

Standards and Business Committee

Thursday, 22nd February, 2024

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Alderman Rodgers (Deputy Chairperson;
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Groogan;
Aldermen Lawlor and McCullough; and
Councillors Bradley, M. Donnelly, P. Donnelly, D. Douglas,
Duffy, Kelly, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, F. McAteer, G. McAteer,
McDowell, R. McLaughlin and McMullan.

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal
and Civic Services;
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance
Manager, and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

(Alderman Rodgers in the Chair)

An apology was reported on behalf of the Chairperson, Councillor McDonough-Brown.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 23rd January were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st February.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Motions

The Committee considered the following three motions which had been received in advance of the Council meeting on 4th March:

Gender Pay Gap Recording and Reporting

The Committee agreed that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor T. Brooks and seconded by Councillor F. McAteer, be referred, in the first instance, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Housing Crisis

The Committee agreed that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor Smyth, be referred, in the first instance, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Solidarity with Palestine

Proposal

Moved by Alderman McCullough,
Seconded by Alderman Lawlor,

That the motion be rejected.

Amendment

Moved by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor Lyons,

That the motion be referred to Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

On a recorded vote, two Members voted for the amendment and sixteen against and it was declared lost:

<u>For 2</u>	<u>Against 16</u>
Councillors Groogan and Lyons	Aldermen Rodgers, Lawlor and McCullough, Councillors Bradley, M. Donnelly, P. Donnelly, D. Douglas, Duffy, Kelly, Magee, Maghie, F. McAteer, G. McAteer, McDowell, McLaughlin and McMullan.

On a recorded vote, the original proposal standing in the name of Alderman McCullough was put to the Committee and sixteen Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was declared carried:

<u>For 16</u>	<u>Against 2</u>
Aldermen Rodgers, Lawlor and McCullough, Councillors Bradley, M. Donnelly, P. Donnelly, D. Douglas, Duffy, Kelly, Magee, Maghie, F. McAteer, G. McAteer, McDowell, McLaughlin and McMullan.	Councillors Groogan and Lyons

Anti-Poverty Strategy

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Lyons,
Seconded by Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Groogan,

That the motion be referred to Council for debate, with no restrictions on the number of speakers.

Amendment

Moved by Alderman McCullough,
Seconded by Alderman Lawlor,

That the motion be adopted.

On a vote, sixteen Members voted for the amendment and one against, with one no vote and it was declared carried.

The amendment was thereupon put to the meeting as the substantive motion and passed.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to adopt the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Doherty and seconded by Councillor Whyte:

“This Council notes the significant increase in families living in poverty across Belfast as a result of the cost-of-living crisis and other financial pressures.

This Council notes the legal obligation on the Northern Ireland Executive under the 2006 St Andrew’s Agreement and subsequent Northern Ireland (St Andrew’s Agreement) Act 2006 and New Decade, New Approach Agreement 2020 to “*adopt an Anti-Poverty Strategy setting out how it proposes to tackle poverty, social exclusion and patterns of deprivation based on objective need*”.

This Council notes that the Executive is acting unlawfully by failing to adopt an Anti - poverty Strategy.

This Council will write to the Minister for Communities calling on him to bring forward an Anti-Poverty Strategy and to outline how he intends to live up to his legal obligation to tackle poverty with measures, targets, and timescales for doing so.”

Chairperson