional staffing and administrative resources required to manage this new function. Members will note the resource implications for District Councils to be evaluated will be requested in our submission to DFC.**

**Equality or Good Relations Implications**

- 3.12 None associated with this report.”**

The Committee noted the draft proposals and comments and agreed to submit the response, including a request for the resource implications for District Councils to be evaluated, to the Committee for Communities subject to the inclusion of the following additional points:

Clause 4:

- note that limiting deposits to one month's rent might impact those tenants without guarantors or who owned pets. Highlight the need for specific measures to be introduced to protect such applicants;
- note that the amount of rent charged at the beginning of a tenancy should also be capped at one month;

Clause 7: The mechanism to challenge rent increases should also allow for the following:

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- tenants should be given a longer notice period for rent increases, aligned with a notice to quit period;
- specific reference to be made to rent controls to manage rent hikes as per previous Green motion and Council's corporate support;

Clause 11:

- note that the notice to quit period required by landlords for tenancies under 12 months should also be extended and highlight the impact of such.

It further agreed that the draft response be submitted by the 30th November deadline, noting that it was subject to Council ratification

**ITV 1 Million Minutes Bench at  
C.S. Lewis Square**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the Committee that a request had been received from ITV Good Morning Britain and the Eastside Greenways Teams seeking the Council to support the ITV 1 Million Minutes Campaign.

He explained that the 1 Million Minutes Campaign worked with charities to help combat the national pandemic of loneliness, this campaign did not ask for money but for people's time. Throughout December there would be a pledge button on the ITV website where people could commit their time to volunteer.

ITV had sought permission to place a temporary wrap to an existing bench in front of the visitor centre at CS Lewis Square in East Belfast from 6th – 31st December, after which there would be the option to leave or remove the wrap.

The Committee approved the application of a temporary wrap to a bench at CS Lewis Square in support of ITV's 1 million minutes campaign.

**Permission for drone filming at Cavehill**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the Committee that a request had been received from a company called Piranha Bar seeking permission to film a commercial on behalf of Tourism NI at Cavehill Country Park, using a SUA (Small Unmanned Aircraft/Drone), week commencing 15th November 2021 from 8.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee grant permission to Piranha Bar to film on the aforementioned dates.

The Committee agreed that, due to timescale, and date of the next Council meeting, that the decision of the committee would be implemented with immediate effect, on the condition that the event organisers:

- resolve all operational issues to the satisfaction of the Council;
- meet all statutory requirements, including those relating to Public Liability Insurance cover, health and safety and licensing; and

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- adhere to Government Covid-19 Regulations in place at the time of the event.

Chairperson