

Council

MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Monday, 3rd April, 2023 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Black) (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly);
The High Sheriff (Councillor Kyle);
Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, Haire, McCoubrey, Sandford and Rodgers;
and Councillors Beattie, Bower; Bradley, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, , de Faoite, M. Donnelly, R. M. Donnelly, Doran, Douglas, Duffy, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Harvey, Heading, Hutchinson, Howard, Hussey, T. Kelly, Long, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCullough, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Murphy, Murray, Nelson, Newton, O'Hara, Smyth, Spratt, Thompson, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor Michael Collins.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in relation to the minute of the People and Communities Committee of 7th March, under the headings "Community Support Programme Additional Funding 2022/23" and "Timeframe for Reviews (Strategic Partners and Fuel Hardship)", on the basis that she was employed by Forward South Partnership.

Alderman Copeland and Councillors Gormley, Hutchinson, Thompson and Verner declared an interest in relation to the minute of the People and Communities Committee of 7th March, under the heading "Timeframe for Reviews (Strategic Partners and Fuel Hardship)", in that they worked for organisations which were Strategic Partners or were in receipt of Strategic Partner Funding.

Councillor R. M. Donnelly declared an interest in relation to the minute of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th March, under the heading "Contracts Update", on the basis that the organisation she worked for had applied for funding.

In relation to the agenda item 15.c) Motion on Vaping, Councillor McKeown declared an interest in that his work included smoking cessation and left the room whilst the item was being considered.

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Councillor Bower declared an interest in relation to the minutes of the Planning Committee of 14th March in that she was the property owner of a Planning Application of included in the minute.

Councillors Beattie, Lyons, McDonough-Brown and O'Hara declared an interest in in relation to the minute of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th March, under the heading "Asset Management", in that they were Council representatives on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Black),
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly) and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 1st March be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

Condolences

Councillor Garrett and Alderman Copeland paid tribute to Geraldine McKee, a renowned volunteer for older people and community campaigner, who had died recently. They praised her for her community and voluntary work and extended their condolences to her family and the wider community.

Councillor Howard condemned the Nashville school shooting attack of 27th March and extended her condolences for the victims and family members affected by the senseless act of violence.

Appeal

At the request of Councillor de Faoite, the Lord Mayor agreed to make an appeal to the Secretary of State, the Northern Ireland Office and the Department for Education in relation to the cuts that had been made which impacted young people and to convene an urgent meeting with the Department for Education and the relevant stakeholders of the Holiday Hunger Payments and Happy Healthy Minds scheme and youth services.

Congratulations

At the request of the Deputy Lord Mayor, the Lord Mayor agreed to forward a letter of congratulations to the Belfast Giants on winning their third Elite League title in a row and agreed to invite them to the City Hall for a Reception.

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Ice Hockey Event

The Chief Executive advised that a request had been received from the Odyssey Trust in relation to funding for a proposed Ice Hockey match between the Belfast Giants and a Ukrainian Team on 19th April. The Council agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive for the Council to provide a financial contribution of £10,000 for the event to be funded from existing departmental budgets.

Request to Film Proceedings

The Council approved a request which had been from France 24 Television to film the full Council meeting in relation to a short film package giving an overview of politics in Northern Ireland.

Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor McDonough-Brown,
Seconded by Councillor Groogan,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th March, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

**Business Cluster and Community
Grant Scheme Re-allocation**

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th March, under the heading "Business Cluster and Community Grant Scheme Re-allocation" be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees that monies be reallocated and used towards the expansion of the kerbside glass recycling project.

On a vote, thirteen Members voted for the proposal and forty-six against and it was declared lost.

Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service

At the request of Councillor Ferguson, the Council agreed to the following addition to the decision: That the Council also commits to find funding from other funding resources, if the use of any in-year underspend does not cover the shortfall of up to £279,315 to fund the Citywide Tribunal Service in 2023/24.

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Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th March, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Murray,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 7th and 22nd March be approved and adopted.

Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 8th March be approved and adopted.

**Request for Matter to be Taken
Back for Further Consideration**

Belfast Zoo - Fees and Charges

At the request of Councillor Ferguson and with the permission of the Council, the Chairperson (Councillor Murphy) agreed that the minute under the heading "Belfast Zoo - Fees and Charges" be taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments, the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 8th March, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 15th March, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Whyte,
Seconded by Councillor Carson and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 14th and 16th, omitting matters in respect of which the

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Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Minutes of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.
Shareholders' Committee**

Moved by Councillor Maghie,
Seconded by Councillor Howard and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Ltd. Shareholders' Committee of 13th March, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Climate and City Resilience Committee

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor McCabe and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 9th March be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Standards and Business Committee

Moved by Councillor Harvey,
Seconded by Councillor McCabe and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 28th March, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted

Motions

50th Anniversary of Greenfinches in Northern Ireland

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Bunting proposed:

“That this Council recognises the 50th Anniversary of Greenfinches in Northern Ireland; remembers that on 6th July 1973 the Ulster Defence Regiment Bill permitted the recruitment of women into the Ulster Defence Regiment. Women were given the codeword ‘Greenfinch’ and defended Northern Ireland throughout the period known as ‘The Troubles’. We are forever grateful for their commitment and sacrifice.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor T. Kelly

The Council agreed to vote on the motion, when twenty-nine Members voted for the motion and twenty-six against, with four no votes and it was declared carried.

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Police Service of Northern Ireland

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Spratt proposed:

“That this Council expresses its full and unconditional support for the Police Service of Northern Ireland and stands with those officers who serve our community so magnificently on a daily basis.

We condemn the attempted murder of DCI John Caldwell and call upon anyone who can assist in the apprehension and conviction of those responsible, to come forward. We also condemn the series of subsequent threats to both serving officers and their families. These are abhorrent to all right thinking people and again we urge that anyone with information should come forward to the PSNI. Threats will not work.

We urge all those in our community who would consider policing as a career not to be deterred from pursuing this option, and that the united front of politicians following the aforementioned attack continue, to ensure that all necessary resources are in place to protect officers and their families.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Douglas.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor Matt Collins,

That the motion standing in the name of Councillor Spratt and seconded by Councillor Douglas be amended as follows:

To delete the first and concluding paragraph and edit the middle paragraph to replace it with the following: ***“Violence inflicted down the barrel of the gun has no place on our streets and will only bring more pain, heartache and suffering. Paramilitaries who carry out violent attacks do so against the wishes of the vast majority of people, and against their communities. The Council therefore condemns the attempted murder of DCI John Caldwell and the subsequent threats to other officers and families which are futile and senseless; and calls for an immediate cessation of all paramilitary activity.”***

The motion, as amended, therefore read:

“Violence inflicted down the barrel of the gun has no place on our streets and will only bring more pain, heartache and suffering. Paramilitaries who carry out violent attacks do so against the wishes of the vast majority of people, and against their communities.

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The Council therefore condemns the attempted murder of DCI John Caldwell and the subsequent threats to other officers and families which are futile and senseless; and calls for an immediate cessation of all paramilitary activity."

The Council agreed to vote on the amended motion, when thirty Members voted for the motion and twenty-eight against and it was declared carried.

Accordingly, the motion as amended was put to the Council as the substantive motion and passed.

Vaping

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Kyle proposed:

"Belfast faces a growing problem of vaping by children and young adults. These products are addictive, damaging to health and often contain illegal substances.

The legislation covering their sale is inadequate. While it is illegal to sell them to under 18s there is no registration of retailers, no restriction on the display of the products and no resources to identify illegal and harmful additives.

Some disposable vapes are designed to be attractive to children and many are discarded in the street posing an environmental and health risk.

In the face of a developing public health crisis this Council will convene a working group with other stakeholders, including the Department of Health, the Public Health Agency and the PSNI to consider measures to strengthen current legislation and enforcement, including the consideration of a ban on the sale of disposable vapes.

Furthermore, the Council will ban the use of vapes by under 18s in all its sites and premises."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lyons.

The motion was put to the meeting and passed.

Rosetta Way – "quietway"

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor de Faoite proposed:

"Belfast City Council:

- Recognises that many neighbourhoods across the city suffer from the blight of congestion, poor air quality, commuter traffic, under investment in active travel measures and road safety issues;

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- Recalls that the Council has already expressed its support for measures like School Streets and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods as well as the creation of a “quietway” linking Lagan Gateway to Cregagh Glen, through Cherryvale Playing Fields;
- Believes that a “quietway” through Rosetta - a “Rosetta Way” along with associated measures like active travel infrastructure, reduced speed limits, the closing up of rat runs, the installation of tree pits as chicanes could all help to reduce congestion, poor air quality, commuter traffic and road safety issues;
- Agrees to write to the Department for Infrastructure seeking an update on the agreed puffin crossing on the Knockbreda Road which would facilitate the opening of the pedestrian gate into Cherryvale and the creation of the Rosetta Way “quietway”;
- Further agrees to ask the Department for Infrastructure to draw up an action plan, in consultation with the Council and relevant local organisations and residents, to deliver the Rosetta Way “quietway” and tackle the challenges associated with congestion, poor air quality, commuter traffic and road safety issues in the area.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor McKeown.

The motion was put to the meeting and passed.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson