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**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

21st February, 2023

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall and remotely via Teams on Tuesday, 21st February, 2023 at 5.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. Motions

- (a) Motion - Cllr Spratt – Maternity Leave Provision for Mothers of Babies defined as Premature (Pages 1 - 4)
- (b) Motion - Cllr Ferguson – Increase in Average Rent Costs (Pages 5 - 8)
- (a) Motion - Cllr O'Hara - Notice of Motion – Overdose Prevention Facility in Belfast (Pages 9 - 12)



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Maternity Leave Provision for Mothers of Babies defined as Premature
Date:	21st February, 2023
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st March in relation to Maternity Leave Provision for Mothers of Babies defined as Premature.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note that the motion should be referred, in the first instance, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Committee will be aware Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r) as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October is as follows:
3.2	<p>(m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i></p> <p>(n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i></p> <p>(o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i></p> <p>(p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i></p> <p>(q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i></p> <p>(r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i></p>
3.3	<p>The following motion has been received:</p> <p><u>Maternity Leave Provision for Mothers of Babies defined as Premature</u></p> <p>“This Council will amend maternity leave provision for mothers of babies defined as premature so that maternity leave will not commence until the certified due date of the child. All/any leave required from delivery date of a premature baby by parents will be considered compassionate leave and not reduce an employee’s right to standard parental leave.”</p> <p>Proposer: Councillor Gareth Spratt</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Sarah Bunting</p>

3.4	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to amend its maternity leave provisions - the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for HR and associated policies and the motion should be referred to that Committee for consideration.</p> <p>Members are reminded that in accordance with Standing Order 13(I), where the notice of motion seeks to commit the Council to expenditure not previously agreed through the Committee process, the motion will stand referred to the relevant Committee for consideration. If the motion is agreed at the Committee then this will usually require a further report from officers outlining the financial and other implications should the notice of motion be adopted.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None.</p>

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Subject:	Notice of Motion – Increase in Average Rent Costs
Date:	21st February, 2023
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st February in relation to an Increase in Average Rent Costs
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and agree to either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p data-bbox="316 304 472 331"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="316 365 1514 432">The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="363 465 1514 633">(m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i> <li data-bbox="363 656 1514 824">(n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i> <li data-bbox="387 846 1514 947">(o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i> <li data-bbox="387 969 1514 1037">(p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i> <li data-bbox="387 1059 1514 1160">(q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i> <li data-bbox="387 1182 1514 1328">(r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i> <p data-bbox="204 1361 842 1395">3.2 The following motion has been received:</p> <p data-bbox="316 1429 759 1462"><u>Increase in Average Rent Costs</u></p> <p data-bbox="347 1496 1474 1597">“This Council recognises the increase in average rent costs in the North by roughly 10% over the past 12-month period. The Council further recognises the impact these increases have on those dealing with higher cost of living prices.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1630 1474 1697">With warnings of higher mortgage prices being pushed onto tenants by landlords, this Council accepts that people in Belfast will struggle further to pay increased rental bills.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1731 1474 1832">Indeed, rising rentals and rising house prices mean that more people may be forced to rent for longer before they can afford to buy, adding to increased demand for rental properties which can lead to even further rental price increases.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1865 1474 2000">This Council rejects the idea that renters should be left unprotected against rising prices in the rental sector or risk facing eviction for failure to keep up with prices. Further, the Council accepts that the political failure to build enough public housing has led to the crisis facing renters and those on the housing waiting list.</p>

	<p>In the absence of a Stormont Communities Minister and, given the failure of the previous Minister to implement adequate rent controls to protect tenants, the Council is committed to doing what it can to protect renters in the City.</p> <p>Accordingly, Belfast City Council will follow the lead of Bristol City Council in writing to the Secretary of State, in the absence of a Minister locally, to request the powers to control rents locally be vested to the Council. The Council also commits to writing to any incoming Stormont Executive to request such powers.</p> <p>Finally, Council agrees to write to Bristol City Council to make express interest in their Living Rent Commission, requesting access to its findings, and develop a working relationship, where possible, relating to this issue.”</p> <p>Proposer - Councillor Fiona Ferguson</p> <p>Seconder – Councillor Michael Collins</p>
3.3	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to write to the Secretary of State in relation to powers to control rents and to Bristol City Council regarding its Living Rent Commission – the Committee can either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.

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Subject:	Notice of Motion – Overdose Prevention Facility in Belfast
Date:	21st February, 2023
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st February in relation to an Overdose Prevention Facility in Belfast.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and agree to either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.

3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	<p>The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i> (n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i> (o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i> (p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i> (q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i> (r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i>
3.2	<p>The following motion has been received:</p> <p><u>Overdose Prevention Facility in Belfast</u></p> <p>“This Council supports the establishment of an Overdose Prevention Facility in Belfast. This Council will work with key partners in the community, voluntary and statutory sector to bring together a partnership to advocate for the establishment of an Overdose Prevention Facility (OPC) for the city. With almost 350 drug related deaths in the city from 2017-2021 and over 1,000 needles recovered each month, a facility like this will save lives and reduce the amount of discarded drug debris. There are over 200 Overdose Prevention Facilities in 14 countries across the world.</p> <p>While we are conscious that the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 is an inhibitor to the establishment of this service and that it would require some form of special legal dispensation from the Act for the facility to be lawful, it is clear that current policy is not saving lives. In the absence of a local Assembly to deliver reform and innovation that can save vulnerable lives, this Council will act as a civic leader by requesting our City Solicitor and Chief Executive to engage with partners and to lobby Belfast Trust, PSNI, the Departments of Health and Justice and the Attorney General to make the case for special dispensation.”</p>

<p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p>	<p>Proposer - Councillor Mal O'Hara</p> <p>Seconder – Councillor Brian Smyth</p> <p>The motion calls upon the Council to lobby various organisations to for special dispensation from the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 to establish and overdose prevention facility – the Committee can either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None.</p>

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