

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



**Belfast
City Council**

MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room, City Hall on Wednesday, 11th September, 2024 at 5.15 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. **Matters referred back from Council**

- (a) Belfast City and Region Place Partnership Update

3. **Restricted Items**

- (a) Belfast Zoo Quarter 1 Update (Pages 1 - 4)
- (b) Belfast Bikes Quarter 1 Performance Update (Pages 5 - 14)
- (c) Financial Reporting – Quarter 1 2024 / 2025 (Pages 15 - 22)
- (d) Markets Quarter 1 Update (Pages 23 - 28)

4. **Regenerating Places & Improving Infrastructure**

- (a) City Centre Boundaries (Pages 29 - 34)
- (b) Off-Street Car Parking – Notice of Motion Update (Pages 35 - 42)
- (c) Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2024/25 (Pages 43 - 46)
- (d) Belfast Waterfront Framework - Waterfront Tour Request

5. **Positioning Belfast to Compete**

- (a) Night-time Economy Notice of Motion Update (Pages 47 - 66)
- (b) City Centre Animation

6. **Growing Business & the Economy**

- (a) International Relations Activity Update
- (b) Business Growth and Scaling Support (Pages 67 - 70)

7. **Strategic and Operational Issues**

- (a) Notice of Motion Quarterly Update (Pages 71 - 78)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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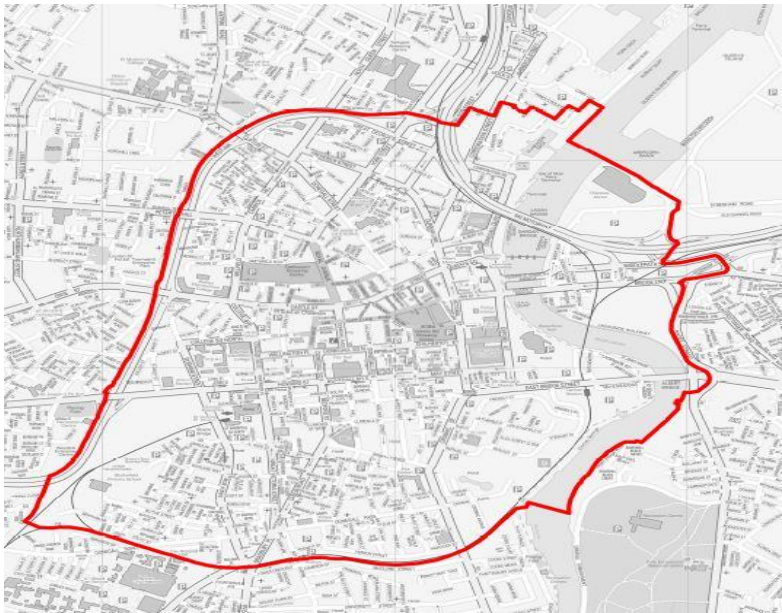
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Subject:	City Centre Boundaries
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager Callie Persic, Development Manager

Restricted Reports					
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 					
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?					
<p>After Committee Decision</p> <p>After Council Decision</p> <p>Sometime in the future</p> <p>Never</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 100%;"> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> </table>				

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	Following a request by Members to clarify the boundary of the city centre and the rationale for how boundaries are applied for projects, and how this might be looked at going forward, this paper sets out the city centre boundary and proposes a future approach on this issue.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the context of the Draft BMAP City Centre Boundary and the update on the rationale for allocating city centre boundaries to specific projects.
3.0	Background
3.1	At the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 12th June and at the Climate and City Resilience Committee on the 13 th June 2024 Members raised queries in relation to the boundary of the city centre and how these are used to delineate project borders. Members had referenced certain examples including the Inner North West, UP2030 and the Business Cluster and Community Grant schemes. The Committee agreed that “a future report would be brought to the Committee to outline the rationale around red line boundaries including the city centre boundary and various Programmes and projects and how this might be looked at going forward.”
4.0	Main Report
4.1	<p>The statutory boundary of the city centre is often used as the recognised and defined boundary area given its definition within planning policy in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP). The city centre boundary as defined by draft BMAP remains the most up to date expression of the Department’s spatial planning approach to the Belfast Metropolitan Area and may remain a material consideration where appropriate within a planning context. The city centre boundary will be reviewed as part of the Local Policies Plan stage of the LDP process.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Figure 1 - Draft BMAP City Centre Boundary</i></p>

4.2	<p>A number of schemes or projects developed within in the city centre have been brought forward based on the eight principles of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) as set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the Employment Population; • Increase the Residential Population; • Manage the Retail Offer; • Maximise the Tourism Opportunity; • Create Regional Learning and Innovation Centres; • Create a Green, Walkable, Cyclable Centre; • Connect to the City Around, and • Shared space and social impact
4.3	<p>As projects are developed to target specific issues or priority areas the parameters of the project, including boundaries, are brought to the CG&R Committee for approval prior to designing and implementing the project. When developing projects aligned to BCCRIS the Draft BMAP city centre boundary is typically used as the starting point for setting the boundary, subject to discussions with Members. Setting boundary areas is often required on projects when addressing specific area-based issues, or when subject to funding constraints.</p>
4.4	<p>An exception to the use of the draft BMAP boundary is in relation to the Inner North West Masterplan which was defined by the Special Action Area agreed by Council in 2016 as a part of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Strategy document where, following consultation with Members the agreed BCCRIS document established the INW boundary as one of five Special Action Actions to be addressed through BCCRIS. With regard to the UP2030 Net Zero District the boundary was selected to encapsulate the highest concentration of typical city infrastructure, including high frequency transport networks, walking & cycling, a mix of commercial and residential areas, to develop a holistic framework that could be adopted for any city area. Following consultation with Members in 2021 the boundary area was increased to include more residential area that surround the city centre.</p>
4.5	<p>Recently delivered schemes such as Vacant to Vibrant, Grey to Green and the Active Travel Enablers were brought forward within defined funding allocations and/or timeframes and agreed through the Committee process. In each of these cases, the interventions were developed to address specific city centre issues, such as vacancy, or contained elements within the grant process that were aligned to the BCCRIS Strategy with the draft BMAP city centre definition used to identify the boundary for these projects.</p>

4.6	<p>For example, this definition was applied to the Vacant to Vibrant pilot due to the particular issues in the city centre where vacancy is significantly higher than the UK average and with a recognition that the city centre was in need of intervention to preserve it as the economic centre for the region. The initial pilot project for secure cycle facilities was also trialed within the city centre following a Notion of Motion from Members to bring forward secure cycle facilities within the city centre. Funding for both of these schemes was limited in the pilot phases and it was agreed that concentrating the funding within a defined area would create the greatest impact. Following the initial pilot period the secure cycle project received additional funding to deliver a city-wide project, and Officers are currently seeking external funding to deliver a city wide Vacant to Vibrant programme as agreed at the June Meeting of the CG&R Committee.</p>
4.7	<p>At the time of the initiation of Vacant to Vibrant and with the secure cycle parking projects there were a number of complementary projects and programmes under delivery that supported communities and businesses outside the city centre including the Vibrant Business Destinations Programme (in partnership with DfC) and community-focused funding streams such as the Business and Community Cluster Grants and city-wide covered cycle schemes. Members will also be aware that the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund was developed in line with the Area Working Group boundaries and other area-based funding streams, such as the Social Investment Fund, Urban Villages and the Local Investment Fund are delivered within an agreed geographical boundary and are reported to the appropriate Area Working Groups.</p>
4.8	<p>Where funding is defined or limited, it is often necessary to define the parameters and area of funding to ensure maximisation of the impact of benefits within a defined programme or when addressing area specific issues. While some Programmes do need to be defined within a certain area for a specific reason, it is acknowledged that using standard approaches may not always provide the best results and may lead to parties, groups, businesses or communities just outside the boundary area failing to be able to avail of or engage with the initiative.</p>
4.9	<p>While it is normal that the parameters of a new project are presented to the City Growth & Regeneration Committee prior to finalisation and initiation, it is recommended that at the development stage the proposed boundary areas are outlined as a specific element of the parameters for discussion and agreement by the Committee within the remit and constraints of the project, but recognising that budgetary constraints may influence the scope and impact.</p>

5.0	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no financial or resource requirements associated with this paper, although financial implications will need to be considered on a project-by-project basis as boundary areas are agreed.</p>
6.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no Equality, Good Relations nor Rural Needs Implications associated with this paper.</p>
7.0	<p>Appendices - Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None</p>

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Subject:	Off-Street Car Parking – Notice of Motion Update
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Seamus McBride City Protection Manager
Contact Officer:	Gavin Bell Off Street Car Parking Manger

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	
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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	The purpose of this report is to update Committee on a Notice of Motion relating to a Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update on progress with respect to the original notice of motion detailed at section 3.1; and • Note Council’s desire to make parking provision compliant with the provisions set out in the Park Access criteria but not to seek accreditation.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>At the City Growth & Regeneration Committee meeting in January 2021, former Councillor Mulholland on behalf of Councillor McMullan, outlined the following proposal:</p> <p><i>“This Council is committed to ensuring that the city and neighbourhood areas of Belfast are accessible and inclusive for disabled people, older people and carers. This Council recognises that access to a car is central to the independence of many people with mobility issues but notes the low provision of accessible bay parking spaces in its off-street car parks with just 3% of its spaces designated as accessible across the city. This Council agrees to join Disability Motoring UK’s Disabled Parking Accreditation scheme to improve the minimum number, size and quality of our accessible bay parking spaces. This Council further notes this is one of many interventions that need to be taken by this Council and partners as part of our commitment to an inclusive COVID-19 response and recovery and our commitment in the Belfast Agenda to become an accessible city for all by 2035.”</i></p>
3.2	<p>Members will be aware through quarterly Notice of Motion updates that officers contacted the British Parking Association (BPA) to discuss the general principles of the accreditation criteria and how this could be achieved within our current portfolio.</p>
3.3	<p>Along with general access requirements and a prerequisite number of bays, consideration would also be made of the standard and location of the pay and display machines within each car park. Following these conditions being met Council could apply for accreditation and pay an annual fee for membership. Officers met with the BPA to conduct site assessments, within the charged car parks in the city centre, to apply the criteria for the accreditation and making recommendations where appropriate.</p>
3.4	<p>This involved checking the markings and measurements of bays, measuring the hatching area at the side of bays and the hatching area at the front of bays (where this was present), presence of dropped kerbs and any access/egress issues for disabled persons which included ease of access to pay machines. The pay machines were also assessed against the criteria for the Accreditation which included height measurements for the cash insertion points and for the issue of the ticket.</p>

3.5	The stipulation within the criteria regarding Disabled Bay (DB) provision is that Council should have 2 DB bays + 3% DB provision within a car park with 1 - 50 spaces and 3 DB bays + 3% provision within a car park with 51 – 200 spaces. If a car park does not meet the minimum requirement for accessible bays, it can still achieve accreditation if justification can be provided as to why this is the case.
3.6	To achieve accreditation car parks must not only have accessible bays correctly marked and in the specified number but must also have alternative ways to enter and pay. Following the site assessments, the BPA noted that, although our provision was below the number designated within the criteria, there was an under use of DB bays. This could be explained by the number of blue badge holders parked on-street within the vicinity of car parks.
3.7	The general condition of the car parks was deemed acceptable, with an acknowledgement that some additional pedestrian access was required for people with more complex needs and the reconfiguration of some DB's for the same purpose. Officers have examined how to reconfigure the car parks to meet the criteria including structural changes where required. It should also be noted that most of these car parks have been earmarked for development and City Regeneration & Development are currently advancing plans for these locations. Officers are in the process of reconfiguring the car parks, to address the comments made during the Strategic Site Assessments.
3.8	Rather than incur the cost of accreditation, (£5,100 for initial registration and a £2,550 yearly fee) it is recommended that any costs should go towards work to reach compliance with the BPA's audit recommendations (attached at Appendix 1).
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There will be costs to get the car parks relined for additional DB accommodation including remarking and any structural works. These costs will be delivered within existing budgets.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The paper seeks to improve the service of council's car parks for users with a disability.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – BPA comments

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Belfast City Council Car Parks Disabled Parking Accreditation Pre-Assessments

I recently carried out a number of pre-assessments of Belfast City Council Car Parks in respect of the Disabled Parking Accreditation.

These assessments involved applying the criteria for the Accreditation and making recommendations where appropriate.

My findings for each of the car parks assessed are listed below.

I have highlighted the text in red where improvements are required and in blue where I believe the Car Park should achieve Accreditation.

I have not mentioned the pay machines in each of these assessments as all pay machines located within the car parks are of the same type and are compliant with the criteria for the Accreditation.

Car Parks Assessed :

Charlotte Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 99 bays, 1 of which is an Accessible Bay. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, this bay was unoccupied. I believe 1 bay is sufficient at this time.

All measurements are compliant with the criteria. There was no drop kerb on exiting the car park and this will require to be rectified.

Little Victoria Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 89 bays, 4 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, only 1 bay was occupied. I believe 4 bays are sufficient at this time.

This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.

Hope Street North

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 36 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 3 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. I believe that at this time, 1 bay would be sufficient for this facility.

A drop kerb is required at this facility to permit exit to the Train Station.

Smithfield

Appendix 1

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 105 bays, 1 of which is an Accessible Bay. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, this bay was unoccupied. I believe 1 bay is sufficient at this time.

This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.

Kent Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 54 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, 1 bay was occupied. I believe 4 bays are sufficient at this time.

This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.

Little Donegal Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 105 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, no bays were occupied. I believe 2 bays are sufficient at this time.

Consideration should be given to moving the Accessible Bays nearer to the Pay Machine for easier access. Drop kerbs would then be required for the Central island.

All measurements were compliant with the Criteria.

Lancaster Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 53 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays.

I believe that at this time, due to the location of this car park, 2 bays would be sufficient for this facility. Bays should be located near to the Pay machine and the perimeter fence should be shortened to allow easier entry/exit access. All measurements were compliant with the Criteria.

Corporation Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 124 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. I believe that at this time, due to the location of this car park, 1 bay would be sufficient for this facility. This bay should be located adjacent to the Pay Machine for ease of access.

Corporation Square

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 168 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. **I believe that at this time, due to the location of this car park, 2 bays would be sufficient for this facility. These bays should be located adjacent to the exit on to Corporation Square for ease of entry/exit to the facility.**

Exchange Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 45 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 3 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, no bays were occupied. I believe 3 bays are sufficient at this time.

[This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.](#)

Dunbar Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 36 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 3 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, 1 bays was occupied. I believe 3 bays are sufficient at this time.

[This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.](#)

Cromac Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 99 bays, 1 of which is an Accessible Bay. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, the bay was unoccupied. I believe that at this time, due to the location of the car park, 1 bay is sufficient.

[This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.](#)

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Subject:	Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Chris McCreery, Manager, Culture Development Unit

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
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<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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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	The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that the Chief Executive exercise his delegated authority to: Grant permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage the Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25
2.0	Recommendation
	The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that the Chief Executive exercise his delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage the Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In line with previous years, it is expected that the Department for Communities will be inviting local Councils to administer the Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25 within their respective local Council areas and to apply for funding to the Department. Whilst the Departments for Communities capital budget is currently fully allocated, approval is requested to launch the programme as a competitive process should the Department open the funding at a later date in 2024/25.
3.2	The Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme aims to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to arts, culture and active recreation venues across NI for people with disabilities. Make arts, cultural and active recreation venues more inclusive across society; and Increase participation in arts, culture and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.
3.3	The Council oversees the assessment and recommendation of projects via a competitive open call internally and externally and is responsible for delivery of all projects in receipt of funding.
3.4	The Culture Development Unit has managed the programme since its inception in 2018/19. Previous years have included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018/19 - 14 external projects and 2 council projects with grants equating to £301,074 • 2019/20 – 5 external projects and 3 council projects with grants equating to £115,730 • 2020/21 – 7 external projects and 1 council project with grants equating to £129,438 • 2021/22 – 5 external projects with grants equating to £90,520 • 2022/23 – 3 external projects and 1 council project with grants equating to £99,701

3.5	2023/24 – Funding was reduced by 50%, resulting in 2 external projects with grants equating to £30,926
3.6	Examples of projects supported include improved access to City Hall and the Tropical Ravine; easier access for audience and participants to not for profit cultural venues across the city; installation of new specialised playground facilities and changing spaces; and provision of equipment to provide immersive theatrical experiences for children with complex needs.
3.7	Capital works and equipment costs are eligible under this programme. The maximum grant available is £30,000, (the maximum project cost cannot exceed £80,000), and applicants are required to contribute at least 10% of the total project costs. To receive a £30,000 grant therefore, applicants must provide a contribution of at least £3,000.
3.8	The Department for Communities is particularly keen to welcome applications for Changing Places facilities, accessible equipment for play parks and projects that will impact positively on sustainability and climate change. Projects must complete on or before 31 March 2025.
3.9	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Contribution of at least 10% of project cost is an eligibility condition. This resource will need to be sourced by the applicant. Council has staff resources to oversee the administration of this Programme.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The Culture Development Unit will work closely with the Council's Equality Unit and the Department for Communities to ensure positive equality implications which is the central component of the Programme. Officers will discuss the Programme with the Council's Disability Advisory Panel. There are no rural needs or good relations implications.</p> <p>There are no direct Equality or Good Relations implications associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None

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Subject:	Night-time Economy Notice of Motion
Date:	11 th September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Jamie Uprichard, Business Research and Development Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?	Yes		No	X
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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

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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	
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1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Night-time Economy Notice of Motion which is recommended for closure as part of the quarterly NoM update.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update on action in relation to the Notice of Motion on Belfast City's Nightlife and Night-time economy; and • Agree that members engage with the newly appointed Night Czar through the City Centre All-Party Working Group.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>At the City Growth & Regeneration Committee meeting on 4th October 2021 Councillor de Faoite raised a Notice of Motion focussed on Belfast City's Nightlife and Night-time Economy which sought to deliver two specific actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a roundtable engagement event which seeks to identify the main challenges facing the city center's evening and nighttime economy (ENTE) and opportunities for the future; and • the establishment of an ENTE 'coordinator'.
3.2	<p>At a meeting of the City Centre All-Party Working Group (CCAPWG) on 26th January 2023, members welcomed Amy Lamé, London's Night Czar, who provided an overview of her background, role and collaborative approach to ensuring London thrives as a 24-hour city. Ms. Lamé outlined the challenges that she had faced, including changing perceptions of the city at night, ensuring women felt safe in London at night, addressing issues relating to nighttime workers and improving nighttime transport links. Members heard that key to addressing these challenges was working in partnership with the nighttime industries, local authorities, the Metropolitan Police, Transport for London and the general public.</p>
3.3	<p>At the same meeting members also received a presentation from the council's Director of Economic Development who provided an update on council related work which was assisting with the revitalisation effort of the night-time economy following the Covid pandemic. This included a presentation on case studies and best practice from other cities and information on Belfast's Purple Flag status. (Purple Flag is an internationally recognised accreditation for excellence in the nighttime economy and helped to create safe and thriving locations at night for all users).</p>
3.4	<p>Belfast City Centre First Achieved Purple Flag Status in 2020, just prior to the lock down and more recently Belfast City Council had joined the Steering Group that was seeking re-accreditation. Membership of the group included representatives from the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast One BID; • Linen Quarter BID; • Destination CQ BID; • Belfast City Council; • Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce; • PSNI; • SOS Bus; • Value Cabs; • Hospitality Ulster; and • Translink.

3.5	As part of its recent application for Purple Flag status the Steering Group undertook a self-assessment evening in September 2023 which identified the main challenges facing the city's nighttime economy and a number of areas of improvement in relation to the Purple Flag themes. Belfast City Centre's Purple Flag status was successfully re-certified in January 2024 (following an assessment conducted by assessors in November 2023).
3.6	The CCAPWG received a presentation from Chris McCracken, Managing Director of the Linen Quarter BID (on behalf of the Purple Flag Steering Group) at its May 2024 meeting. Mr. McCracken updated the working group on the latest status and outlined the next steps of the process, which included addressing a number of recommendations within the assessors' feedback report (attached at Appendix 1). It was agreed that the CCAPWG would be used to collate and direct Members' feedback to the ongoing work of the Purple Flag Steering Group.
3.7	<p><u>Night Czar</u></p> <p>On 11th June 2024, Belfast's three BIDs (Linen Quarter, Belfast One and Destination CQ) announced the appointment of Michael Stewart as Belfast's city centre's first Night Czar. The role reflects a previous Purple Flag recommendation and will focus to enhancing, coordinating, leading and advocating for the city's night-time economy. The Night Czar position follows appointments in cities such as London, Manchester, and Edinburgh and is an honorary role attracting remuneration of £12K per year which is jointly funded by the three BIDs.</p>
3.8	Following discussion at the May CCAPWG, it was recommended that the Night Czar should be invited to future meetings to engage with elected members. It was proposed that the working group would enable ongoing political engagement to ensure that elected representative's feedback could be provided and discussed (as suggested by best practice from other cities).
3.10	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no additional financial implications attached to this report. Finance and resource implications are considered by Committee when taking decisions on the specific Notices of Motion and Issues Raised by Members.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix 1 - Purple Flag Assessor's full renewal report

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Assessor's full renewal report

2023

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*Excellence in managing the
evening & nighttime economy*

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Purple Flag assessor full renewal report

Details of entry		Overnight assessment
Location of entry Belfast	Date of assessment Fri 24th November	Night of the week Friday
Name of assessors Julieta Cuneo – Liam O’Hare	Times covered (<i>tick or colour circles</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Entrant’s presentation  Early evening: 5–8pm  Late evening: 8pm–11pm  Night: 11pm–2am  Late night: 2–5am 	Anomalies Damp, cold, windy, Black Friday shopping night, City Hall Night market trading.
Author of report Julieta Cuneo – Liam O’Hare		Members & roles of local partnership present Eimear McCracken – Belfast One/Purple Flag Co-ordinator Chris McCracken – Linen Quarter BID Manager Lawrence Tingson – Linen Quarter BID Damien Corr – Destination CQ BID Manager Alan Crowe – Belfast One BID CEO Sgt Dave McKinley – PSNI Con Owen Kelly – PSNI BID funded officer Ex Insp David Gibson – PSNI (retired in October ’23 but has been a huge supporter of Purple Flag since 2018) Clare Guinness – CEO of Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce Lesley-Ann O’Donnell – Belfast City Council, Culture and Tourism Manager Emma McCausland – Director of ValuCabs
Date of report 12.12.2023		

		<p>Michael Stewart – Director of CommonMarket/Ex Belfast Chamber President (2019 – 2021)</p> <p>Resilience and continuity Who is the delegated PF Co-ordinator back-up to cover absence or position change?</p> <p>The Purple Flag is funded by three BIDs affording Belfast unique resilience and continuity.</p>
<p>Documents reviewed (tick or colour circles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Entry form  Map of area  Purple flag area snapshot  Self assessment chart 	<p>Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attach the itinerary for the assessment. • To achieve an overall standard met no standards should fall within the grey shaded boxes and no more than one attribute in any theme must be below standard. • Please can you explain any significant differences in scoring between yourself and the centre e.g. if a town/city scores themselves “excellent” and you score a “standard met”, why is there such a margin? • Please show entrant’s and your recommended standards on the same chart: <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Your recommended standards  The entrant’s standards 	

Core agenda and attributes	Assessment				
<p>Wellbeing (welcoming, clean and safe)</p> <p>Threshold standard: per capita crime and anti-social behaviour rates that are at least average and show an improving trend, or how any declining trends are understood and being managed – taking both residents and visitors into account (see KPI’s).</p>	Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
<p>1. Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While KPIs showed an increase in crime figures across the board, the PNSI and BID-funded police service were confident in indicating the rise is due 				X	

<p>Proportionate level of visible, effective policing and active surveillance.</p>	<p>to a higher public confidence in reporting. No crime or ASB were observed while assessing the PF area.</p>				●	
<p>2. Care Responsible guardianship, customer care and concern for community health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is strong communication among the PSNI, SIA and volunteer groups – Street Pastors, SOS Bus and Community Rescue Service (CRS) – all of which were present at the PSNI briefing session. • The CRS runs a remarkable boat patrol service on Friday and Saturday night. It runs until 2am and they have intervened in 8 positive interventions this year. There is an intention of funding an extra service on Thursday night. • During the assessment we encountered one incident involving an intoxicated individual. The scene was attended by a number of police and volunteer services. 					X
<p>3. Regulation Positive and proactive licensing and regulation. Please reference here as to whether certified for the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the night of the visit a representative from the SIA was undertaking a check on licensed premises’ security staff licenses and ability to manage potential conflict in a safe manner. • Unlike England & Wales the licensing regime is ran by the police. And magistrates. A team were out on the night and were engaging with Bar operators. 			X	●	
<p>4. Services Appropriate levels of public utilities including public conveniences or alternative schemes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the assessment we encountered 2 public access toilets, both paid with the possibility of using cash or card. Victoria Square’s public toilets are open to the public until 9pm, even though the space qualifies as public realm and employs 24-hour security staff. 			X	●	
<p>5. Partnership The active involvement of business in driving up standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership work among stakeholders is remarkable. This was evident from the relationship between representatives present at the visit, feedback from people encountered along the way and anecdotal evidence from the radio link and Retail Crimewatch services. 			X	●	
<p>6. Perceptions</p>		X				

A valid and positive presentation of the area to customers.

- While overall perceptions of safety were high there is a stark difference between different areas of the PF area, some of which feel disconnected and less looked after than others. However, plans for improvement and development were shared with the assessors.

		●		
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Core agenda and attributes	Assessment	Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
<p>Movement (a secure pattern of arrival, circulation and departure)</p> <p>Threshold standard: some form of appropriate late-night public transport provision (see KPI's) appropriate to each individual destination (size/location etc).</p>						
<p>1. Public Transport</p> <p>Safe, affordable, well-managed late night public transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The night of the visit coincided with the first night of the Translink Nightmovers service, a special late night bus service for the holiday season, already implemented in 2022. There is an intention to make the night bus service available throughout the year, currently stalled by the lack of central administration. • While welcome, the Nightmovers service doesn't seem to be enough to provide for all nighttime users. A conversation with a nighttime worker revealed that the late-night bus routes didn't provide a solution to her late-night commute home and at £6 per journey very expensive. • On the night of the visit taxis were widely available. However, it was a relatively quiet night. Representatives from Valu Cabs, a local taxi company, highlighted challenges in keeping up with the demand for services. Belfast like everywhere else is suffering from not enough drivers. 			X		
<p>2. Car parking</p> <p>An appropriate provision of secure late night car parking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was an appropriate provision of late-night car parking across the PF area. It was also noted that On-Street parking is free after 18:00. 			X		
<p>3. Pedestrian routes</p> <p>Clear, safe and convenient links within the centre and homeward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dublin road was well lit and easily navigable, linking well into Bedford st, Howard St and City Hall. • Donegall Place and Royal Ave were bright and welcoming. 			●	X	

- The Entries linking Anne St to Hight St were really animated, colourful with lots of “Instagram moment” photo opportunities.
- Victoria Square was fully pedestrianised, well-lit and spotlessly clean.
- Linen Quarter was people friendly even with crowds spilling onto the streets at times it didn't feel dangerous.

4. Crowd management

Measures to deal with overcrowding, congestion and conflict between those on foot and moving vehicles.

- The highest congestion points were in Cathedral District, the busiest NTE area. Plans for pedestrianization of the most popular crossings are on the way, but currently stalled due to lack of central administration.

5. Information

Provision of practical information and guidance to town centre users.

- There is good wayfinding signage throughout the PF area, including informative totems marking relevant historical points. Tourists are well catered for in this city and the information points are evenly spread with City Hall serving as an enormous beacon dominating the city centre as it does.

6. Partnership

Business, venues and transport operator commitment and participation to support the safe movement of people and vehicles.

- There was good evidence of a partnership approach between the three BIDs (Belfast One, Linen Quarter and Cathedral Quarter) The Venues had broad representation and the cabs appears to be very well coordinated.
- The PSNI who run licensing link well with community support services and the Guardians who are doing a great job despite dwindling numbers.
- The partnership on display that night really does beg the question, what exactly is the point of the inert executive.

Core agenda and attributes

Assessment

A Broad appeal (a vibrant choice and a rich mix)

Threshold standard: an evening and late night offer that is broader than youth-oriented and alcohol-based activity (see KPI's).

1. Food and dining

A choice of eating venues and a commitment to good food.

- There is a rich mix of independent and chain food outlets and food markets in the city, in addition to a seasonal Christmas market open at the time of the visit. Notable was the town centre options AMPM which was

Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
		X		
		●		
		X		
		●		
			X	
			●	
				X

	<p>buzzing. Kelly’s Cellars goes from strength to strength and seems to be expanding at every visit. The Garrick appeared busy and looked attractive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, options were reduced to a handful after 11pm, something particularly noticeable at closing time, where we observed a high concentration of young people in Mc Donald’s., manned by 2 security staff. • We encountered one kebab shop and one small take away offering food and hot drinks until 2am. 				●	
<p>2. Pubs and bars</p> <p>Well-managed venues, to meet varied tastes, and offering more than just alcoholic beverages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a solid offer of pubs and bars, all of which appeared to be well managed. There was no congregation of people by the doors, an acceptable level of noise and the fronts and surrounding areas were pristine clean after closing time. • Belfast has many great bars, we visited The Crown, Robinsons, the wonderful Bittles. • Hellcat Maggie’s affords its guests with lovely views across city hall and the night market. • However, there seemed to be a lack of non-alcoholic options, such as shisha bars and ice cream parlours, open until late. The several food markets in the city also close down by 11pm. 			X	●	
<p>3. Late night venues</p> <p>A late-night offer that complements the diverse appeal of the centre as a whole.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the visit we encountered a few late-night venues, located in different locations of the PF. They mostly seemed to cater to a very young audience except for one live-music venue, which was open until 3 but had stopped playing music by 2.30. Voodoo deserves special mention with a very strong music culture running through its program of events. • The telegraph Building is a fine example of what to do with the abundance of buildings around the cathedral quarter. I went to a gig the night after the assessment where the Undertones had a sold-out event. Impressive place. 			X	●	
<p>4. Early evening activity</p> <p>An active early evening period, including late opening shops, sporting and leisure opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The early evening period was busy and buzzing, with a wide variety of people around. This was probably increased by the fact that it was Black Friday, but overall, it felt that there was a healthy variety of retail and food options available, as well as the Christmas market. • The retail offering was very impressive and late-night shopping was abundant with a strong representation from small independents. • The Cinema in Castle Court was very impressive. Multi screens show Film as well as Sport, Opera, Concerts and plays. 9 screens showing 3 shows per 			X	●	

day. Very well managed by managed by Emma Robinson who explained the quirks of NI licensing by telling us that you need a ticket go get an alcoholic drink.

- City Hall had the late night market, which was a tale of two halves, Outside the hall the broad pavements allowed a parade of attractive huts all with retail late into the night; inside the city hall the ergonomics were far from satisfactory. Narrow walkways, too many food traders with nowhere to sit or stop. Prams and wheelchairs felt unwelcome or not considered and the journey around the grounds was not nice which is a great shame and a missed opportunity for the traders and City Hall.

5. Public buildings

Creative and imaginative use of public/civic buildings in the evening and at night.

- There is a remarkable amount of beautiful public buildings in the PF area and, following previous assessor comments, lighting has been expanded to highlight them, in turn contributing to enhancing public realm lighting.
- A highlight of the visit was 2 Royal Avenue, a former bank now turned into an ‘indoor park’ providing safe and free public space. It features a community library, café and event space that everybody is welcome to use. Works are underway to open a back entrance, thus connecting two parts of the PF area. Unfortunately, it is only open until 6pm.

6. Arts and culture

A vibrant, inclusive arts and cultural scene.

- The arts and culture scene are thriving, with a full agenda of events and venues. This will be increased next year with Belfast 24, a city-wide cultural programme. We also observed several venues playing live music.
- We were told by Victoria Square manager Ryan Mc Avoy that there are Belfast School of Music concerts every day in November and December.

			X	
			X	

Core agenda and attributes

Assessment

Place (a stimulating destination and a vital place)

Threshold standard: a mix of pleasing and functional spaces.
A convenient and attractive destination at night (see KPI’s).

1. Location

Appropriate location, clustering and capacity of venue types.

Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
			X	

- As we moved from the evening into the night the activity also moved towards Cathedral Quarter, where there is a high clustering and good mix of venues.
- The tide of trade is moving towards the Cathedral Quarter with its lack of residential property is allowing a buoyant nighttime economy not afraid to make a bit of noise.
- The street hosting the Duke of York pub, and the surrounding area was very colourful and attractive. Several high-quality bars in this area makes it an attractive and diverse destination area.
- The previous Golden Mile has seen better days but the Linen Quarter BID have used vinyl's imaginatively to bring old buildings back to life including murals . One notably of Terri Hooley which caught the eye but was not lit well, a missed opportunity.

2. Diversity

A successful balance of uses and brands.

- There is a good mix of restaurants, pubs and bars, and an incipient LBGTQ+ area. The Cathedral Quarter also hosts the new university campus, where we observed a late-night opening gym which someone was using. However, there didn't seem to be any non-alcohol related options available.
- The Grand Opera House is a very impressive building with a strong culture program bringing, music, plays, comedy and a bit of panto to the town centre.
- The Telegraph Building is delivering a strong live music program in a dramatic post-industrial space.

3. Clarity

Well-designed links and visible signs.

- Signage is good in terms of landmarks and highlighting of relevant historic spots, with informative totems scattered around the city. However, there seems to be a disconnect between the busiest hubs and other parts of the city. Apart from taxi stops, which are well spread, there wasn't signposting towards public transport.

4. Animation

Attractive, well-used public places, active streets and building frontages.

- There are a number of parklets and well-lit and set up public spaces across the city. Some areas are pedestrianised, and we observed groups of people making use of them while eating late-night takeaway.
- There is a high contrast between the busiest NTE spots and other parts of the city, which were very dark in comparison – i.e. the Golden Mile area and the stalled Tribeca regeneration project. Plans are underway to improve this.

			●	
		X	●	
			X	
		X	●	

- The Linen Quarter is home to a pedestrianised entertainment area that offers seating and performance space and a pétanque court that the public is encouraged to use. The area is inviting and well-lit but was not being used by anyone on the night of the visit.

5. Design

Thoughtful and imaginative design for the night.

- Public art and interventions are scattered across the city. However, there are areas of improvement such as the murals in the Linen Quarter, which were very poorly lit.
- The Entries are a good example of thoughtful and imaginative design for the night, with artistic intervention and place-making interventions that helped made the narrow alleyways feel inviting and safe, even late at night when venues were closed.

6. Identity

The appropriate use of natural and built features to reinforce appeal.

- Buildings are in general well-kept and well lit, and they convey a sense of city identity.

			X	
			●	
			X	
			●	

Core agenda and attributes

Assessment

Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
		X	●	
		X	●	

The Policy Envelope (a clear aim and a common purpose)

Threshold Standard: a momentum of collaboration between sectors, agencies, service providers and policy-makers (See KPIs’).

1. Data

A sound statistical base for policy-making and action.

- The statistical base provided is good starting point, but there is plenty of room for improvement, for example by splitting footfall data by time of the day, collecting spend data and providing analysis of different demographics accessing the PF area at night.
- The perceptions survey is a good addition to the KPIs, but the lack of contextual information makes it difficult to understand how representative it is.

2. Strategy

Positive strategic objectives and targets.

- There is a strong strategic direction, with the council’s Agenda 2023-2027 and the Future City Centre programme, backed by investment coming into the city and the expansion of the new university campus. However, the

focus seems at times too geared towards tourism over the local population: i.e. a total of 5 new hotels will be built in the near future.

3. Coordination

Public policy coordination and focus.

- Coordination among the membership of the PF is strong. Following previous assessor comments the group has incorporated a member of the City Council into the Steering Group, which facilitates decision making in a context of lack of central government.

4. Leadership

Clear responsibilities for policy and action.

- Leadership by the three city centre groups is strong and well-coordinated. The group manifested an intention to establish a Night Time Economy coordinator/ mayor, which would be a step forward and could strengthen leadership further once central government functions are eventually restored.

5. Partnership

Multi-sector endorsement and commitment.

- There is good representation of different sectors, including the police, Translink, the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and trade bodies, as well as the City Council, which is a welcome addition from the last assessment.

6. Community

A dialogue with consumers and residents.

- While partnership representation is strong it does feel like there is a lack of community and grassroots representation. It would be good to see the University/ youth representation involved, as well as representatives from communities that make use of the PF zone in a non-consumer capacity, such as night workers, religious groups, and minorities.

		X		
		X		
		X		
		X		

Purple Flag summary chart

Purple Flag core agenda		Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
1.	Wellbeing Welcoming, clean and safe.				X ●	
2.	Movement A secure pattern of arrival, circulation and departure.			X ●		
3.	A broad appeal A vibrant choice and a rich mix.				X ●	
4.	Place A stimulating destination and a vital place.				X ●	
5.	Policy envelope A clear aim and a common purpose.			X ●		

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NOTE. All five Themes must be at least 'Standard met' if the area is to be recommended for a Purple Flag.

Assessors' conclusions

Recommendation



Purple Flag accreditation

- Standard met or exceeded on all five core agenda themes.



Not yet ready for Purple Flag accreditation

- Standard not met on one or more core agenda themes.

Any matters to be referred to accreditation panel before a final decision is made:

The only difference in scoring is related to the 'Diversity' entry, and it is due to the fact that, while it is true that the offer is diverse, there seems to be a lack of non-alcohol related venues, such as shisha bars, desert parlours and etc., to cater for those who can't or choose not to drink on a night out.

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Guidance to applicant on any priority issues to address prior to purple flag renewal:

1. *KPIs on Crime and Disorder Anti-Social behaviour and Sexual Violence need to be addressed. While it is great to hear from the police that people are feeling better about reporting crime the assessors are less convinced and more work needs to be done to get the numbers down. They are too high.*
2. *It would be helpful to have figures broke down into NTE crime and domestic figures should be removed for clarity. It would be helpful to see figures on a month-by-month basis to target busy months.*
3. *A perception study needs to occur before the next assessment.*
4. *Relaxed licensing laws need to be analysed to see if they have had a positive impact, or not.*
5. *Belfast should have its next assessment on a busy Saturday, traditionally the busiest night of the week.*

Guidance to applicant on any general issues to address (*please note that any issues noted will be reviewed in the next interim renewal assessment*):

1. *There is a lack of representation and consideration towards the needs of night workers – we heard about issues with night transport, but no mention was made of other types of support available, such as mental health support for Hospitality workers, an issue that is becoming increasingly relevant.*
2. *It would benefit the Purple Flag to have the Victoria Sq. Dome open at night, even seasonally or occasionally for an "Belfast at night" experience*
3. *On another note, there is a variety of plans for growth and investment coming into the PF area, including more hotels, student accommodation and housing. This could present potential threats to existing venues related to noise complaints. It is recommended that plans are made to prevent this from happening.*
4. *Public transport is too expensive late at night. The executive when functioning again needs to address this and look at supplementing the cost of a single journey which at £6 is not going to encourage use and drive football into the town centre.*
5. *Belfast should consider integrating the Queens University area into PF, also Waterfront, Titanic & St Georges market if night events are happening there still.*

6. *The assessors would like to see effective VAWG policies for the licensed trade and buy in from the trade before the next assessment.*
7. *Belfast must engage with the executive as soon as they begin functioning as an administration again. An ENTE strategy should be developed which engages with all stakeholders and creates a common purpose and goals for everyone to work towards especially important if, and, when the executive makes apolitical decisions not to function again. The ENTE must not suffer this kind of stasis again.*

Specific policies and actions that are excellent or outstanding, and especially worthy of note:

The coordination between the police, volunteer groups and businesses are worthy of note. One representative from the hospitality sector highlighted that there is a good working relationship with the PSNI.

The Transformation of 2 Royal Avenue from a TESCO to a not for profit “indoor park” which the assessors assert must be brought into the early evening as it an exemplar project which can only get better with the development explained to us at our visit. The fact it closes at 18:00 falls outside the early evening provision which is a shame.

The assessors would like to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of the boat service.

Need help?

ATCM wants to help all those who are going for Purple Flag, or are thinking of it, to be as successful as possible. That way everyone wins. If you have visited the Purple Flag website or have attended an ENTE event and would like further support a range of workshops are also available for different stages of the application process.

Full details of all the workshops can be found by contacting the Purple Flag Team:

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For further information contact the Purple Flag team:

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Excellence in managing the evening & nighttime economy





Subject:	Business Growth and Scaling support		
Date:	11 September 2024		
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development		
Contact Officer:	Margie McKay, Enterprise and Business Growth Manager		
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"/>	
Some time 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		
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the Enterprise and Business Growth support and provide additional information on new interventions that had been identified in the 24/25 workplan which was presented to committee in May 2024.		
2.0	Recommendations		
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note and approve the allocation of £20,000 from the existing 2024/25 Economic Development budget to support the Fintech Support Programme, in partnership with the Fintech Corridor Note and approve the allocation of up to £65,000 from the existing 2024/25 Economic Development project to support the Advanced Media Production (AMP) capacity programme in partnership with Digital Catapult Note and endorse the proposal to invest in a localised test trading pilot to support pre/early start businesses with a maximum budget of £20,000. 		

3.0	Main Report
3.1	At the May 2024 meeting of this Committee, members endorsed the Enterprise and Business Growth workplan for the 24/25 year. The report set out key priority areas of work for the 2024/25 financial year, aligning to the delivery of the targets under the “Our Economy” pillar of the Belfast Agenda.
3.2	The report provided plans for scaling support and innovation, focusing on key technologies and priority sectors including Fintech and Financial Services, Creative and Digital Life and Health Sciences, and Advanced Manufacturing. Since that time, we have continued to work closely with the City Innovation Team to develop and deliver on new interventions which build capacity among local businesses – including those aligned to the Belfast Region City Deal interventions. Through this work and engagement with stakeholders in the wider ecosystem including Digital Catapult, Ulster University, Queen’s University, and the Fintech Corridor we have identified two key projects which we consider have clear alignment to the overall plan and which can lever resources and support from other key organisations.
3.3	<p><u>Fintech Support Programme</u></p> <p>Working in partnership with the Fintech Corridor, the Fintech Support Programme will aim to address the issues and strategic objectives identified in the Fintech NI action plan. The Fintech Corridor was established in 2020 and is a cross-border cluster working with multiple Fintech companies, academic institutions, and development agencies along the Dublin to Belfast corridor. It supports local SMEs working in the financial services to utilise new technology to grow and scale and provides important networking opportunities for companies along the corridor as well as with international companies working in this space.</p>
3.4	Belfast City Council is seeking to support 40 Belfast based companies to provide new partnership and networking opportunities, mentoring to support business growth, scaling and access to finance, and to look at opportunities to support the skills development and pipeline into the sector.
3.5	The support programme will focus on addressing specific barriers to SME growth and will provide the tools to overcome these barriers including mentoring, education, and support to enable business and product development, route to market engagements enabling b2b opportunities for Fintech SMEs, facilitated networking and collaborative space to explore and develop innovation, future opportunity identification and shaping SMEs for a growth mindset.

3.6 Advanced Media Production Capacity Programme

Working in partnership with Digital Catapult, the Advanced Media Production (AMP) capacity programme will aim to address key barriers to growth and explore opportunities for creative digital SMEs to engage with large scale Advanced Media Production (AMP) facilities such as Studio Ulster. The AMP programme will support up to 50 Belfast based companies wishing to build capacity in the commercial use of, and access to, Advanced Media Production (AMP). Through this programme businesses will have the opportunity to gain valuable skills and learning linked to Advanced Media Production and Studio Ulster in particular, to apply this new understanding to offer potential new market opportunities and to develop a pathway for local SMEs to engage and benefit from large scale City Deal projects, Studio Ulster, in this case.

3.7 Test trading opportunities for growing businesses

The May 2024 committee report provided an overview of the role which the Enterprise and Business Growth team takes in supporting businesses at all stages of their journey including improving start-up and survival rates of new businesses and encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship across the city.

3.8 The report outlined plans for continuation of our dedicated start up space at St George's Market. Since April this year, we have enhanced our promotion of this service and demand has grown for the offer as a result. Two stalls at the market are set aside for new traders and we rotate participation on a six-week basis in order to ensure that businesses get a feel for the retail environment – as well as ensuring that the opportunity is available to a growing list of interested businesses. Further to this, we have enhanced our stakeholder engagement, ensuring our services are accessible in all areas of Belfast and across all communities. Through this stakeholder engagement we have explored various opportunities with shopping centres and trading locations across Belfast to explore further opportunities for test trading. As part of this engagement, we have identified an opportunity to provide test trading to approximately 30 pre/early start businesses in a busy retail environment.

3.9 In order to pilot this approach, we have developed a partnership with the Kennedy Centre in West Belfast. Through this, we will provide space for approximately 30 traders over the duration of the pilot. If feedback is positive and this process successful, we would propose providing test trading opportunities across other retail locations in Belfast. Early discussions are already under way to identify viable opportunities. The pilot will include wraparound support being provided to the businesses through the established Go Succeed service and each business will avail of branding, marketing, and sales support. Following successful

	<p>completion of the pilot programme, the Kennedy Centre has committed to a period of reduced costs on more permanent trading space within the centre. A maximum budget of £20,000 is proposed for this activity to include pilot development, recruitment and marketing, wraparound support for businesses, and evaluation of the pilot.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Financial & Resource implications</u></p> <p>The activities outlined within this report will be resourced through the existing Enterprise and Business Growth budget for 2024/25.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The unit is currently undertaking an equality screening on the overall work programme. This will ensure that due consideration is given to equality and good relations impacts throughout the delivery of the collective workplan.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	N/A



Subject:	Notices of Motion – Quarterly Update
Date:	11 th September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Jamie Uprichard, Business Research and Development Manager

Restricted Reports											
Is this report restricted?	Yes		No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 											
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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		No

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Notices of Motion and Issues

	Raised in Advance allocated to the City Growth & Regeneration (CG&R) Committee.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes the updates to all Notices of Motion/ Issues Raised in Advance that this Committee is responsible for as referenced in Appendix 1; and • Agrees to the closure of seven Notices of Motion, as referenced in Appendix 1 and noted in paragraph 3.3 below.
3.0	Main report
3.1	At the SP&R Committee meeting on 25th October 2019 , members agreed “ <i>that this Council notes that other Councils produce a monthly status report in relation to Notices of Motion; and agrees Belfast City Council adopts a similar practice and produces a monthly Notice of Motion Update which will be brought to each full Council Meeting.</i> ”
3.2	<p>It was subsequently agreed that quarterly updates would be brought to the council’s statutory committees providing a regular update on the progress of each motion for which the committee is responsible for. At the SP&R Committee on 20th November 2020, members approved the arrangement for the future management of motions, which included recommendations that Notices of Motion could be closed for one of two reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Notice of Motion contained an action that has been completed. All Notices of Motion within this category contained a specific task that has since been complete. It is worth noting that, when Committee agree to action a Motion, there are sometimes additional actions agreed alongside the Motion. As these are not technically part of the Notice of Motion, they are taken forward through normal committee decision making processes. The Notice of Motion can therefore be closed, but additional actions related to it will continue to be progressed and reported to the committee. • Category 2 - Notice of Motion has become Council policy or absorbed into a strategic programme of work. These Motions did not contain a specific task that could be completed but rather they are more strategic in nature and require changes in Council policy and/ or strategy for long term outcomes. Those listed within this category have all been agreed by Committee and are now either Council policy or are currently being implemented through a Council strategy that is managed by a Standing Committee through the corporate planning process.
3.3	<p>There are presently 7 Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance for which the CG&R Committee is responsible for. Members are asked to approve the recommendation to close 4 motions (detailed below) and note status updates for the remaining 3 motions which remain open. Additional information is included at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Category 1 Recommended Closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme (ID = 153). • Belfast City Nightlife and Night-time Economy (ID = 208). • Belfast 2024 Animation Culture Night (ID = 381). <p>Category 2 Recommended Closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Infrastructure in Council Car Parks (ID = 152) which will now be considered as part of the council’s Low Emissions Vehicle Strategy.

3.5	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> There are no additional financial implications attached to this report. Finance and resource implications are considered by Committee when taking decisions on the specific Notices of Motion and Issues Raised by Members.
3.6	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix 1: Notices of Motion Live Database – CG&R Committee

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City Growth & Regeneration Notice of Motions

Notices of Motion and Issued Raised in Advance that remain OPEN

ID	Date	Notice of Motion	Proposed By	Referral Route	Lead Officer	Latest Status Update
217	01/11/2021	Tourism Street Signage (Enlightenment Period)	Cllr Long	Notice of Motion - referred by S&B Committee	John Greer	Officers have been working on an audit and resultant new approach to visitor attraction and wayfinding signage this is being considered within this work.
289	01/12/2022	Translink - Night-time provision of services	Cllr Lyons	Notice of Motion – debated at council	Cathy Reynolds	A letter was sent to the DfI Minister and the reply was presented to August's CG&R committee . The Committee noted the correspondence and officers are now investigating potential options with Translink and event organisers in relation to providing night-time services during festivals and event seasons in the city.
309	22/02/2023	Rent Controls	Cllr Beattie	Issue Raised in Advance (Special CG&R)	Nora Largey	Following the return of the NI Assembly a revised letter is being sent to the DfC Minister, whose departmental officials had previously advised that they were unable to make changes relating to rent controls without a sitting NI Executive.

Notices of Motion and Issued Raised in Advance recommended to CLOSE

ID	Date	Notice of Motion	Proposed By	Referral Route	Lead Officer	Update / Latest Status
152	13/01/2021	Environmental Infrastructure in Council Car Parks	Cllr Heading	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	John Tully	<u>Recommend to close (Category 2)</u> A draft Low Emissions Vehicle Strategy was presented to members at August's SP&R to seek agreement to progress its implementation on a phased approach. The paper sets out proposals to undertake a commercial assessment on council land assets (including car parks) with a view to bringing forward proposals for investment in EV infrastructure.
153	13/01/2021	Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme	Cllr McMullan	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	Siobhan Toland	<u>Recommend to close (Category 1)</u> A separate paper will be presented to members at September's CG&R meeting. CNS's Off-Street Car Parking team continue to work in line with the recommendations from the British Parking Association audit.
208	04/10/2021	Belfast City Nightlife and Night-time Economy	Cllr de Faoite	Notice of Motion – straight to CG&R	John Greer	<u>Recommend to close (Category 1)</u> A separate paper will be presented to members at September's CG&R meeting. Representatives from the Purple Flag Steering Group attended a meeting of the City Centre All-Party Working Group on 3 rd May and gave members an update on their recent re-accreditation. The application for this process included a presentation of the challenges posed in the city during the nighttime and evening hours. In addition, an update was also provided on the BID's recent recruitment of a Night Czar.
381	10/04/2024	Belfast 2024 Animation Culture Night	Cllr Groogan	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R) – referred to SP&R	John Greer	<u>Recommend to close (Category 1)</u> Members considered plans for Culture Night 2024 at the May SP&R Committee meeting and agreed not to develop an additional event for Belfast 2024. It was also agreed also that an allocation of £30,000 would be considered as part of the process to allocate from year end underspends to facilitate an engagement programme with the wider cultural sector, key funders, partners and other interested parties in relation to culture night from September 2025 and onwards https://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=78419

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