

Public Document Pack

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

TO: THE LORD MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND THE COUNCILLORS OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Belfast on Monday, 3rd June, 2024 at 6.00 pm, for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Council (Pages 1 - 6)
5. Official Announcements
6. Appointment of Positions of Responsibility 2024/2025 (Pages 7 - 8)
7. Installation of Lord Mayor
8. Installation of Deputy Lord Mayor
9. Appointment of Members to Committees 2024-2025 (Pages 9 - 12)
10. Minutes
 - a) Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 13 - 68)
 - b) People and Communities Committee (Pages 69 - 82)
 - c) City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 83 - 96)
 - d) Planning Committee (Pages 97 - 104)
 - e) Standards and Business Committee (Pages 105 - 106)

The Members of Belfast City Council are hereby summoned to attend.

John Walsh

Chief Executive

This page is intentionally left blank

Council

MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall
on Tuesday, 7th May, 2024 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Murphy) (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Groogan);
The High Sheriff (Councillor S. Douglas); and
Aldermen Copeland, Lawlor, McCoubrey, McCullough and Rodgers; and
Councillors Anglin, Beattie, Bell, Black, Bower, R. Brooks, T. Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Collins, de Faoite, Doherty, M. Donnelly, R. M. Donnelly, Doran, D. Douglas, Duffy, Ferguson, Garrett, Kelly, Long, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, F. McAteer, G. McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCormick, McDonough-Brown, McDowell, McKay, McKeown, I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin, Murray, Nelson, Nic Bhranair, Ó Néill, Smyth, Verner and Walsh.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported for Councillors Bradley, P. Donnelly, Flynn, Harvey, McMullan and Whyte.

Declarations of Interest

The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Groogan) and Councillors Beattie, Doherty, M. Donnelly, Duffy declared an interest in relation to the item "Social Supermarket Fund" within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes and "Social Supermarkets 2024/25" within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that their employers were recipients of the fund.

Alderman Rodgers and Councillor Ferguson declared an interest in relation to the item "Blanchflower Stadium – Preferential Use Agreement" within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that they were shareholders of Glentoran Football Club.

Councillor Canavan declared an interest in relation to the item "Social Supermarket Fund" within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes and "Social

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 7th May, 2024**

Supermarkets 2024/25” within the People and Communities Committee minutes, in that she was a Board Member of one of the organisations that delivered the fund.

Councillor Smyth declared an interest in relation to the item “Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024” within the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minutes, in that his wife was employed by NILGA.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Murphy),
Seconded by Councillor R. McLaughlin,

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 8th April, be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Murphy) congratulated Cliftonville Football Team on its Irish Cup win and, at the request of Councillor Smyth, agreed to host a reception in City Hall to acknowledge the achievement.

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Murphy) and several Councillors congratulated all those who had participated in the Belfast City Marathon, particularly Councillor Garrett who had completed his first marathon.

Alderman McCoubrey welcomed the completion of two projects in Greater Shankill, the Greater Shankill Community Council who had received investment through the Belfast Investment Fund and had become the home of a number of community groups, also Berlin Swifts Football Club which had received investment from the Local Investment Fund to build changing facilities and undertake groundwork and thanked the Council staff who assisted.

At the request of Councillor de Faoite, the Lord Mayor agreed to write to and invite The Breda Bells and 110th Scouts to his parlour to congratulate them on their fundraising and participation in the Belfast City Marathon.

Councillor Black congratulated the Immaculata Football Club on becoming club champions.

Councillor Bunting congratulated the Council’s Parks employees on the success of Springfest at Malone House and the staff at Belvoir Park Primary School on the awards they had recently received, and the Lord Mayor agreed to write a letter of congratulations to Belvoir Park Primary School.

Councillor Collins commended the staff and students of Queen’s University who had taken part in a peaceful sit-in on campus in solidarity with the people of Gaza.

Councillor Doran congratulated Ballysillan Swifts 2012 Team, Ballysillan Swifts U18 Team and Westland Young Men Football Club on their recent wins and also the Belfast Boys

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 7th May, 2024**

Model School on winning the Derrytrasna Award for Exceptional Pastoral Care and the Lord Mayor agreed to write to the school to congratulate them on their win.

Councillor Ferguson congratulated the Northern Ireland School Boys on winning the Centenary Shield and the Lord Mayor agreed to write a letter of congratulations to the team.

Councillor Long paid tribute to Councillor McMullan who had announced that he would stand down as a Councillor and thanked him for his achievements as a member of the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland.

Councillor Murray congratulated the Oh Yeah Music Centre on winning the Grassroots Venue: Spirit of the Scene Award and commended the Council's Parks employees on the success of Springfest at Malone House.

**Change of Membership on
Committees/Outside Bodies/Position of Responsibility**

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from Sinn Fein and the Green Party of the following changes in Positions of Responsibility:

- Councillor Duffy to replace Councillor Nic Bhranair on the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee;
- Councillor Flynn to replace Councillor Smyth on the Climate and City Resilience Committee; and
- Councillor Smyth to replace Councillor Flynn on the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

The Council noted the changes.

Minutes of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Black,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie and

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 19th April, 2024, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Irish Language Policy

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Bunting,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 19th April, under the heading "Irish Language Policy" to adopt the recommendations as set out in the report, be amended to state that the Council will not adopt the recommendations and will consider the Irish Language Policy once an Irish Language Commissioner is in place. "

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 7th May, 2024**

On a recorded vote, seventeen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-six against and it was declared lost.

For (17)	Against (36)
The High Sheriff (Councillor Sammy Douglas); Aldermen Copeland, Lawlor, McCoubrey, McCullough and Rodgers; and Councillors R. Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Doran, D. Douglas, Ferguson, Kelly, McCormick, McDowell, I. McLaughlin and Verner.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Murphy); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Groogan); and Councillors Anglin, Beattie, Bell, Black, Bower, T. Brooks, Canavan, Carson, Collins, de Faoite, Doherty, M. Donnelly, R. M. Donnelly, Duffy, Garrett, Long, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, F. McAteer, G. McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McDonough-Brown, McKay, McKeown, R. McLaughlin, Murray, Nelson, Nic Bhranair, O'Neill, Smyth and Walsh.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 19th April, 2024, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Murray,
Seconded by Councillor M. Donnelly,

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 9th April, be approved and adopted."

Minutes of City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Nic Bhranair,
Seconded by Councillor Duffy, and

That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 10th April, be approved and adopted.

Notice of Motion Quarterly Update

At the request of Councillor de Faoite, the Council agreed to retain the following two notices of motion which had been recommended for closure, and to write to the Minister for Infrastructure to request that funding be committed to the provision of nighttime services:

- Translink – Nighttime provision of services (ID 289); and
- Late Night Public Transport (ID 349).

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 7th May, 2024**

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the forgoing amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 10th April, 2024, were approved and adopted.

Minutes of Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor McKeown,
Seconded by Councillor Doran, and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 17th April, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Councillor Maskey, and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 16th April, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Climate and City Resilience Committee

Moved by Councillor R. M. Donnelly,
Seconded by Councillor Walsh, and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 11th April, be approved and adopted.

Minutes of Standards and Business Committee

Moved by Councillor McDonough-Brown,
Seconded by Alderman McCullough, and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 23rd April, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 7th May, 2024**

Motion

Agricultural Fines for Pollution

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

“This Council notes the ongoing issues with deteriorating water quality in our rivers and waterways across Northern Ireland as highlighted in the recent New State of Our Rivers Report by the Rivers Trust.

Of the 450 river stretches looked at in Northern Ireland, 0% achieved good overall status, and 12% were given either poor or bad overall status. Only 31% achieved good ecological status, and just 2 stretches achieved high ecological status, and almost 70% failed to meet the requirements for good ecological status. This has impacted on the overall quality of Lough Neagh, which supplies over half the drinking water to Belfast, due to excess run-off from industrial agricultural processes.

This Council recognises that we are in the midst of a freshwater crisis in Northern Ireland and are concerned that the capping of agriculture penalties for repeated negligent breaches at 15% in October 2022 is not a sufficient deterrent.

As such, this Council calls on the DAERA Minister to reinstate the previous more stringent penalties to more accurately reflect the environmental harm caused.”

The motion was seconded by The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Groogan).

On a recorded vote, thirty-seven Members voted for the motion and thirteen against and it was declared carried.

For (37)	Against (13)
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Murphy); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Groogan); Aldermen Copeland and Rodgers; and Councillors Anglin, Beattie, Bell, Black, Bower, Canavan, Carson, Collins, de Faoite, Doherty, M. Donnelly, R. M. Donnelly, Duffy, Garrett, Long, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, F. McAteer, G. McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McDonough-Brown, McDowell, McKay, McKeown, R. McLaughlin, Murray, Nelson, O'Neill, Smyth and Walsh.	The High Sheriff (Councillor Sammy Douglas); Aldermen, Lawlor, McCoubrey and McCullough; and Councillors R. Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Doran, D. Douglas, Ferguson, Kelly, I. McLaughlin and Verner.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

Agenda Item 6

Internal Positions of Responsibility	Year 2	Councillor
Lord Mayor	ALL	Councillor Murray
Deputy Lord Mayor	DUP	Councillor McCormick
Chair – SP and R Committee	SF	Councillor Murphy
Deputy Chair – S P and R Committee	SDLP	Councillor Whyte
Chair - City Growth and Regeneration Committee	ALL	Councillor Nelson
Deputy Chair City Growth and Regeneration Committee	DUP	Councillor I. McLaughlin
Chair - People and Communities Committee	DUP	Councillor Verner
Deputy Chair - People and Communities Committee	SF	Councillor Garrett
Chair – Licensing Committee	UUP	Alderman Rodgers
Deputy Chair – Licensing Committee	GREEN	Councillor Smyth
Chair – Planning Committee	SF	Councillor Carson
Deputy Chair - Planning	ALL	Councillor T. Brooks
Chair Climate and City Resilience	SF	Councillor R. M. Donnelly
Deputy Chair Climate and City Resilience	SF	Councillor McCabe
Chair Standards and Business	DUP	Councillor Lawlor
Deputy Chair Standards and Business	SF	Councillor Magee
Chair Waterfront and Ulster Hall	DUP	Councillor Ferguson
Deputy Chair Waterfront and Ulster Hall	ALL	Councillor Bower

This page is intentionally left blank

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

1	Sinn Féin	Chairperson	Councillor Ryan Murphy
2	SDLP	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Carl Whyte
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ciaran Beattie	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tina Black	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ronan McLaughlin	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Róis-Marie Donnelly	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Joe Duffy	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Matt Garrett	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Micheal Donnelly	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sarah Bunting	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Frank McCoubrey	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ian McLaughlin	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Fred Cobain	
14	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Bradley Ferguson	
15	Alliance	Councillor Michael Long	
16	Alliance	Councillor Jenna Maghie	
17	Alliance	Councillor Sam Nelson	
18	Alliance	Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown	
19	SDLP	Councillor Séamas de Faoite	
20	Green	Councillor Áine Groogan	

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

1	Alliance	Chairperson	Councillor Sam Nelson
2	Democratic Unionist Party	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Ian McLaughlin
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Joe Duffy	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Séanna Walsh	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tina Black	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ronan McLaughlin	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor McKay	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor Maskey	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Tracy Kelly	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman James Lawlor	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Andrew McCormick	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Davy Douglas	
14	Alliance	Councillor Fiona McAteer	
15	Alliance	Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown	
16	Alliance	Councillor Eric Hanvey	
17	SDLP	Councillor Séamas de Faoite	
18	SDLP	Councillor Dónal Lyons	
19	Green	Councillor Brian Smyth	
20	TUV	Councillor Ron McDowell	

People and Communities Committee

1	Democratic Unionist Party	Chairperson	Councillor Nicola Verner
2	Sinn Féin	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Matt Garrett
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor Maskey	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Micheal Donnelly	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor JJ Magee	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tina Black	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Claire Canavan	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Róis-Marie Donnelly	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tomás Ó Néill	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sarah Bunting	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ruth Brooks	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ian McLaughlin	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Fred Cobain	
14	Alliance	Councillor Christine Bower	
15	Alliance	Councillor Jenna Maghie	
16	Alliance	Councillor David Bell	
17	Alliance	Councillor Hedley Abernethy	
18	SDLP	Councillor Paul Doherty	
19	SDLP	Councillor Gary McKeown	
20	Green	Councillor Anthony Flynn	

Licensing Committee

1	Ulster Unionist Party	Chairperson	Alderman Jim Rodgers
2	Green	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Brian Smyth
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Pádraig Donnelly	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor McKay	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Caoimhín McCann	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Nichola Bradley	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Brónach Anglin	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tomás Ó Néill	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Tracy Kelly	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Davy Douglas	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Jordan Doran	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough	
14	Alliance	Councillor Fiona McAteer	
15	Alliance	Councillor Hedley Abernethy	
16	Alliance	Councillor Tara Brooks	
17	SDLP	Councillor Gary McKeown	
18	IND	Councillor Paul McCusker	
19	TUV	Councillor Ron McDowell	
20	PBPA	Councillor Michael Collins	

Planning Committee

1	Sinn Féin	Chairperson	Councillor Arder Carson
2	Alliance	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Tara Brooks
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Matt Garrett	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ryan Murphy	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor JJ Magee	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Caoimhín McCann	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Bronach Anglin	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Geraldine McAteer	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman James Lawlor	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sammy Douglas	
13	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Jordan Doran	
14	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Bradley Ferguson	
15	Alliance	Councillor David Bell	
16	Alliance	Councillor Eric Hanvey	
17	Alliance	Councillor Hedley Abernethy	
18	SDLP	Councillor Carl Whyte	
19	Green	Councillor Áine Groogan	
20	Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Jim Rodgers	

Climate and City Resilience Committee

1	Sinn Féin	Chairperson	Councillor Róis-Marie Donnelly
2	Sinn Féin	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Áine McCabe
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Séanna Walsh	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Bronach Anglin	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Micheal Donnelly	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Nichola Bradley	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Geraldine McAteer	
8	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sarah Bunting	
9	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ruth Brooks	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sammy Douglas	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Frank McCoubrey	
12	Alliance	Councillor Michael Long	
13	Alliance	Councillor Tara Brooks	
14	Alliance	Councillor Christine Bower	
15	Alliance	Councillor David Bell	
16	SDLP	Councillor Dónal Lyons	
17	SDLP	Councillor Paul Doherty	
18	Green	Councillor Anthony Flynn	
19	Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Sonia Copeland	
20	PBPA	Councillor Michael Collins	

Standards and Business Committee

1	Democratic Unionist Party	Chairperson	Alderman James Lawlor
2	Sinn Féin	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor JJ Magee
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ronan McLaughlin	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Micheal Donnelly	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Ryan Murphy	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Nichola Bradley	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Geraldine McAteer	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Pádraig Donnelly	
9	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Tracy Kelly	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Andrew McCormick	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Davy Douglas	
13	Alliance	Councillor Fiona McAteer	
14	Alliance	Councillor Jenna Maghie	
15	Alliance	Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown	
16	SDLP	Councillor Séamas de Faoite	
17	SDLP	Councillor Dónal Lyons	
18	Green	Councillor Áine Groogan	
19	Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Jim Rodgers	
20	IND	Councillor Paul McCusker	

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

1	Democratic Unionist Party	Chairperson	Councillor Bradley Ferguson
2	Alliance	Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Christine Bower
3	Sinn Féin	Councillor Clíodhna Nic Bhránair	
4	Sinn Féin	Councillor Caoimhín McCann	
5	Sinn Féin	Councillor Geraldine McAteer	
6	Sinn Féin	Councillor Áine McCabe	
7	Sinn Féin	Councillor Tomás Ó Néill	
8	Sinn Féin	Councillor Conor McKay	
9	Sinn Féin	Councillor Claire Canavan	
10	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Nicola Verner	
11	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ruth Brooks	
12	Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sammy Douglas	
13	Alliance	Councillor Jenna Maghie	
14	Alliance	Councillor David Bell	
15	SDLP	Councillor Paul Doherty	
16	Green	Councillor Anthony Flynn	
17	Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Sonia Copeland	
18	PBPA	Councillor Michael Collins	
19	TUV	Councillor Ron McDowell	
20	IND	Councillor Paul McCusker	

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 24th May, 2024

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Black (Chairperson);
Alderman McCoubrey; and
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Cobain, de Faoite,
M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Duffy, Ferguson, Garrett,
Harvey, Maghie, Maskey, I. McLaughlin,
R. McLaughlin, Nelson, Smyth and Whyte.
- In attendance: Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of
Corporate Services;
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and
Civic Services;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Ms. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and
Development;
Mr. D. Sales, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood
Services;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance
Manager.
- Also attended: Councillor Flynn.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors de Faoite and Long.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 19th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 7th May, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Items

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

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

The Members were also reminded that the content of 'restricted' reports and any discussion which took place during closed session must be treated as 'confidential information' and that no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

City Centre Regeneration Scheme

(Members of the Planning Committee, that is, Councillors Hanvey, Ferguson, Garrett, Maskey and Whyte, left the meeting whilst issues in relation to the Planning application as part of this item were under discussion.)

The Committee considered a report which provided an update in relation to the City Centre Regeneration Scheme.

The Committee:

- I. Noted the update in relation to progressing acquisition of the Assembly Rooms, including an agreed revised inspection date for LPS in order to inform a valuation;
- II. Agreed that officers commence 'without prejudice' discussions with the landowners (or agents) on the potential for acquisition of a city centre property. Any acquisition would be subject to referral to this Committee (and Full Council) to include all due diligence;
- III. Agreed that officers engage external expert resource to support the proposed acquisition process;
- IV. Noted the update on correspondence with Government Departments; and
- V. Noted the scheduled Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee Meeting on Friday 28 June to consider the Regeneration Framework, city centre developments and heritage assets.

Organisational Reviews and Change Programme

The Committee noted:

- the progress on the work programme for the Organisational Reviews and Change portfolio and timescales going forward;
- the update on the Review of Continuous Improvement;
- the ongoing work to develop the business plan for Continuous Improvement for the current financial year; and
- that the next report to the Committee would align with the Update on Employees on Temporary Contracts and Agency Workers.

The Committee agreed that a report on the use of contractors in Property Maintenance and a report on a Review Sister Cities be submitted to a future meeting.

Pay and Grading Review

The Committee considered a report which provided details of the revised proposed new Pay and Grading structure for staff on Belfast City Council Terms and Conditions and seeking the Committee's approval for the proposed next steps within the Industrial Relations Framework.

The Committee:

- approved the revised proposed pay and grading model and associated assimilation rules;
- approved that a formal offer on the above can be issued to Trade Unions;

Subject to TUs accepting the offer:

- approved the awarding of the proposed non-consolidated 7/12ths award;
- approved the implementation of the Pay and Grading model.

The Committee also noted:

- that the costs for the new pay and grading model was approximately £2.4m. £2m has been included in the rate setting process for Financial Year 2024/25;
- that the non-consolidated payment of approximately £320k for PO3, PO6, PO9 and PO11 proposed in the previous version of the offer was no longer required;
- the additional cost for 2024/25 will be in the region of £80k and would be paid from departmental underspends or realignment of specified reserves;
- the proposed next steps for the Pay and Grading Review.

Living With Water Programme Update

The Committee:

- noted the written response submitted to LWW on the interim review findings informed by the Committee discussions attached at Appendix 2 to the report;
- noted that a copy of the correspondence was submitted to the office of the Minister for Infrastructure requesting a meeting with Party Leaders given the significance for Belfast; and
- agreed to undertake a site visit to a NI Water Waste Water Treatment plant to understand their significance in the LWW Programme and that all Members be invited to this.

**North Foreshore - Giant's Park Belfast
Limited Leisure Led Development Update**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 16 December 2022, it had approved a revised development proposal from GPBL for a mixed-use development over approximately 250 acres. This had amended their previous successful bid which had been approved by in August 2018, which was submitted as part of an Expressions of Interest exercise carried out by the Council. In addition, the Committee approved the Council to enter into a Master Development Agreement (MDA) for the revised scheme which would require GPBL to deliver the uses identified in their submission within a prescribed timeframe.

The Director of Property and Projects explained that the agreement and signing of the MDA was then delayed due to the complexity of the arrangements, the scale of the site, the range of proposed uses and special considerations relating to management of a former landfill site. The Committee had been asked to note this at its meeting dated 15 December 2023 with a further update to be brought when finalised. The Master Development Agreement and all supporting documents, including Guarantees, Site Investigation Licence, Collateral Warranties, Funding Agreement, Licence to Occupy, Lease, Works Deed and Side Letter have now been agreed and MDA was signed on 27 March 2024.

Accordingly, the Director submitted a report on the current status of the development.

The Committee noted the update on the leisure led commercial brief by Giant's Park Belfast Limited (GPBL) at the North Foreshore and that a launch event was scheduled for June.

The Committee agreed to receive an update presentation from GPBL on their proposals at a future meeting.

City Hall Income Generation Proposals

The Committee considered a report in relation to City Hall income generation proposals and seeking approval for the introduction of the charges set out in the first phase of the project.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the following:

- an increase in wedding room hire costs in the City Hall;
- an increase in charges for officiating at other wedding venues;
- the introduction of a cost recovery charge for certain public tours of the City Hall; and
- granted delegated authority to the City Solicitor to negotiate room hire charges for commercial type events.

Request for the use of the City Hall Grounds

The Committee acceded to a request for use of City Hall grounds for an event on 20th – 22nd September 2024.

In response to a request from a Member, the City Solicitor undertook to investigate as to whether a fee could be charged for the use of the grounds for the event.

Invite to participate in Building Cultural Networks Convention on Cultural Expression

The Committee considered a report seeking to invite an officer to participate in the Building Cultural Network Convention - Cultural Expression: Rights, Roles and Responsibilities.

The Committee agreed to accept an invite to the Convention and for a senior officer to speak at the event on the Council's legal obligations in regard to the theme on Bonfire Celebrations: Rights, Roles and Responsibilities.

Matters referred back from Council/Motions

Motion – Plant-based Councils Initiative – referred from Standards and Business

The Members were informed that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 30th April, had considered the following motion which had been received for submission to the Council on 7th May:

“Belfast City Council endorses the plant-based councils initiative.

The Council therefore;

- *Agrees to engage with the Plant Based Councils initiative and to commit to fully plant-based procurement where food is served*

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

throughout the council estate, prioritising seasonal local produce to support local farmers, and ensure that there are plant-based food options available at all City Council run events, as well as prioritising plant-based menu options in Council run facilities.”

The motion had been proposed by Councillor Flynn and Seconded by Councillor Smyth.

The Committee noted that, in accordance with Standing Order 13(i), Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

The Committee noted that the Notice of Motion had been received and agreed that a subsequent report be brought to Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications.

The Committee agreed further that a report on the cost of the provision of refreshments at Council/Committee meetings be submitted to a future meeting.

**Report - Response received from Translink
re NOM - Bilingual Signage at Weavers Cross**

The Committee was advised that, at the Standards and Business Committee meeting held on 28th March, 2024, it was agreed to write to Translink advising them of a Notice of Motion in connection with bilingual signage at Weavers Cross.

The City Solicitor reported that a response has been received from Mr. Chris Conway, Group Chief Executive of Translink.

In his response he had advised that Translink acknowledged the motion and further acknowledged the importance placed on matters of language by all sections of the community. He had stated further that it was important that Translink reached out to engage with all relevant communities and stakeholders. Translink was currently planning a series of meetings with a range of interested parties during the coming weeks, where they would listen carefully to all viewpoints and would consider a response once that process had been completed.

Noted.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

Belfast Region City Deal – update

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This report is to provide an update to Committee on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD).

2.0 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the progress on project development and delivery across the pillars of investment.
- Note the update in relation to the Annual report and Annual Conversation.
- Note the update in respect of programme communication and the BRCD Council Panel

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Significant progress has been seen now that the BRCD is fully into delivery, with the most advanced projects recruiting and upskilling staff, constructing new premises, co-designing projects with industry, procuring next generation technology and equipment and moving fully into operation in 2024, 2025 and 2026.
- 3.2 To date a total of 15 Outline Business Cases (OBC's) have been approved with a combined approximate project value of £660m and 10 Contracts for Funding have been signed for projects with an approximate value of £505m. To date over £5m of claims have been paid to individual projects.
- 3.3 Also following significant local market engagement local businesses have been awarded contracts to support delivery of the BRCD. For example Henry Brothers were recently appointed to deliver a significant contract for the Queen's University led Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) and the aim this year as outlined in BRCD's first annual report is to have awarded 15 major contracts for design, support for delivery and construction.

Progress across BRCD Pillars since previous update in January

Innovation

- 3.4 Innovation has seen a number of key milestones since the last update with the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) receiving Full Business Case (FBC) approval in early March and with construction works commencing on site at Global Point in Newtownabbey on 25th March. A significant recruitment drive is also underway with 21 new roles advertised including senior engineers and roles relating to sustainable manufacturing.

- 3.5 Studio Ulster also received FBC approval in March and is well on course to open fully for business this Autumn, leading the way in creative industries. The construction of the Studio Ulster facility at Giant's Park in North Belfast is due for completion in July. A recruitment drive is also underway for the project. The procurement process in relation to specialist virtual production equipment has also been completed.
- 3.6 iREACH Health received planning approval in March, full planning permission was granted for the erection of four and five storey clinical research buildings on either side of the Lisburn Road replacing the existing Russell court buildings currently at the site. The FBC has been significantly drafted and formal submission is anticipated in June ahead of construction commencing in Autumn.
- 3.7 In relation to Momentum One Zero, the planning application has been formally submitted and Stage 4 Detailed Designs are progressing well.
- 3.8 The CDHT OBC2 was submitted to Government partners by Ulster University and following detailed review has now successfully received DoF Supply approval. The drafting of the Contract for Funding is now well underway, following legal consideration of Subsidy Control.

Digital

- 3.9 The Digital Twin Centre project led by Digital Catapult signed its Contract for Funding at the end of March and a formal launch has now taken place. The City Deal is funding £15m towards the project, with £15m of funding from Innovate UK and an additional £7.6m from industry partners. Digital Catapult are seeking rental accommodation within Belfast and a significant recruitment drive is underway.
- 3.10 The Augment the City Challenge Fund opened in April 2024 for applications from local SMEs who wish to explore the future role of immersive technologies in visitor experiences, with the ability to utilise and exploit the benefits of 5G technology – with learnings for Belfast Stories and all tourism & regeneration projects across the Deal. A separate report on the Smart Cities innovation programme which includes a detailed update on the fund is also on the agenda for Members consideration.
- 3.11 The i4c Cleantech Centre at St Patrick's Barracks, led by Mid & East Antrim Borough Council, is progressing

procurements for a centre operator and progressing detailed designs for the facility.

- 3.12 An OBC for the AND Innovation Hub, an innovation centre based in Holywood, focused on the creative industries and led by Ards & North Down Borough Council, which will utilise £8.9m of City Deal funding has been formally submitted to Government partners for consideration. Discussions are underway to maximise integration with Studio Ulster and South Eastern Regional College.

Tourism and Regeneration

- 3.13 As reported previously Contracts for Funding are in place for the Carrickfergus, Newry City Centre and Bangor Waterfront regeneration projects. Newry are now progressing with the procurement of contractors, Carrickfergus are developing RIBA 2 designs and Bangor Waterfront have progressed the appointment of the design teams for Ballyholme Yacht Club and Pickie Fun Park.
- 3.14 The Tourism projects have also seen significant progress since the last update in relation to Contracts for Funding.
- 3.15 The contract for funding for Mourne Mountain Gateway Project has now been approved through Newry Mourne & Down District Council governance arrangements. Approval for the OBC addendum from the Department of Finance has also been received meaning the contract can now proceed to signing, which is a significant milestone for this project. Procurement of design team is also reaching final stages of approval, with design team expected to be appointed this month.
- 3.16 The Gobbins Phase 2 contract for funding has now been signed. The design team procurement has concluded and the design team has been formally appointed.
- 3.17 Destination Royal Hillsborough has received final Council and Historic Royal Palaces approval for the Contract for Funding and will now progress to signing. Procurement of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Historic Royal Palaces design teams have commenced with first appointments expected in the summer. Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council have continued to engage with a number of statutory bodies to progress the planning application for the public realm.
- 3.18 A detailed report on the progress to date on Belfast Stories was considered by Members in March 2024. The RIBA 1 stage has completed and development on the Stage 2 concept designs

for both the visitor experience and the build has now commenced.

3.19 Subsidy Control

In line with the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act, the subsidy assessments for Mourne Gateway and Gobbins, were referred to the Competition and Markets Authority, which concluded that a well reasoned case for the subsidies had been made. The PMO continue to work closely with projects and Government Departments and take appropriate professional advice to ensure that the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act are fulfilled.

Infrastructure

3.20 Feasibility studies are being completed Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 on the extensions to Glengormley and Carryduff as requested by the last Minister. Following completion of these studies the OBC will be updated.

3.21 The OBC Addendum for Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge has now received approval from the Department for Finance. Approval is now being sought from the Minister to progress to procurement of the design and build contractor.

3.22 The minister has reaffirmed the previous decision that the preferred option for the bridge on the Newry Southern Relief Road is a non-opening 50m fixed bridge and work is proceeding to finalise Statutory Orders.

Employability and Skills (E&S)

3.23 Work has been progressing on the cross deal skills assessments in order to align the plans of partners, industry and government to meet the needs of the high-quality jobs that will be created through BRCD investments. The first assessment focusing on construction opportunities has already informed recommendations for BRCD partners and other stakeholders. Since the last update the advanced manufacturing assessment has now been completed and the Creative Industries (Virtual Production) assessment is at an advanced stage of preparation. A digital skills assessment has also commenced and work is ongoing.

3.24 The £7.5m Digital Transformation Flexible Fund is a cross-Deal project, funded by the NI Complementary Fund and offers eligible businesses and social enterprises help to fund their digital transformation project. The DTFF grants are worth

between £5,000 and £20,000 and are designed to help small and micro businesses accelerate their digital transformation ambitions. Demand has been strong as the project progresses through its second call for applications.

Annual Report 2023/24

- 3.25 As previously reported the agreed reporting arrangements for all City and Growth Deals requires the production of an Annual Report and the requirement to meet with the Northern Ireland Delivery Board in order to discuss deal progress as part of an 'Annual Conversation'.
- 3.26 The annual report for 2023/24 is currently being compiled by the Programme management office who have been actively engaging with partners on project specifics where required in advance of consideration of by the Executive Board in June and by partners through their own governance structures.

Communications and Engagement

- 3.27 Partners held their first Industry Engagement breakfast event, at Belfast City Hall on 29 February 2024. The session set the Deal in its wider political and economic context, offered greater visibility of the full programme of investment and outlined the significant opportunities being created for local businesses. Attended by a diverse range of heads of NI business and industry bodies, sectoral representative organisations, representatives from NI and UK Government, and elected members from the partner councils, the event offered an excellent opportunity to showcase the pillars of investment.
- 3.28 Participants learned how the Deal's long-term investments will help overcome embedded economic challenges in order to enhance the region's productivity and generate more and better job opportunities.
- 3.29 Attendees were encouraged to help engage their members and partners by amplifying key messages and opportunities in their own communications and events.
- 3.30 Further political and business engagement is planned for the months ahead and Members will be kept updated as this work progresses.

BRCD Council Panel

- 3.31 The next meeting of the Council Panel will be held on 29th May 2024, hosted by Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council.

At the meeting members will be provided with a programme update and presentations on the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC), the advanced manufacturing skills assessment and the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund.

3.32 The minutes from the meeting hosted by Ards & North Down Borough Council on 27 September 2023 are attached at Appendix 1 for information.

3.34 **Financial and Resource Implications**

All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets. As outlined additional resources have also been leveraged from other funding sources to extend the impact of the deal.

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

The approach taken to develop the City Deal has been subject to independent equality screening and rural proofing and states that;

‘BRCD is inherently inclusive, affording an opportunity for the region to grow in a way that will benefit the economy of Northern Ireland as a whole, thereby enhancing the lives and well-being of its citizens. If during further development of the programme it becomes apparent that there may be an adverse impact on certain groups or communities then the partnership commits to carrying out further Section 75 work and including screening and EQIAs as and when appropriate.’

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Smart Belfast: Immersive technology initiatives

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services submitted for the Committee’s consideration the undernoted report:

“1.0 **Purpose of Report**

1.1 To update Members on a number of Immersive technology initiative currently being designed and delivered by the City Innovation Office.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

1. Note progress on the City Hall exhibition immersive experience and plans to present these at the next Members' City Hall and Grounds Installations Working Group.
2. Note progress on the Augment the City challenge competition for SMEs and innovators.
3. Note the delivery of the Maritime Mile Innovation Fund.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The Smart Belfast urban innovation programme encourages collaboration on digital innovation projects between government (both local and regional), industry, SMEs, academia and communities. Immersive digital technology (such as virtual reality and augmented reality) is one of the digital technologies that the programme has prioritised, as it is recognised as having an important role in driving innovation in many disparate areas including planning, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, tourism and entertainment.

3.2 While immersive technologies are still at an early stage of maturity, they already generate £1.4 billion in turnover for over 2,000 companies nationally. Locally, a recent report by The Data City noted that the region has many of the characteristics necessary to establish a significant immersive ecosystem, with the sector already supporting over 200 local jobs.

3.3 Building on such potential, the City Innovation Office is taking forward three initiatives that aim to encourage greater investment in Immersive R&D by local companies, while at the same time helping to demonstrate the application of such technologies in the tourism sector. These initiatives are:

3.4 (1) City Hall exhibition immersive experience

Following Member approval, the Council and BT(NI) signed a collaborative agreement to work together on an experimental project called the 'Belfast City Hall Immersive experience'. Its aim is to explore the role of immersive tech and advanced connectivity in visitor locations such as City Hall, Belfast Stories and elsewhere, while at the same time offering a world-class visitor experience as part of the Belfast 2024 programme.

3.5 BT appointed the nationally renowned agency, Jam Creative Studios, to develop the concepts and content behind the experience. The team has worked closely with council officers over the past twelve months – particularly the

Functions & Exhibition and Belfast 2024 teams - to develop an approach that is sensitive to the themes of the existing exhibition.

- 3.6 The immersive experience will focus on three rooms on the east side of City Hall (7, 8, and 9) which make up the 'City Speech' and 'City Streets' exhibitions themes. The new experience will use this existing content as a jumping-off point for an experience that allows visitors to explore these rooms in novel ways.
- 3.7 Each room will be equipped with iPads (while also offering the option for visitors to use their own mobile devices). This will be a magical experience, guiding visitors through the rooms with immersive, augmented reality moments. Room 7 will mainly concentrate on the Belfast accent, our turns of phrase, and the unique sound of local voices. Room 8 will explore the changing physical shape of the city in the past, present and future. For example, visitors will be immersed in virtual vignettes that explore the role of the city's now-hidden rivers. We're also asking young people from all over Belfast to give us their ideas of Belfast of the future. We'll recreate their designs in 3D and add them to a virtual city model. Room 9, is a more playful room and we want to enable visitors to have some fun with interactive games and Instagram-able wall art.
- 3.8 These high-level concepts will be presented to the next meeting of the Members' City Hall and Grounds Installations Working Group. Following engagement with Members, the creative team will begin detail work on detailed-design and coding with the aim of opening to the public by mid-September.
- 3.9 **(2) Augment the City SME Challenge**
- Following Department of the Economy approval of a Belfast Region City Deal business case, the City Innovation Office opened the Augment the City challenge competition for applications in April 2024.
- 3.10 This £575,000 competition will provide R&D funding to up ten organisations (including individuals, start-ups and SMEs) to work with the team from Belfast Stories to explore the role of immersive technologies in supporting individuals to contribute their stories to future Belfast Stories collection.
- 3.11 Thirty-two organisations applied to the competition. The ten winners will commence in June 2024 working with Belfast Stories, Digital Catapult and the City Innovation Office to develop their ideas over the next eighteen months. The best of

these will be tested and show-cased in City Hall alongside the immersive experience.

3.12 (3) Maritime Mile Challenge Fund

With funding from Horizon 2020, the City Innovation Office, working with Belfast Maritime Trust, awarded £120,000 to six local creative businesses, artists and innovators to create experimental projects aimed at animating and enriching the local heritage of the Maritime Mile.

3.13 The winning projects were powered by a range of technologies including AI, 3D film, augmented reality and virtual reality. Each ran co-creation sessions with local partners and communities, gathering stories, artwork, and artefacts that shaped their individual prototypes. The projects were open to the public in April and May, encouraging increased footfall, dwell-time and local spend.

3.14 Projects included: an interactive experience with an AI ‘Salmon of Knowledge’ (ie, the ‘Big Fish’); a joint project with the Public Records Office and local communities to develop interactive 3D/virtual reality rooms; an AI ‘Voyage to the Past’, that brought local historical figures to life; a project with Sailortown Regeneration Group to explore new ways to preserve heritage and local stories through interactive digital sculpture and storytelling; an immersive experience along the Yardman’s Trail; and an augmented reality experience highlighting HMS Caroline’s heritage.

3.15 A follow-up survey found that the participating companies were overwhelming positive about their experience and its contribution to their own R&D work. While three-quarters of local participants reported that the programme greatly enhanced their knowledge of local history.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.16 Budgets for the initiatives noted above are funded via third-party sources, with any Council contributions identified within the existing City Innovation Office and Belfast Region City Deal budgets.

3.17 Under the terms of the collaborative R&D agreement Belfast City Council are bringing managed access to the City Hall location, creative content, promotion, and access to the new small cell network in City Hall – which is funded as part of the Augment the City Challenge. BT are bringing substantial technology and development support.

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

3.18 None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Culture Night

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide further information to enable consideration of an issue raised by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr Aine Grogan at the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 10th April 2024 under the procedures available to Members for raising an issue in advance that they wish to have included on the agenda.

1.2 At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19th April, members requested an updated paper for consideration so that further detail of how this could be facilitated, resourced and managed could be provided.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 In considering the options, timelines and resource requirements outlined in this paper, it is recommended not to develop an event on 20th September as part of the Belfast 2024 programme. This is based on a number of factors including:

- The wide range of cultural activity already taking place as part of Belfast 2024.
- The limited officer capacity to deliver this programme.
- The limited time available for a robust public procurement process or a small grants programme.

3.0 Main Report

3.0 Background

3.1 At the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 10th April 2024, Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Aine Grogan, outlined a suggestion to support cultural venues in the city to open on the evening of ‘Culture Night’ in September, within the Belfast 2024 Programme of events. The Committee agreed to refer the decision to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19th April for consideration so that further detail of how this

could be facilitated, resourced and managed could be provided. At this Committee, members agreed to defer consideration of the matter to enable a further report to be submitted on the cost to fund each of the three options.

Belfast 2024

3.2 Belfast 2024 is a year-long celebration of home-grown culture featuring new and exciting events, theatre, music, and art developed through new co-design and partnership models with the city stakeholders, the creative sector and the citizens of Belfast.

3.3 The year delivers on the aims of the City Council's Cultural and Tourism strategies, Belfast Agenda, Bolder Vision and City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy. As part of the Belfast 2024 programme, there is a significant number of cultural events happening in the last two weeks of September including:

- World Peace Day Block Party in Townsend St with Ulster Orchestra – 21st Sept
- Launch of the digital playroom Wiggle Room
- BBC Concert – Century of Stories at Waterfront – 24th Sept
- Belfast Half Marathon – 22nd Sept
- Shadow Dock at Thompson Dry Dock – 26 – 29th Sept
- An Droichead Irish Language Dance Showcase
- Drift River Installation - throughout
- Late Night Art – 5th Sept and 3rd October

Culture Night in Belfast

3.4 The report presented to members at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19th April outlined the history of Culture Night in Belfast. In summary:

- Culture Night in Belfast began in 2009 when a number of arts organisations came together to organise the first Belfast Culture Night in September 2010.
- In 2012/13, the Cathedral Quarter Trust became the custodians of the event, delivering Culture Night in the city until the final event in 2019.
- As the largest free shared cultural event in the city-centre, audiences grew to an attendance of over 100,000 for the 2019 event held across two days in September 2019.
- The budget for Culture Night ranged from £240k in 2016 to over £328k in 2019.

- Culture Night received £12,000 annually from the councils Core Multi Annual Funding programme from 2016 to 2020, with additional resource in 2019 as part of the Bank Buildings recovery campaign through City Centre Revitalisation Funding.
- The event received the majority of its support from other statutory bodies including the Arts Council NI, The Executive Office, Department for Communities and Tourism NI alongside support from trusts and foundations and the private sector.
- On 6th April 2023, because of the withdrawal of core funding the Cathedral Quarter Trust announced that it is 'has been forced to cease day to day operational activity, including planning any cultural events'. In the absence of the Cathedral Quarter Trust, no organisation has taken on the lead organising and delivery role necessary to revive Culture Night in Belfast.

Options for a late night event in September 2024

3.0 Following the discussion at City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 10th April 2024, council officers examined options on how an event on the night of Culture Night could be facilitated, resourced and managed. In order to develop any event, it is important to consider a range of factors including:

- Geographic – Is the event in one defined location (e.g. city centre, or a section of the city centre such as Cathedral Quarter) or open to the whole city
- Support mechanisms – Is financial support available for groups to apply to or are organisations asked to contribute their own resources as an audience development tool
- Thematically – Is the event focused on a particular artform or audience.
- Delivery mechanism – Is this delivered via an external facilitator or internally in council
- Marketing – Who leads on collation and promotion of the event
- Budget – What are the requirements to make the event successful

3.7 At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19th April, members were presented with a number of options, including requirements for engagement with the sector. It was also noted that the pressures on staff resource during Belfast 2024 are a consideration in all options. A breakdown of pre-existing commitments for June to September 2024 is detailed in Appendix One.

Option 1 – Extended Late Night Art

3.8 One option presented to members was to explore the option of supporting a special Late Night Art on 20th September. In this option, members were informed that:

- **Late Night Art is a pre-existing event in the city with a defined list of galleries and participants.**
- **Late Night Art is an audience development initiative created and managed by the visual arts sector, with Belfast City Council playing a supporting role in helping to amplify the event.**
- **The event is organised independently by visual arts galleries in the city and officers would need time to consult with the organisers of the event to explore the appetite and feasibility of an additional event on 20th September.**

3.9 Officers met with the Visual Arts Steering Group on 9th May to discuss the potential initiative. This steering group consists of 11 organisations and sets the direction for the wider Visual Arts Forum which consists of approximately 50 people representing individual artists, directors of arts orgs and venues, curators, Gallery Directors and studio groups. The majority of steering group members participate in Late Night Art. Feedback from this meeting includes:

3.10

- **Galleries would continue to host their planned events on Thursday 5th September and Thursday 3rd October. The “First Thursday” principle is a key element in the success of Late Night Art so any event on 20th September would be additional to these pre-existing events.**
- **There was a general agreement that galleries would respond to financial support to deliver a special Late Night Art on 20th September.**
- **Support for a special one-off event could prove an opportunity to also draw attention to the Late-Night Art concept to new audiences.**
- **It is imperative that any extra event maintains its identity as Late Night Art, is hosted in visual arts spaces and venues and is primarily a visual arts and craft event. To veer from this principle risks diluting and impacting the brand of Late Night Art. The event would have to be carefully described to ensure that audiences were not expecting a 'culture night', rather a specific approach building on Late Night Art. There would be no other art forms included e.g. music, comedy, theatre, but there**

may be a participatory element where possible with craft and art demonstrations and artists talks, as well as exhibitions and shows.

3.11 This option would require the administration of financial support to organisations who are part of the current Late-Night Art ecosystem. There are currently circa 30 organisations/venues who participate in Late Night Art. Within these parameters, a £75,000 allocation could be broken down as:

3.12

- £60,000 allocated to programming costs – Groups to apply for up to £2000 for the cost of programming, producing and marketing their own events as part of the evening. Financial support may also need to include costs such as security. As a non-ticketed event, galleries may need to manage audience flow.
- £15,000 allocated to marketing of the event. As a pre-existing event with an established brand, this allocation would go towards physical and digital advertising of the event.

3.13 This approach would require the establishment and administration of a new small grants programme led by the Culture Development team and under delegated authority with the Director of Economic Development. Given that any resource is linked to the reporting of the year end position in June, the earliest opportunity for members to approve this approach would be at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 21st June. Therefore, the administration of this programme would necessitate a very quick turnaround to develop, administer, score, award and market the potential event. A potential timeline is suggested as:

3.14

- 21st June – SP&R approval
- 1st July – Council Ratification
- 10th July – Call in Period Ends. Small grants launched and advertised
- 31st July – Application deadline closes.
- 1st to 9th August – Assessment of application
- Week beginning 12th August – Notification of awards
- Week beginning 19th August – Marketing of event begins to include the range of events in receipt of support
- Friday 20th September – Late Night Art Extra event

3.15 As a pre-existing event, there is no requirement to develop a new brand or scope as event would build upon the current Late Night Art concept. Staying within the parameters of Late Night

Art will also limit the number of potential applications. However, the administration of any small grant will require significant resource including a minimum of three officers from the Culture Development team to score and monitor the awards. As outlined in appendix one, officers are currently committed to delivery against a wide-range of initiatives during this period and delivery of a new grants programme will have a significant impact on delivery of these commitments.

Option 2 – Procure an external organisation

- 3.16 Similar to how the delivery of Culture Night is managed in Dublin, one potential model is the procurement of an external organisation to manage an open call for a series of free events in venues across the city. This contractor would act as a receiving house, collating various events from willing participants under one banner and presenting them to the public as a cohesive programme. This external organisation would be expected to lead on programming, production and marketing of the event, with support from council officers.
- 3.17 Similar to the timeline above, any resource is linked to the reporting of the year end position in June and therefore the earliest opportunity for members to approve this approach would be at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 21st June. This would result in:
- 21st June – SP&R approval
 - 22nd to 10th July - Tender specification developed
 - 1st July – Council Ratification
 - 10th July – Contract advertised
 - 31st July – Tender deadline closes.
 - 1st to 15th August – Tender assessed including scoring, panel, clarifications and sign-off.
 - 16th August – Contract Awarded
 - Friday 20th September – Event takes place
- 3.18 The proposal for circa £75k could be broken down as follows:
- £25,000 – Marketing of event – Including branding, web design, hosting, print and distribution.
 - £50,000 – Contracted organisation or individual. To cover core costs of managing the call out, event staff, insurance and general administration
- 3.19 Given the required approvals and time needed for a robust public procurement process, there are significant internal time and resource challenges to this approach. Any supplier would effectively have just over 4 weeks to establish the core team,

issue the call for any venue that wishes to participate, curate the programme and launch the full list of events. This timeframe also provides a very limited window to market what is effectively a new event, thus limiting the potential reach of the event. The limited timeframe to deliver, coupled with the acute resource pressures within the cultural sector, is likely to limit the number of responses to the tender.

Option 3 – Produce an event internally through funding mechanisms

- 3.20 Another suggested approach to delivery of an event on 20th September would be to invite organisations to apply for small grants to develop and deliver events in venues throughout the city. This approach would result in Council effectively acting as curators for the night through selecting which projects receive financial support through funding. In addition,
- 3.21 Similar to other funding schemes full eligibility criteria, themes and outcomes would be required to be developed. In addition this scheme would still required additional central marketing support to promote. Similar to the timeline referenced above, a potential timeline would likely be:
- 21st June – SP&R approval
 - 1st July – Council Ratification
 - 10th July – Call in Period Ends. Call out launched
 - 31st July – Application deadline closes.
 - 1st to 14th August – Assessment of applications
 - 16th August – Notification of awards
 - Week beginning 19th August – Marketing of event begins to include the range of events in receipt of support
 - Friday 20th September – Event
- 3.22 It is likely that this approach will be the most resource intensive for Council to administer due to a range of factors, namely:
- The concept and theme for the event would need to be designed;
 - Parameters and eligibility criteria would need to be developed
 - Opening out the event to all forms of cultural venues will result in a significant increase in applications, adding additional pressure on assessment of applications.

3.23 Recommendations

In considering the options outlined above, it is recommended not to develop an event on 20th September as part of the Belfast 2024 programme. This is based on a number of factors including:

- The wide range of cultural activity already taking place as part of Belfast 2024.
- The limited officer capacity to deliver this programme.
- The limited time available for a robust public procurement process or a small grants programme.

2025 and a way forward

- 3.24** As an historically successful event in Belfast and a key part of the cultural calendar across multiple towns and cities globally, in recognition of benefits of having a sustainable and successful event in the city, Council officers have been exploring potential ways forward part of the legacy planning from Belfast 2024 for September 2025 and onwards. This work to date has included meeting with officials involved in developing and delivering Culture Night in other jurisdictions to understanding funding and delivery models.
- 3.25** The concept of Culture Night was initially developed as an audience development tool for the culture sector and this principal is the foundation of other successful Culture Nights such as Dublin. It is therefore vital that any development of a new iteration of Culture Night must begin with the Cultural and Creative Sector co design to ensure buy-in, ownership and the success of the event.
- 3.26** In order to build a sustainable Culture Night in future years, it will also be necessary to secure significant buy in and investment from previous statutory funders and supporters such as Arts Council NI, British Council, Museums NI, BBC NI, National Heritage Lottery and finally from the broader business, institutional and educational sectors.
- 3.27** Whilst Belfast City Council can act as a catalyst for the re-emergence of the event, there is significant merit in having an independent convenor of these conversations. The contracting of a convener who could broker and bring together conversations and assess interest and capacity across the cities cultural and creative sector to enable BCC to forward the objectives of its Cultural Strategy.

3.28 Finance and Resource Implications

In the discussion held at CG&R a proposal for circa £75k was discussed. There is no current allocation for this initiative within unit budgets or the Belfast 2024 programme budget and either budgets would need to be reallocated or funding would be required from central budgets and/or underspends. An understanding of available funds would be linked to the reporting of the year end position in June.

3.29 If members were to approve the development of an event in September, there will be significant time and human resources required with this approach, particularly given the current workloads relating to delivery of Belfast 2024, the ambitions of the Cultural Workplan, delivery against the Music Strategy and the ongoing calendar of city and major events (as outlined in Appendix 1).

3.30 It is recommended to allocate up to £30,000 to the facilitation of 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. There is no current allocation for this initiative within unit budgets or the Belfast 2024 programme budget An understanding of available funds would be linked to the reporting of the year end position in June.

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

The cultural strategy, *A City Imagining* has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA). Specific initiatives as required will be subject to a further equality screening.”

The Committee agreed not to develop an event on 20th September as part of the Belfast 2024 programme.

It was 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.

**Sustain Exchange Climate Leadership
Event – Funding Agreement**

The Director of City and Organisation Strategy submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform Committee of a proposal by the non-profit Management and Leadership Network (MLN) to host a prominent climate leadership event ‘Sustain Exchange’ with up to 300 decision-makers. To request approval for a funding agreement to be put in place between Belfast City Council and the event organiser with the value of £8,450+vat. The event will put the challenges, opportunities and absolute need for positive action associated with climate change, on the agenda for local organisations and leaders.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Support this climate leadership conference by approving a funding agreement to the value of £8450+vat be entered into with the event organiser.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

It is now beyond doubt that organisations of all shapes, sizes and sectors need to radically reduce their environmental impact both directly and indirectly through their supply chains. The extreme weather experienced across the globe over the past 12 months has further evidenced the reality that the effects of climate change are being felt now and the need for decisive action from organisations, championed by their leaders, is now. We are fast approaching the point of no return.

It is a truly transformative time for organisations as they address climate risks and identify new opportunities in the green economy. The transition is not straightforward. Organisations need help in developing planet positive practices, securing cleaner power, heat and transport solutions. They need help in navigating new markets to find more environmentally sustainable solutions in their supply chain, and they need to do it fast. There has never been a more important time to find specialist help to navigate the transition, and to educate, inform and engage by sharing the existing knowledge and exemplar experience of those at the forefront of the transition.

3.2 Purpose and format of event

The Sustain Exchange Summit will deliver on the objectives above and will connect local decision-makers with international thought leaders as well as those at the forefront of the transition locally.

The event is expected to attract some 300 local leaders (primarily business leaders but also those from the public, NDPB and third sectors) to a Belfast City Centre venue with strong public transport links to ensure the carbon footprint of the event is kept to a minimum. The Sustain Exchange project will ensure the messages, around the need and importance of positive climate action are heard, and the Council's proactivity in this area will be strongly profiled before and during the event.

3.3 Content

Previous speakers at this event have included the eminent writer, broadcaster and commentator Sir Jonathan Porritt CBE, Norman Crowley (global entrepreneur and founder of CoolPlanet) and Sit Tim Smit KBE (Founder of The Eden Project and world-renowned thought leader in sustainability). The 2024 Sustain Exchange Summit will again be delivered to a world-class standard and will feature a globally-renowned speaker as well as a carefully selected line-up of local leaders who will be challenged to share their story (exemplar), insights (expert) or support offering (stakeholder).

As exemplars these leaders will share their story and associated lessons in an engaging, informative, and entertaining manner. The speakers will encourage and empower attending organisations to consider their own climate impact and take the first (or next) steps in their quest to become 'planet positive'. Previous local speakers at this event have demonstrated how leaders from humble beginnings in Belfast have become game-changers in their respective fields. These include the likes of Dr Andrew Woods from Catagen (Sustain Exchange 2022), Eddie McGoldrick from The Electric Storage Company (Sustain Exchange 2021) and Philip Rainey from Weev (Sustain Exchange 2023). The 2024 event will once again showcase how leaders from Belfast are leading the charge when it comes to the quest to avoid what is now a 'code red for humanity'. In doing this MLN plans to galvanise existing businesses to act and to inspire the next cohort of planet positive pioneers to emerge from our city.

The event will also provide the opportunity to make the broader leadership community in NI aware of the proactive work of Belfast City Council when it comes to the climate emergency.

3.4 Management and Leadership Network Experience

The Management and Leadership Network (MLN) is a non-profit which exists to connect decision-makers in NI with the insights of thought-leaders and world-class performers. The rationale is that by enhancing our leadership competence we will, empower local organisations, strengthen our economy, enrich our society and ultimately improve lives.

MLN has worked with some of the most respected leaders on the planet and is vastly experienced in creating and delivering truly world-class events that engage, enrich and elevate attendees. As host, MLN will facilitate the event and invite all speakers to provide their slides in advance so that the idea-sharing session is delivered in a concise, visually impactful and professional manner. Belfast City Council would once again be invited to participate and profile its extensive climate work i.e the Mini Stern Report, Resilience Strategy, Climate Commission, One Million Trees etc.

3.5 Date, Venue and Contingence

The Sustain Exchange Summit will take place in October 2024. The total cost of the project will be in excess of £70k. Belfast City Council has been a key partner in the Sustain Exchange Summit since its inception in 2021 and its support has been crucial in the growth of the initiative and its impact. In order to reduce the financial cost to Belfast City Council and increase collaboration MLN will seek financial support from additional sources to include the private sector. MLN will give previous sponsors the opportunity to remain as partners. These have included Belfast-based organisations such as Danske Bank, FPM Accountant, International Synergies (circular economy specialists), Belfast Harbour and Mills Selig Solicitors. As well as demonstrating real collaboration, these partnerships have allowed MLN to reduce Belfast City Council's financial contribution from £10,000+vat in 2021 to £8,450+vat in 2024.

3.6 Partner Contribution and Profile Benefits

If Belfast City Council chooses to support the Summit, it would be profiled as an 'Event Partner' alongside several other lead event partners (examples given in 3.5). The Council brand would be prominent on all event marketing collateral as well as 'at-event'. A Council representative would be invited to

participate in the event press launch and MLN would be delighted for the Lord Mayor of Belfast to speak at the event. Council would also promote the conference through its social media and other relevant communication channels.

3.7 Financial and Resource Implications

£8,450+vat to support this initiative has been allocated from within the existing climate budget.

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

There are no direct equality or good relations/rural needs implications.”

The Committee agreed to support the climate leadership conference by approving a funding agreement to the value of £8450+vat being entered into with the event organiser.

Inclusive Growth - Belfast Business Promise

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To provide Members with an update on the continued progress with the Belfast Business Promise, following the celebration and launch event in City Hall on 11th April 2024.

1.2 The Committee will be aware that the Belfast Business Promise is a key commitment in the Council’s Inclusive Growth Strategy and embedded within the refreshed Belfast Agenda (2024-2028). The development of the Business Promise has been shaped by Elected Members through the work of the Social Policy Working Group and supported by a strong cross-council partnership approach.

1.3 As the inclusive growth charter for the city, the Belfast Business Promise is a key tool to encourage and support employers across the city to adopt and/or improve their practices and demonstrate a positive social impact through their core business activities. The level of engagement and positive response from businesses of all sizes and sectors during its first year of operation has been significant. There is now a strong and growing community of practice aligned to the ambitions of the business promise. This presents a real opportunity to build upon and share good practice and adopt a holistic approach to create a stronger, more resilient, and fairer economy and society for Belfast.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the progress made during the first year of implementing the Belfast Business Promise**
- (ii) Note the work underway to support the further development and continued scaling up of the Business Promise and to ensure the continued successful implementation, including:**
 - the continued growth in the number of organisations engaging in the initiative, committing to be partners and supporting implementation and accreditation.**
 - the Council's continued commitment and work underway to progress through the Belfast Business Promise journey to become an accredited Member and Ambassador.**
 - Next steps for the programme as outlined at paragraph 3.12.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 As agreed by SP&R Committee, the Belfast Business Promise is a proactive commitment by businesses to support the city's inclusive growth mission by signing up to a number of underpinning pledges that support inclusive business practices. Organisations use the process to assess and benchmark their business practices against eight pledges and gain support from the Belfast Business Promise community/network to continually improve their inclusive practice and performance.

3.2 A cross-council team has been progressing the development and delivery of the Belfast Business Promise with an external business working group, with oversight and input from the Council's Social Policy Working Group. The Belfast Business Promise is aligned to and complements other strands of work across the Council, including the Social Value Procurement Policy & Toolkit, Social Enterprise action plan and BCC Employment Academies. Strong relationships have also been built with the Inclusive Growth Network, the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and the Scottish Business Pledge Charter teams which has enabled the sharing of good practice and shared learning opportunities.

3.3 Following a significant period of co-development and engagement, the Belfast Business Promise went live on 24th April 2023 for a six-month pilot phase. Working with

20 early adopters, the pilot phase enabled testing and refining of the model with the business community and clearly identified a strong support for the scheme across the public, private and third sectors. The pilot phase also allowed for crucial practical testing of the operational delivery processes with improvement work on both the systems and the support provided to businesses continuing.

- 3.4 The pilot phase endorsed the holistic approach adopted by the Belfast Business Promise and the ethos of building a network of like-minded organisations to work together to create a better Belfast and a more inclusive city. It also confirmed the three core pledges that all organisations should commit to (see figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Belfast Business Promise pledges



- 3.5 An underpinning accreditation process has been developed in conjunction with key Council Departments, partner organisations such as the Labour Relations Agency and external advisers, including those with expertise and experience in auditing quality standards (IIP, EFQM and ISO standards). This has been tested and enhanced during the pilot phase to ensure that it aligns to other good practice standards, provides assurance around the robustness of the process and recognises the challenges organisations are facing in the current economic climate.

- 3.6 A review and evaluation of the pilot phase was undertaken and considered by the Social Policy Working Group in November 2023, with identified improvements progressing in relation to:
- clarifying the requirements set out in each of the pledges that organisations are expected to demonstrate.
 - strengthening the requirement to encourage employers to consider inclusivity/accessibility, streamlining the processes to support the assessment and accreditation process.
 - developing a communication plan and website.
 - continuing to build on the work so far to develop the Promise Learning Days and create a sense of community and network for Supporters to learn from each other and share practice.
- 3.7 Since the pilot completed, the network of supporters has continued to grow with 46 organisations now signed-up to the scheme. A well-attended and very positive celebration/launch event had been held on 11th April 2024 in the City Hall. This event recognised the significant level of commitment to the Business Promise in the city, the growth in the network of Belfast Business Promise Supporters and the improvement journey underway across many organisations.
- 3.8 Some of the highlights and successes during the first year of implementation of the Belfast Business Promise include:
- 46 organisations have signed up as Supporters (see Appendix 1),
 - 3 organisations secured 'Member' status (meeting 5 of the 8 pledges and committing to continue to work towards all 8 pledges) – Department for Economy, Linen Quarter BID and Belfast Harbour.
 - Established a BBP Partner Network of technical advisers which provide specialist expertise to support the accreditation process and delivery of the Belfast Business Promise (See Figure 2 below)
 - Delivered 7 Promise Learning Days, focusing on sharing good practice relating to each of the pledges.
 - Almost half the 'early adopters' in the pilot phase reported measuring their carbon footprint for the first time.
 - BBP Supporters are recommending other organisations to sign-up to the BBP.
 - Showcased the Belfast Business Promise, promoting more inclusive practices and insight at key events such

as the Labour Relations Agency conference, Equality Commission's event to mark International Day for people with Disabilities and the Inclusive Growth Network's Good Employment Conference in Manchester.

- Shared learning and experience from the Belfast Business Promise with the Inclusive Growth Network's Good Employment Charter group

Figure 2: Belfast Business Promise Partners



BCC Accreditation

- 3.9 As an organisation, the Council has also signed-up to the Belfast Business Promise demonstrating leadership and commitment to working with employers and encouraging others to join us in working to create an inclusive city. Detailed internal discussions are ongoing with key officers and professions to assess the Council's position in relation to meeting the pledges and the subsequent action planning to ensure continuous improvement.
- 3.10 Members will be aware of the significant progress made in key areas such as Social Value Procurement Policy, the work of the Employability and Skills team, community engagement teams, HR, Legal, Finance etc. In addition, the Council achieving accreditation from the Real Living Wage Foundation for paying the Real Living Wage in February 2023 and the progress being

made in terms of Protecting our Environment (pledge 8) have been vital steps in meeting the standards.

3.11 The internal assessment of the Councils stage of readiness across the eight pledges, identified a number of areas of development which had already been recognised with work underway in these areas. These included the development and delivery of the Council's People Strategy, which was approved by the Committee in August 2023, and the Health & Wellbeing Strategy approved in February 2023. Additionally, the Council has also signed up as a JAM (Just a Minute) Card Partner with the NOW Group to enhance its commitment to inclusivity and plans are being taken forward for the development of a staff volunteering policy to strengthen its contribution to the core pledge 'working in partnership with our communities'. The Council is committed to continuing its efforts to meet the standards set in the Belfast Business Promise and is therefore on course to achieve its aim to attain Member and Ambassador status in autumn 2024.

3.12 Next steps for the BBP

In addition to continuing to make progress on the Council's journey through the Belfast Business Promise, the following next steps will be taken forward with regular progress reports being brought to the Social Policy Working Group:

- Building the Belfast Business Promise offer and menu of provision.
- Onboarding strategic partners/technical panel specialisms.
- Developing effective MIS (Management Information Systems) / MS Forms to streamline delivery.
- Conducting an interim evaluation to support plans to sustain and scale-up.
- Encouraging progression through the accreditation tiers, increasing the awards of Member / Ambassador status to organisations.
- Developing the website to highlight the reputational benefits associated with a city charter, which is key to sustaining interest and commitment.
- Showcasing the story so far and celebrating success.

3.13 A further report on the steps being taken to embed inclusive growth will be brought to Committee in June, alongside an update on the Corporate Plan.

3.14 Financial and Resource Implications

Resources are included within Departmental budgets. In addition to the core team of 3 officers, support is also provided across a range of Council Departments and professions to support the delivery as well as the Council's aim to lead by example and progress through the accreditation tiers.

Delivery of the programme also draws on the Supporter network to share resources and expertise to assist in delivery, where possible.

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

An Equality screening and Rural Needs Assessment has been carried out, with the Belfast Business promise screened out with mitigating actions. Whilst the Belfast Business promise is a key tool to deliver on the Inclusive Growth Strategy and is not expected to have any adverse impacts on the Section 75 categories, the programme will continue to be informed by practice and review, with an interim evaluation planned for 2024/25. This will ensure that modifications and mitigations can be put in place to meet the needs of programme participants as delivery matures.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Digital Strategy

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services submitted the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Following SP&R approval, Digital Services worked with Castlerigg Consulting to develop a new Digital Strategy (Appendix 1). Castlerigg are a specialist management consultancy who help to develop digital transformation and innovation strategies for the public sector. The Digital Strategy aims to provide a framework for elected members under the remit of the Strategic Policy and Resources committee, to oversee the strategic use of digital technology as a key enabler of service improvement – over a period of 5 years – in alignment with the Council's key business priorities.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the contents of the report and to approve the new Digital Strategy attached.

3.0 Main report

3.1 In the past, a traditional ICT strategy looked to change, fix, or improve technology without impacting on the council's business strategy. A good strategy ensures that information and digital technology will contribute to achieving the success of the organisation, which is why we have taken time to engage extensively with Departments and CMT members to ensure that the aims of the new strategy align with the development of our new Corporate Plan and emerging Medium Term Financial plan and performance improvement priorities. The strategy can act as one of the key drivers for operational service improvement and will feed into the next phases of our efficiency and customer focus programmes. The strategy will continue to evolve as the Council's detailed delivery plans emerge, this will enable Digital technology to support our immediate and longer-term objectives.

3.2 Strategic oversight of both information and technology are essential as they underpin the majority of the Council's service improvement initiatives, new and improved business processes, and the delivery of essential operational efficiencies. Consequently, the new Digital Strategy will be extremely important to help us to make the most of increasing digital transformation opportunities and in managing the significant cyber security threats that we are currently facing. The strategy has the potential to help optimise, transform, and improve the operational services we deliver and to maximise the value of our information assets.

3.3 Delivery of the new Digital Strategy will focus on delivering the right set of policies, working practices, and supporting technologies as information technology and the management of our information:

- is an essential element of good corporate governance,
- provides Members and Chief Officers with the right information to support effective decision making,
- challenges our thinking on how we deliver services and supports innovation in service design,
- sets direction in terms of investment in technology assuring alignment to corporate objectives,

- and provides the basis of accountability to Elected Members and the citizens of Belfast for the stewardship and use of IT resources.

3.4 Some of the key messages that the strategy delivers are outlined below:

- We have set a bold vision for how technology can transform Belfast City Council. We want to strengthen our digital and information capability, enhancing our ability to be an effective civic leader in a data-enabled smart city.
- Service Improvement is integral to the next chapter of the Council's development. The digital strategy recommends that we do not plan digital in isolation. The benefits of digital innovation come from being able work differently and that involves designing all aspects of our services so they work together.
- Digitally enabled service design provides an opportunity to drive our service improvement agenda. It is only when services can be fully automated end-to-end, that we will improve customer experience, remove inefficiency, and ensure our resources (finance, people, and assets) are focused on what matters to our communities.
- Our current technology architecture already gives us a robust foundation for the delivery of a different delivery model. We now need to exploit the enterprise solutions and technical architecture that are already in place or are currently in the process of being delivered.
- With demand for digital projects growing, prioritising and resourcing our digital programme of work appropriately, whilst challenging, will be key to the successful delivery of the Digital Strategy. If the digital programme is integral to our future council aspirations, then we need to ensure our digital and change teams are resourced to meet this challenge.

3.5 The 4 main pillars of the Digital Strategy are described in the image below.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**



3.6 Work has already started on the delivery of the strategy. Some of the key projects that are included in the digital programme of work are summarised in the table below:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status</u>
Time & Attendance (Corporately significant)	Live project
Online Recruitment (Corporately significant)	Live project
Finance system (Corporately significant)	Live project
Corporate Asset Management (Corporately significant)	Live project
Customer Focus Programme (Corporately significant)	Live project
Cyber Security Programme (Corporately significant)	Live project
Building Control (Service Improvement)	Live project
Grants Management system (Service Improvement)	Live project
NI Enterprise Support Services CRM (Regional system)	Live project
Network Redesign (Infrastructure improvement)	Live Project
In-Cab Technology (Service improvement)	Requirements
City Services (Service Improvement)	Process review
EDRMS (Corporately significant)	Pilot review

Intranet Replacement (Corporately significant)	Emerging
Climate Data Platform (Data and analytics)	Emerging
Inclusive Growth (Data and analytics)	Emerging
Windows 11 upgrade (Infrastructure improvement)	Emerging
Legal Case Management System	Emerging

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.7 Delivery of the Digital Services programme of work is managed through normal rate setting processes and through the ICT strand of the capital programme.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.8 A new Digital Strategy will need to be screened for any equality, good relations or rural needs implications.”

The Committee approved the new Digital Strategy.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Assets Management

The Committee:

- i) **King George V Playing Fields– Site Investigation Works**
 - noted the site investigation works at King George V playing fields and adjacent lands to inform design of the new NI Water Sydenham Wastewater Pumping Station.
- ii) **Black’s Road Park & Ride – Licence for installation & siting of Cycle Shelter**
 - approved entering into a Licence Agreement with the Department for Infrastructure for the installation & siting of a cycle shelter at Blacks Road Park & Ride.
- iii) **Duncrue Estate – Deed of Variation**
 - approved the extension of the current term of the ground Lease at Plot 37 Duncrue Estate to a term of 125 years from 2024 and approve the variation of the rent review pattern to facilitate 5-year rent reviews from the commencement of the lease extension.
- iv) **River Terrace – Disposal of lands to Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG)**
 - approved the disposal of lands (139 sq.m) at River Terrace to LORAG to facilitate the redevelopment of the Lockhouse building.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

v) Cavehill Country Park - Conacre Agreement

- approved conacre licence for a 1-year term for grazing of agricultural Council lands at Cavehill Country Park.

Area Working Groups Update

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the special meeting of the South AWG of 22 April 2024.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Contracts Update

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 1);
- approve the award of STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 2);
- noted the award of retrospective STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 3);
- approved the modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 4); and
- approved the public advertisement of tenders (Peaceplus) as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 5) noting current conditions set out in Section 6 of the report.

It was agreed that an update on the use of consultants be submitted to a future meeting.

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Gartner for Technical Professionals	Up to 2 years	£91,200	P Gribben	Provides in-depth technical research and guidance to help Digital Services advance the initiatives/projects that support execution of the Digital strategy
Delivery of Customer Focus Programme	Up to 2 years	£61,200	J Tully	To provide tailored access to research and insights, access to analyst review of

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

				strategy and approach, diagnostics and toolkits to support the delivery of Customer Focus Programme.
A Bolder Vision for Belfast Strategy and Implementation Framework	Up to 1 year	£70,000	C Reynolds	Commission of consulting services to finalise A Bolder Vision Strategy and Implementation Framework to include update of draft strategy.

Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Description	Supplier	STA Reason Code
Elephant Transfer Service	Up to 3 months	£65,000	D Martin	Service required for the relocation of two elderly female Asian elephants, Dhunja and Yhetto, that currently reside in Belfast Zoo, while work continues on a long-term development plan for the zoo and its animal collection. Approval was granted in August 2023 by CG&R Committee to transfer the elephants to Burgers Zoo in	Global Elephant Care	3

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

				the Netherlands. The transfer is due to take place in July 2024. The supplier is considered the only current suitable supplier to ensure the safe and secure transfer of the two elephants.		
--	--	--	--	---	--	--

Table 3: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Description	Supplier	STA Reason Code
Interpreting Services (Partly funded)	3 years	£45,000	S Toland	A team member is registered as deaf and is supported via the Access to Work (NI) programme for Support Worker funding from DFC which permits BCC to claim 50% of expenditure relating to interpreter services. This provides continuity of existing support.	Heather Martin	11

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

Table 4: Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Original Contract Duration	Modification	SRO	Description	Supplier
T2135b Continuation of Consultancy Services for City Centre Residential Development Contract modification being reported retrospectively	2 years	Additional £164,390	C Reynolds	Additional fees required due to delay in commencement of procurement and greater input required for commercial advisory work under the existing contract specification.	Cushman & Wakefield
T2422 Provision of catering for services (retail and small to medium signed events) at Malone House This is a concession contract with estimated annual gross revenue of £435,000 for the contractor (based pre-Covid figures). Of which a minimum 5% commission will be payable to BCC.	1 year	Additional 6 months	D Martin	Six-month extension of contract period to facilitate market exercise for the future operation of Malone House. This contract is a below threshold requirement under the Concession Regs and, given history of low interest in the local market to provide this service, this extension is considered a low risk.	Café Nosh

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

Table 5: Peace Plus Tenders

Title of Tender	SRO	Proposed contract duration	Est. Max Contract Value
Annadale Open Space - ANIMATION	Jim Girvan	Up to 2 years	£86,000.00
Distillery Street Open Space - ANIMATION	Jim Girvan	Up to 2 years	£85,900.00
Access to the Hills - ANIMATION	Jim Girvan	Up to 2 years	£85,600.00
Sanctuary Theatre ANIMATION	Jim Girvan	Up to 2 years	£85,100.00
Capacity Building - Community Empowerment Programme	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£903,577.68
Health & Wellbeing Programme	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£853,000.00
Youth - Inspiring Future Belfast	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£970,861.00
Sports for Peace	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£711,646.00
Employability - Language Up	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£447,513.00
Arts in communities	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£695,744.00
Interfaith and Belief Programme	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£304,564.00
Community Connections - Ethnic Minorities	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£638,135.00
LGBTQIA+ - Community Engagement Programme	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£391,672.00
Community Empowerment Ex Politically Motivated Prisoners	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£493,006.00
From Multiculturalism to Interculturalism (possible broken into lots)	D Sales	Up to 2 years	£949,140.00

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

STA/ Direct Award Reasons

Reason Code	Reasons in line with Public Contract Regulations
1	No response following advertised procurement exercise
2	Creation or acquisition of a unique work of art or artistic performance
3	Competition is absent for technical reasons (no reasonable substitute exists)
4	The protection of exclusive rights, including intellectual property rights
5	Extreme urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by BCC, the time limits for a procurement cannot be complied with.
6	Products manufactured purely for the purpose of research, experimentation, study or development
7	Additional deliveries which are intended either as a partial or extended replacement of supplies or installations where a change of supplier would result in supplies of different technical characteristics causing incompatibility or disproportionate technical difficulties in operation and maintenance
8	Supplies quoted and purchased on a commodity market
9	Supplies or services on particularly time-limited advantageous terms e.g. supplier winding up its business activities
10	New works and services consisting of the repetition of similar works or services, provided that the possibility of a direct award is disclosed during the original tender process
11	Other – Reason not in line with Public Contract Regulations (PCR 2015)

Commercial and Procurement Services
Social Value Working Group update

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update following consideration by the Social Policy Working Group 'SPWG' at its meeting in May 24 on the delivery of social value outcomes via BCC tender competitions awarded in accordance with the Council's Social Value Procurement Policy 'SVPP'

Equality and Good Relations

Draft Language Strategy Action Plan

The City Solicitor reminded the Members that the Council had conducted a consultation on the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan between 16th October 2023 and 22nd January 2024. The public and interested parties were encouraged to give feedback through an online survey available in English and Irish and were able to make submissions in writing. A range of consultation sessions and stakeholder engagement sessions were also conducted by Council officers.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

The consultation resulted in a range of amendments to the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan. The revised plan had been presented to Members at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 19th April 2024.

While there was broad agreement with the revised Action Plan, Members had suggested some further amendments to the Action Plan, specifically, actions in relation to the development of a Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme and recurring annual funding for a large-scale event to mark Seachtain na Gaeilge.

The proposals in relation to Seachtain na Gaeilge also included a commitment to compiling and publishing a comprehensive programme of events for all events, not just those organised by the Council. It was also proposed that the Council would organise a comprehensive calendar of events and place particular emphasis on Irish language branding, posters, exhibitions in the City Hall and use of Irish at Council meetings during the festival.

Those proposals were likely to require additional significant resource commitments, including staffing resource. It is therefore proposed that there is a commitment to undertaking exploratory work on these proposals as part of the Action Plan. A detailed report would be submitted to the Language Strategy Working Group in relation to Seachtain na Gaeilge 2025 in the coming months.

The City Solicitor explained that the amendments suggested at the Committee meeting in April had been changed slightly for their inclusion in the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan. This was to give officers the opportunity to explore the full scope of those suggested amendments and the operational and resource issues associated with them.

The Committee approved the amended version of the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan.

**Minutes of Shared City Partnership
Meeting on 13th May 2024**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes and recommendations from the Shared City Partnership Meeting held on 13th May 2024, including:

Committee Papers of 8th April meeting which was inquorate - for notation

- Members were advised by the Good Relations Manager that the meeting scheduled for 8th April had been inquorate and had therefore not been held. He drew the Members' attention to the Committee pack for that date and advised that no decisions had been required as the papers had all been update position reports. He advised the Members to contact him directly if they had any queries and agreed for Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to note the papers of 8th April 2024.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

Good Relations Verbal Update

- The Good Relations Manager advised that officers were still not in receipt of a Letter of Offer from The Executive Office, however, he hoped to be able to provide a further update at the June meeting.

The Executive Office Asylum Dispersal Verbal Update

- The Partnership agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee the verbal update provided and detailed in the minutes.

Peace IV - Secretariat Update

- The Partnership agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report.

PEACEPLUS – Theme 1.1 - Local Action Plan Update

- The Partnership agreed to recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report.

Equality and Diversity: Equality Screening and Rural Needs Outcome Report Quarter 4 2023-24

The Committee was reminded that the Council had a duty to have, under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:

- Due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity in relation to the nine equality categories; and
- Regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

In addition, under section 1 of the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:

- Due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans, and when designing and delivering public services.

To this end, the Council had a process to carry out equality screening and rural needs assessment of new and revised policies. This allowed any impacts related to equality of opportunity, good relations or rural needs to be identified and addressed.

An equality screening and rural needs impact assessment template was completed by the relevant officer, in collaboration with the Equality and Diversity Unit. On a regular basis, the Unit collates all completed templates into a screening outcome report and publishes it onto the Council's website, along with the relevant completed templates.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

The Committee noted the Quarterly Screening Outcome Report which would be published on the Council's website.

**Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 - DAERA
Annual Monitoring Report**

The Committee was reminded that the rural population of Belfast was comprised of the small settlements of Edenderry, Hannahstown and Loughview.

Section 1 (1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 required public authorities to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing, or revising policies, strategies and plans, and when designing and delivering public services. As part of that duty, Council officers complete Rural Needs Impact Assessments.

Section 3 (1) of the Act required public authorities to:

- i) Compile information on the exercise of their functions;
- ii) Include that information in annual reports; and
- iii) Send that information to DAERA.

The Annual Return was designed to inform stakeholders and other interested parties of how the Council had had due regard to rural needs in the exercise of its functions. The Annual Return showed how the Council had met this duty for 2023-24.

Subject to Committee and Council approval, the Annual Return would be submitted to DAERA next month for inclusion in its Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report in order to meet DAERA's deadline for publication.

A copy of the Annual Return, together with a list of the completed Rural Needs Impact Assessments would be published on the Council's website as the Council does not have an annual report.

The Committee approved the Annual Monitoring Return to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for 2023-24, which provided evidence of how the Council had met certain duties under the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Operational Issues

**Minutes of Party Group Leaders
Consultative Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 16th May.

**Requests for use of the City Hall
and the provision of Hospitality**

The Committee adopted the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 10th May, 2024 as set out below and noted that, given the decision taken

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

earlier in the meeting in regards to room hire charges for commercial events, the City Solicitor would be using the authority delegated to her for those events listed as under review:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2024 EVENTS						
Retail NI	21 August 2024	High Street Heroes 2024 Winner Evening to celebrate NI's amazing independent retailers over 13 categories. Numbers attending – 120	D	Charge £300 or £825 <i>(Dependent on room chosen)</i>	No hospitality	Approve Charge £300 or £825 No Hospitality
Politics in Action	12 September 2024	Pre-Conference Dinner for guests attending their 1 day conference taking place in QUB. Numbers attending – 30 - 40	A & B	No charge as charity	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Washington Ireland Program	5 October 2024	30th Anniversary Celebration- Drinks Reception, Dinner, Speeches, and entertainment to celebrate the WIP role in past 30 years in post-conflict Northern Ireland and Ireland by bringing together leaders from a	C & D	<i>Under review</i>	<i>Under review</i>	Approve

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		wide range of communities and backgrounds for outstanding leadership and skills-development programs. Numbers attending – 300				
Sirocco Works Football Club	12 or 16 October 2024	Centenary Anniversary Celebration- Drinks Reception, Dinner, Speeches, and entertainment. Numbers attending – 200	C & D	No charge as charity	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
Bioscientific/ Irish Endocrine Society	14 October 2024	UK & Irish Endocrine Conference Dinner for guests attending their 4-day conference taking place in QUB. Numbers attending – 150 - 200	A & B	<i>Under review</i>	<i>Under review</i>	Approve
British Council	19 November 2024	Schools COP29 debating event on Climate Change/ COP29 for 30 NI schools.	A & B	No charge as charity	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		Numbers attending – 150				
2025 EVENTS						
Global Career Services Summit Ltd	10 March 2025	Global Career Services Summit Dinner for guests attending their 4-day conference taking place in QUB. Numbers attending - 120	A &B	<i>Under review</i>	<i>Under review</i>	Approve
Young Enterprise NI	1 May 2025	YEA NI Awards 2025 Drinks reception, dinner and Awards Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of people across NI who completed YE Programmes. Numbers attending – 300	C	<i>Under review</i>	<i>Under review</i>	Approve
Stories Ireland	5 June 2025	Farewell Gala Dinner for Whataburger - Drinks Reception, Dinner and Entertainment for sales executives from US multi-billion dollar corporation visiting Belfast as part of	B	<i>Under review</i>	<i>Under review</i>	Approve

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		incentive programme. Numbers attending - 200				
CO3 Chief Officers Third Sector	13 November 2025	CO3 40th Anniversary Gala Ball- Drinks Reception, Dinner, Speeches and entertainment. Numbers attending – 300 - 400	C & D	<i>Under review</i>	<i>Under review</i>	Approve

Minutes of the Language Strategy Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Language Strategy Working Group of 16th May.

Minutes of the Disability Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Disability Working Group of 9th May.

Minutes of Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group of 13th May.

Minutes of the Social Policy Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Social Working Group of 14th May.

All-Party Working Group on the City Centre

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the All-Party Working Group on the City Centre of 3rd May.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 24th May, 2024**

**Use of City Hall Grounds –
OrangeFest - 12 July 2024**

The Committee authorised the use of City Hall grounds and the Cenotaph on 12th July 2024.

Issues raised in advance by Members

**Transfer of Powers - Licensing of
Bus Tour Operators in the City:
Councillor Beattie to raise**

(The Committee agreed that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item.)

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Beattie raised the issue of the licensing of bus tour operators in the city.

The Committee agreed that the Department for Infrastructure be requested to review the legislation regarding licensing of bus tour operators and consider transferring the powers to issue licenses for Belfast tours to Belfast City Council.

It agreed also that the Department be requested to introduce regulations for a mandatory code of conduct for bus/coach tour operators.

**Connection of Water Supply to Social
Homes: Councillor M. Donnelly to raise**

Councillor M. Donnelly advised the Committee that he had requested that the abovementioned item be included on the agenda for the meeting, but it had not been added.

In response, the Democratic Services and Governance Manager stated that that had been the case and the item had been omitted in error. It was accordingly agreed that the matter could be discussed.

The Committee agreed that the City Solicitor explore the legal options available to the Council to address the failure of NI Water to connect water supplies to social homes.

Chairperson

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 31st May, 2024

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Black (Chairperson);
Alderman McCoubrey; and
Councillors Beattie, Cobain, de Faoite,
M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Duffy, Ferguson,
Garrett, Hanvey, Long, Maghie, Maskey,
I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin, Nelson and Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of
Corporate Services;
Mr. D. Sales, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood
Services;
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance
Manager.

Apologies

An apology was reported from Councillor Bunting.

Declarations of Interest

The Chairperson (Councillor Black) declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2a – Summer Community Diversionary Festival Programme, in that she worked for an organisation which had delivered diversionary activities in August 2023, as part of the Feile an Phobail application, and left the meeting whilst the item was under consideration.

Restricted Items

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

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

The Members were also reminded that the content of ‘restricted’ reports and any discussion which took place during closed session must be treated as ‘confidential information’ and that no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 31st May, 2024**

**2024 Summer Community Diversionary
Festivals (SCDF) Programme**

(The Deputy Chairperson, Alderman McCoubrey, in the Chair.)

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided details of the assessments undertaken by officers and seeking approval to award funding for the 2024 Summer Community Diversionary Festival Programme.

August Programme

The Committee was advised that 4 applications had been received for the August programme. The Director provided details of the projects and officer assessment scores for stage 1 and stage 2. Three applicants had passed both stages, with one applicant not having passed stage 1.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to award the funding as follows to the three groups which had passed stages 1 and 2:

<u>Applicant/Group</u>	<u>Amount £</u>
Feile an Phobail	100,000
Feile an hAbhann	75,000
Ashton Community Trust	<u>75,000</u>
Total	250,000

July Programme

The Committee was advised that 10 applications had been received for the July programme. The Director provided details of the projects and officer assessment scores for stage 1 and stage 2. Four applicants had passed both stages; one applicant had passed stage 1 but did not meet the benchmark at stage 2; and the remaining five applicants had failed to pass stage 1.

A Member referred to the proposed amount of funding to be allocated to each of the four successful applicants and made the point they should be allocated an equal percentage of the amount requested.

The Committee concurred with this view and agreed to adjourn for a short period to afford officers the opportunity to reassess the proposed allocation on that basis.

(The Committee stood adjourned for 10 minutes.)

Following reassessment of the proposed allocation of funding for the July programme, the Committee agreed to award the following to the 4 applicants which had passed stages 1 and 2:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 31st May, 2024**

<u>Applicant/Group</u>	<u>Amount £</u>
Twaddell and Woodvale Residents Association	86,820.64
Eastside Partnership (Eastival)	64,334.09
Charter NI	36,821.41
Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT)	62,023.86
Total	250,000.00

The Committee agreed further:

- That any funding awarded would be subject to further engagement with groups and analysis of projects and associated budgets in line with Council due diligence procedures, this would include any outstanding financial and monitoring returns with regards to other Council funding. Funding would not be awarded until approved contracts were issued and signed.
- To approve those organisations seeking permission to use Belfast Parks for their event or activity and to delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to ensure the following:
 - Negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to:
 - The completion of an appropriate management plan,
 - The promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction; and
 - The promoter meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence.

The Committee noted that the above recommendations were taken as a pre-policy position in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which was currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Councils Commercial team.

(The Chairperson, Councillor Black, in the Chair.)

Use of City Hall Grounds - National Graves Association

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for a request from the Belfast National Graves Association to lay wreaths at the Mary Ann McCracken statue and the statue of the Winifred Carney, which were located in the City Hall Grounds, on the anniversary of their deaths on 26th July and 21st November, 2024, respectively.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 31st May, 2024**

During discussion, a Member sought clarification as to whether or not there was a Council policy which covered such requests or if granting the approval would set a precedence. Without such information he felt that he would not be in a position to make a decision on the application.

In response, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that she did not have that information to hand but could bring back a report to the next meeting.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor R. McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor R-M Donnelly,

That the Committee agrees to accede to the requests.

On a recorded vote, twelve Members voted in favour of the proposal and none against, with six no votes and it was declared carried.

<u>For 12</u>	<u>Against 0</u>	<u>No Vote 6</u>
Alderman McCoubrey, Councillors Beattie, Black, Cobain, M. Donnelly, R-M Donnelly, Duffy, Ferguson, Garrett, Maskey, I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin.		Councillors de Faoite, Hanvey, Long, Maghie, Nelson and Smyth.

**Glor Na mona - Croí na Carraige –
'The Heart of the Rock' Project**

A Member reminded the Committee that it had previously agreed to award funding of £500,000 to Glor Na mona for the Croí na Carraige - 'The Heart of the Rock' Project as part of the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF). He stated that group had submitted an application for funding to BIFFA, which closed later today, and was seeking a comfort letter from the Council in relation to the award of funding under the NRF and lease from the Council.

The Committee agreed to issue a comfort letter but noted that the application under the NRF and lease length was still subject to all the Council's processes.

Standing Order 14

The Committee agreed that, in accordance with Standing Order 14, the minutes be submitted to the Council meeting on 3rd June for ratification.

Chairperson

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 2nd May, 2024

MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Murray (Chairperson);
Councillors Bell, Black, Bower, R. Brooks,
Doherty, M. Donnelly, R-M Donnelly,
Flynn, Kelly, Magee, Maghie, McAteer,
Ó Néill and Verner.

In attendance: Mr. D. Sales, Strategic Director City Operations;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mr. S. Leonard, Director OSSS and Resources and Fleet;
Mr. J. Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager;
and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported from Councillors Bunting, Cobain and de Faote.

Minutes

It was reported that the minutes of the 9th April meeting would be considered at the next meeting of the Council, which was scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 7th May.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Items

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

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

The Members were advised that content of ‘restricted’ reports and any discussion which takes place during closed session must be treated as ‘confidential information’ and no

**People and Communities Committee,
Thursday, 2nd May, 2024**

such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

Update on XL Bully Legislation

The Director of City Services provided the Members with a comprehensive update regarding the new safeguarding measures, along with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) timeline for implementation for XL Bully breed type dogs that was due to be introduced in Northern Ireland and would be likely to impact upon the Council's Dog Warden Service.

The Committee was advised that currently there was 140 XL Bully type dogs licensed in Northern Ireland, up from 90 last year and provided an overview of the requirements on owners.

The Director advised that, as requested at the April meeting of Committee, officers had written to Minister Muir to raise the Council's concerns regarding the impact of the upcoming XL Bully legislation for councils and animal welfare charities, and to enquire about what resources would be allocated to Councils to deal with the impacts. Currently the response was outstanding, and the Director undertook to update the Committee further once it had been received.

The Committee noted the update and that the correspondence seeking additional information on the impact of the legislation had been issued to Minister Muir.

Alleygates Phase V Consultation Update

The Operational Director provided the Members with an update on the Alleygates Phase V Programme.

The Members noted that the Notice of Intention for those streets meeting the threshold in Phase 5a had been advertised on 9th February for the required period of 30 days for representations and objections to be logged and he provided an overview of those representations and objections received. He advised that the objections received had been reviewed with legal services and the advice was that the Council was not required to conduct a local enquiry and officers were recommending that the proposed gating order be enacted.

Following a query, the Director advised that the work to evaluate the Alleygate programme would be progressing later in the year.

He advised that the canvassers for Phase 5b had been recruited and those residents within the nominated areas would be given the opportunity to complete a hard copy questionnaire and return it in a Freepost envelope. In addition, notification would be given that the canvassers would be visiting each household to complete surveys, should a form not be registered from that household. As previously requested, canvassers would contact those elected representatives who had expressed an interest in promoting the consultation.

The Members noted that a request had been received from the Department for Infrastructure and Linen Quarter BID seeking to include Ventry Lane within the additional consultation areas. He advised that funding had been secured to include an additional gate

**People and Communities Committee,
Thursday, 2nd May, 2024**

within the gating programme. The Department for Infrastructure had agreed in principle to the proposal and the PCSP had been supportive of the initiative due to the high levels of drug related incidents at this location.

The Committee approved the enacting of the legislation and agreed to the inclusion of an additional self-funded street within the Phase 5b consultation.

Six monthly Healthwise and Physical Activity Referral Programmes Update

The Committee noted the six-monthly progress update on the exercise and health referral programmes managed by GLL in Belfast, which included an overview of the various health related contracts and services along with the key performance indicators.

GLL Leisure Management Contract – six monthly update on contract compliance and performance

The Committee was reminded that it had previously been agreed that contract compliance and performance reports would be presented, at a strategic level, to Committee on a six-monthly basis in November and May. That would allow for sufficient time to collate and verify management information data related to the preceding six-month periods of April to September and October to March.

The six-monthly reports, as submitted, included detailed quarterly information on the two relevant quarters within each six-month period.

The Committee noted the:

- the information provided in paragraph 3.2.1 of the report in relation to contract compliance;
- the information provided at paragraph 3.2.2 in relation to key performance indicators;
- the supporting narrative presented at paragraph 3.2.3;
- the facility asset management monitoring information set out at paragraph 3.2.4; and
- the Health and Safety compliance assurances presented at paragraph 3.2.5.

Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group Update

The Director of City Services drew the Members' attention to the minutes of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group, during which the following matters had been considered:

- New Crematorium Development Update;
- Bereavement Services Operational Update; and
- City Centre Visitor Centre Operating Model Update.

**People and Communities Committee,
Thursday, 2nd May, 2024**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group of 24th April.

Update on Events Social Value Levy Fund

The Operational Director provided the Members with an update on the social value monies that had been accrued, this included a breakdown of the fees collected per area since March 2019.

It was agreed that Councillors working with local community organisations, resident groups and businesses would be best placed to bring ideas for consideration to the local area working groups. In addition, Council officers would support Elected Members with project proposals by providing specialised knowledge and costings where required.

At the request of a Member, it was agreed that the fee collected for Ormeau Park should be directly considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee rather than the Area Working Group.

The Committee noted the amount of social levy fee collected by the Council since March 2019 in respect of events at Ormeau Park, the Boucher Road Playing Fields and Botanic Gardens and agreed that the South Area Working Group would further discuss the projects that should benefit from investment using the social value fund for Botanic Gardens and Boucher Playing Fields, with the fee collected for Ormeau Park to be directly considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Matters referred back from the Council/Motions

Blanchflower Stadium - Preferential Use Agreement

The Committee considered further the minute of the meeting of 12th March which had been referred back to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 8th April. An extract of the minute is set out hereunder:

Extract from minutes of –

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

12th March 2024

**“Blanchflower Stadium –
Preferential Use Agreement**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of this Committee that the Preferential Use Agreement with Glentoran Football Club for the use of the second synthetic pitch at Blanchflower Playing Fields, expired on 1 December 2023.**

- 1.2 Outside the timeslots allocated to Glentoran the facility is very popular and continues to be fully booked from 6pm to 10pm Monday to Thursday by a wide range of youth and senior teams.
- 1.3 On Friday evenings along with Saturday mornings and on Sunday the pitch is booked by South Belfast Youth League.
- 1.4 Council have been approached by several local, community based clubs who are unable to gain access to the pitch.
- 1.5 There are a number of options for Council to consider regarding the future booking arrangements for this pitch:

Option 1

To renew the Preferential Use Agreement with Glentoran Football Club

Option 2

To process all pitch bookings at the site following normal Belfast City Council procedures which is first come, first served.

Option 3

To work with local community based football clubs to develop an allocation model so that they all get access to the pitch on Monday to Thursday evenings. An example of a potential allocation model involving 8 clubs and the South Belfast Youth League is included at appendix 1 of the agenda.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Members of the Committee are asked to note that the Preferential Use Agreement with Glentoran Football Club for Blanchflower Playing Fields has ended.
- 2.2 From 1 April 2024 it is suggested that Council should progress with Option 3.

Council Officers will meet with local clubs to develop an allocation model so that they all get access to the pitch on Monday to Thursday evenings (see appendix 1 in the agenda).

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 In March 2018 Strategic Policy and Resources Committee directed officers to undertake research into the provision of suitable and

convenient pitch facilities for Glentoran FC including its Youth Academy. Committee further accepted the East Area Working Group recommendation that a proposed capital programme to install a 3G pitch with floodlighting at King George V playing fields be replaced on the capital programme with a 3G pitch at Blanchflower Playing Fields.

- 3.2 People and Communities Committee of March 2019 agreed to upgrade facilities at King George V Playing Fields and offer a preferential Use Agreement for 5 years to Glentoran Youth Academy.
- 3.3 King George V playing fields are subject to a Deed of Covenant with Fields of Trust. Local residents had written to Fields in Trust in opposition to the proposed development of the site and management of bookings. Local residents also approached council officers protesting against the proposal on a number of grounds.
- 3.4 In the meantime significant investment in football facilities had taken place in East Belfast and in particular at Blanchflower Playing Fields where Council has developed two full size floodlit synthetic football pitches at Blanchflower Playing Fields. One of the pitches being directly managed and booked by Harland and Wolff Welders Football Club and the other managed and booked by Council.
- 3.5 By 2019 the decision regarding the upgrade works had not been fulfilled and Glentoran FC wrote to Council seeking approval for the previously approved Preferential Use Agreement at King George V playing fields to be transferred to Blanchflower playing fields.
- 3.6 Officers negotiated with Glentoran Football Club and an agreed timetable of priority use for Glentoran Football Club was produced, indicated in the table below. The timetable of use and the teams/sections from within the club using the pitch at these times were to be reflective of Glentoran Football Clubs commitment to growing the game in an inclusive way with significant usage by groups under-represented in sports participation.

Day	Times of Use
Monday	6:00pm-7:00pm 7:00pm -8:00pm
Tuesday	6:00pm-7:00pm 7:00pm -8:00pm
Wednesday	6:00pm-7:00pm 7:00pm -8:00pm
Thursday	6:00pm-7:00pm 7:00pm -8:00pm

**People and Communities Committee,
Thursday, 2nd May, 2024**

Friday	None
Saturday	None
Sunday	None

3.7 People and Communities Committee of 9 November 2021 agreed to offer a Preferential Use Agreement to Glentoran Football Club at Blanchflower Playing Fields for limited access to the site, as identified in the table above, for a period of two years. This agreement has now ended and there have been enquiries from a number of local youth teams with regards to being able to book this pitch for the slots currently allocated to Glentoran through this agreement.

3.8 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications associated with this report.

3.9 Equality Impact/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no equality or rural needs implications associated with this report.”

The Committee noted that the Preferential Use Agreement with Glentoran Football Club for Blanchflower Playing Fields had ended with effect from 1st April 2024 and agreed that the Council should progress with Option 3.

At the request of a Member, it was further agreed that officers would look to work with local community based football clubs to develop an allocation model which was fair and equitable for all users, to ensure that all clubs would get fair access to pitches throughout the week.”

Following a query, the Democratic Services and Governance Manager confirmed that, as the aforementioned minute had been referred back to the Committee, the Committee needed to, once again, consider the three options and whether it wished to proceed with option 3, as per the officer’s recommendation and previous Committee agreement.

The Members considered in detail the three options that had previously been suggested and considered whether a workshop to further discuss the needs of the various football clubs would be beneficial and asked the Strategic Director for an update on any work progressed to date on option 3.

The Strategic Director advised that, following the March meeting, officers had written to the local community-based football clubs and had since received each clubs’ preferred option for use along with detailed information on the membership of each club. Following lengthy discussion, a general consensus was agreed there would be no benefit in discussing this further at a workshop, as officers were already in receipt of the required information from the clubs which could be used to draw up a proposed allocation model.

**People and Communities Committee,
Thursday, 2nd May, 2024**

Following consideration of the various options available, the Committee agreed to proceed based on Option 3 and to also include consideration of Glentoran Football Club, with officers to devise a fair and equitable way to allocate slots, based on need, with a report to be submitted to the next meeting which would detail the proposed allocation model for the Committee to further consider.

**Response from DAERA re "Rethinking Our Resources:
Measures for Climate Action and a Circular Economy In NI"
Consultation - seeking an extension**

The Committee noted that Minister Muir had agreed to extend the closing date for responses to the consultation until 5.00 p.m. on 27th June, 2024, therefore, the consultation from Belfast City Council would have to be submitted in draft form, subject to ratification at the July Council meeting.

**People and Communities Committee
Plan 2023/24 – End of Year Report**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 This paper provides a year end progress update on the key actions contained in the 2023- 24 People and Communities (P&C) Committee Plan, as agreed by the Committee in October 2023.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the content of the year end progress report against the agreed actions within the 2023-24 People and Communities Committee Plan.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will be aware that the 2023-24 P&C Committee Plan was agreed at the Committee meeting in October 2023.

3.2 The plan locates priorities within the framework of the relevant Belfast Agenda themes (Our Services; Economic Recovery; Community Recovery; Environmental Recovery; Strategic Planning Frameworks; and Organisational Foundations) and the CNS Departmental key priority areas (Open Spaces & Streetscene; Community Provision; City Protection and Bereavement; and Resources and Fleet).

- 3.3 While the October 2023 report noted that it is likely many of these areas of focus will take several years to deliver, it detailed the key deliverables and priorities for 2023-24.
- 3.4 The Committee has received specific reports on a number of these priorities, and some are included in the Council's 2023-24 Improvement Plan, though this report provides an end of year progress update regarding all the priorities, as was proposed in the October paper.
- 3.5 The table within appendix 1b (attached to the agenda) provides detail and commentary on the progress of all 36 actions. It sets out the work undertaken by the Department to deliver the key priorities, to the end of Q4 2023/24 (end of March 2024). 36 actions were identified across the Department's three Directorates. Of these, 1 has been completed (marked 'blue' in the table), 33 are currently on track (marked 'green'), 2 are considered at risk and are slightly delayed (marked 'amber').
- 3.6 The Committee is reminded of the resource, capacity and resilience pressures on the City and Neighbourhood Services Department experienced during 2023-24. Recent recruitment exercises have provided some additional resources which will assist with the progress of those actions currently considered to be delayed, though it is anticipated that some of these actions will be carried into the 2024-25 Department Business Plan where completion is more realistically achievable.
- 3.7 The Department intends to bring a further report detailing the 2024-25 Committee Plan to a subsequent People and Communities Committee meeting.
- 3.8 **Financial and Resource Implications**
- The Committee Plan and annual programme of work aligns with the budget agreed by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee through the rate setting process in January for 2023-24 for the People and Communities Committee of £98.901m.
- 3.9 **Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment**
- There are no implications directly relating to this report however individual strategies and plans will be subject to the council's equality, good relations and rural needs requirements."

The Committee noted the update.

People and Communities Committee Plan 2024/25

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This report provides a draft People & Communities Committee Plan summarising the Committee’s key priorities for 2024-25.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the draft People and Communities Committee Plan priorities for 2024-25.

3.0 Main report

The 2024-25 draft P&C Committee Plan has been developed in the context of the Council’s Corporate Plan and the Belfast Agenda and considering the Belfast Agenda Refresh. Consequently, the new Committee Plan contains the commitments within the Corporate Delivery Plan, which fall under the remit of this Committee, plus additional deliverables that have been agreed by the P&C Committee throughout 2023-24 and are relevant to the Standing Orders. The draft plan sets out the main priorities and programmes of work that the Committee oversees to maximise the Council’s contribution to the Belfast Agenda.

3.2 The structure of the delivery plan is themed under the following:

- Our People and Communities
- Our Place
- Our Planet
- Compassionate City
- Improving Our Services
- Organisational Priorities

3.3 A series of priorities fall under each theme, each with several committed deliverables for 2024-25.

3.4 Members will recall that the People and Communities Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes, and projects aimed at improving life at a local level in the context of the outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy. This includes:

- Developing and delivering programmes, events, and activities to promote health, safety, and well-being at a local level.

- **Administering and enforcing the Council's powers and duties under the Public Health Acts and all environmental health and building related legislation and regulations.**
- **Securing and providing adequate provision for the recycling, treatment and disposal of commercial and domestic waste including bulky waste and the collection and disposal of abandoned motor vehicles.**
- **Exercising the Council's powers for improving local environmental quality in relation to housing legislation, managing controlled waste, emergency planning and community safety and anti-social behaviour, clean neighbourhoods and other environmental or regulatory issues not falling within the remit of any other Committee.**
- **Managing, maintaining, and maximising the benefit of the Council's parks, pitches, playgrounds, and other public spaces as well as community centres and other indoor facilities.**
- **Developing and implementing activities to ensure the delivery of corporate strategies and initiatives in respect of the promotion of health and physical activity, environmental protection, community safety and other such areas under the domain of this Committee.**
- **Overseeing the delivery of the Council's frontline services and associated community assets including Environmental Health Services; Cleansing; Waste Management; Parks and Leisure service (excluding Zoo, Malone House and Belfast Castle), Neighbourhood and Development Services; Community Services, Community Safety and Emergency Planning.**

3.5 Summary of Committee Plan Priorities

- **The draft Committee Plan identifies the following key areas of focus:**
- **Build capacity within our communities**
- **Addressing vulnerabilities and responding to societal challenges**
- **Increase opportunities for people to be physically active**
- **Community Safety**
- **Heritage Tourism**
- **Off-Street Car Parking**
- **Open Spaces**

- Reservoir Improvement Programme
- Transition to low carbon
- Promote sustainable circular economy approaches
- Climate Resilience
- Belfast Youth Council
- Good Relations Action Plan
- Community Safety
- Bereavement Services
- Port Health
- House in Multiple Occupancy
- Digital Development
- Asset Management

3.6 It is likely many of these areas of focus will take several years to deliver. The draft plan includes and outlines the key deliverables for 2024-25 that we are working towards achieving.

3.7 It is proposed that Committee receive a 6 monthly progress update regarding the priorities. This will be in addition to usual reports that will be brought to Committee regarding individual priorities and deliverables.

3.8 The Departmental Plan on which the committee plan is based reflects that the department is continuing to focus on the delivery of business-as-usual services while progressing the transformation and improvement agenda.

3.9 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The Committee Plan and annual programme of work aligns with the budget agreed by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 9th February 2024, for 2024-25 for the People and Communities Committee, of £105,332,936.

3.10 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

There are no implications directly relating to this report however individual strategies, programmes and actions will be subject to the council's equality, good relations, and rural needs requirements."

The Committee approved the draft People and Communities Committee Plan priorities for 2024-25.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

**Tullycarnet Bowling Pavilion –
Keyholder Agreement**

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the Council to enter into a key holding arrangement with the Church of Ireland Diocese of Down and Dromore for access to and use of Tullycarnet Bowling Pavilion.

The Operational Director provided an overview of those users of the facility and highlighted that if the Church was to become the responsible key holder for the building it would negate the need for the Council to staff the facility when in use. It was noted that there had been no prior clashes of bookings and the key holder arrangement would not have any impact on the hire of the pavilion or events by other third-party organisations.

The Committee granted authority for the necessary key holding arrangement between the Council and the Church of Ireland Diocese of Down and Dromore for access to and use of Tullycarnet Bowling Pavilion, subject to satisfactory terms being agreed by the Operational Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and on condition the Church resolve all operational and health and safety issues to the satisfaction of Council officers.

It noted that an appropriate legal key holding arrangement would be prepared by legal services to include the necessary facility management and health and safety requirements.

**Annual GLL policies and operational
procedures alignment statement**

The Committee noted a report which provided details on annual assurances on GLL policy and procedure alignments as set out in the leisure management contract.

Proposal to name New Street

The Committee approved the applications for the naming two new streets in the city, Black Ridge Place and Black Ridge Hill.

Proposal for Dual Language Street Signage

The Committee agreed the erection of a second street nameplate in Irish at Meadowhill, Glencolin Manor, Glencolin Close, Glenveagh Park, Ramoan Drive, Garnock Hill, Naron Park, Laganvale Street, South Parade, Willowvale Avenue and Hamill Park.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

**Provision of toilet facilities at Falls Park –
Councillor M. Donnelly to raise**

At the request of Councillor M. Donnelly, the Committee agreed to assess if the bowling pavilion at Falls Park could be made accessible for the use of its toilet facilities for users of Falls Park.

**People and Communities Committee,
Thursday, 2nd May, 2024**

At the request of further Members, the Committee also agreed to submit a report to a future meeting considering the provision of toilet facilities at other parks throughout the city, to include Woodvale Park and at Shaws Bridge.

**Public Health Nuisance of feeding pigeons –
Councillor G. McAteer to raise**

At the request of Councillor G. McAteer, the Committee agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would consider the public health nuisance of people feeding pigeons and provide an update on the legislative powers that existed.

**Books for Refugee Children living across
Belfast – Councillor Bower to raise**

At the request of Councillor Bower, The Committee agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting which would consider the Council supplying reading material in their native language, along with support, to refugee children living in Belfast.

**Glentoran Football Pitch Request to address
the Committee – Councillor Maghie to raise**

The Committee considered a request to address the Committee, as raised by Councillor Maghie, and agreed, given the decision earlier in the meeting, not to accede to the request for Glentoran Football Club to address a future meeting of the Committee.

Chairperson

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 8th May, 2024

MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Nic Bhranair (Chairperson);
Alderman Lawlor;
Councillors Bunting, Canavan, S. Douglas, Duffy,
Maskey, F. McAteer, McCabe, McLaughlin, McKay,
Murray, Smyth and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Ms. L. O'Donnell; Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism;
Ms. L. Toland; Senior Manager, Economy;
Mr. S. Dolan, Senior Development Manager;
Mr. A. Cairns, Zoo Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Garrett, McCormick, McDonough-Brown, McDowell and McMullan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the 10th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 7th May, subject to the following amendment under the heading *Notice of Motion Quarterly Update* - the Council agreed to retain the following two notices of motion which had been recommended for closure, and to write to the Minister for Infrastructure to request that funding be committed to the provision of nighttime services:

- Translink – Nighttime provision of services (ID 289); and
- Late Night Public Transport (ID 349).

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Nic Bhranair declared an interest in items 2.b) Update on Coach Parking and Hop-on/Hop-off Operators and 5.a) 2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans in that she had recently been employed as a Special Advisor to a Minister in the Executive and left the room whilst the items were under consideration.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 8th May, 2024**

Councillors Duffy and McCabe declared an interest in item 5.a) 2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans, in that the organisations they worked for were associated with the employment skills and tourism work plans and left the room whilst the item was under discussion.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the report associated with the following three items was restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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

Members were also reminded that the content of ‘restricted’ reports and any discussion which took place during closed session must be treated as ‘confidential information’ and that no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

Vacant to Vibrant Scheme

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided an update on the Vacant to Vibrant Programme and outlined the recommendations from the Vacant to Vibrant assessment panel following the recent receipt and assessment of applications.

She also provided an overview of the next steps for the Vacant to Vibrant programme and advised that a further update would be provided to the Committee in June, following further discussions with Party Group Leaders.

The Committee:

- I. Noted the update in relation to the city centre Vacant to Vibrant Programme;
- II. Agreed to the recommended grant awards as outlined within Section 3.12 of the report;
- III. Noted the update contained within this report relating to the Renewing the Routes programme; and
- IV. Noted the ongoing work on developing options for the Vacant to Vibrant Programme and that these options would be brought to Party Group Leaders for discussion prior to bringing back into the Committee, and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, as appropriate.

(Councillor Duffy in the Chair.)

**Update on Coach Parking and
Hop-on / Hop-off Operators**

The Senior Manager, Culture, Tourism and Events, provided an update on the availability of secure overnight coach parking and the current city provisions to service the market.

In relation to the provision of Hop on/Hop off sightseeing tours, she explained that Visit Belfast had advised officers of additional providers entering the market. While the licence to operate this form of service was within the remit of the Department for Infrastructure, the Council provided associated permits for street trading. She advised that, given a number of operators now in the marketplace competing for share of visitors, Visit Belfast had proposed requesting operators to sign a voluntary code of conduct.

During discussion, the Senior Manager, Culture, Tourism and Events, answered a range of questions in relation to enforcement, volume of coaches, cruise-ship operators and air pollution.

After discussion, the Committee:

- Noted the contents of the report;
- Agreed, in principle, to sign up to the draft Code of Conduct along with Visit Belfast, other statutory agencies and Operators;
- Agreed that restrictions to Coach engine idling in the City Centre and the impact on air pollution be discussed with the representatives for inclusion in the draft Code of Conduct; and
- Noted that officers would also explore the potential for a similar code of conduct for cruise ship related coach operators.

(Councillor Nic Bhranair in the Chair.)

Belfast Zoo - Collection Update

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy advised that approval was being sought to confirm the final plans for the relocation of two elephants from Belfast Zoo to Burgers Zoo in the Netherlands.

The Committee:

- Approved the final stage of the elephants transfer from Belfast Zoo to Burgers Zoo in the Netherlands; and
- Noted the estimated cost of the transfer.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

**Request to Present - Belfast City and
Region Place Partnership**

The Committee considered the request to receive a presentation from representatives of the Belfast City and Region Place Partnership at its Committee Meeting in June 2024.

During discussion, the Committee noted that the Partnership would be invited to attend the Special Meeting in May, in the first instance. However, if this was not suitable, they would be invited to attend the Committee in June.

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from representatives of the Belfast City and Region Place Partnership at a future Committee.

**Department for Communities Correspondence –
Regeneration Powers**

The Committee considered the correspondence which had been received by the Department for Communities in response to its request in relation to regeneration powers ([Appendix 2](#)).

The Committee noted the correspondence.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Belfast 2024 Update

The Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, provided an overview of the forthcoming Belfast 2024 events programme, together with a Communications Plan update and key milestones:

- May 24 - Little Amal opening spectacle event;
- June 24 - Launch Spring/Summer Programme Campaign – Safari in the City, Hearth, ROOTS, Boat Building, Lyric Midsummer, Alleyways;
- August 24 - Launch Autumn/Winter Programme Campaign - Shadowdock, Wiggle Room, Helen Hall, North Star, BBC Concert, Eco Arcade, An Droichead;
- Sept 24 - Host Eurocities Cultural Conference; and
- Nov 24 - Wrap Up/ Finale - Eden-Oliver Jeffers

During discussion, the Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism confirmed that all events would be incorporated and promoted in the final 'What's on' listings and signposting via associated social and campaign activity.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 8th May, 2024**

The Committee noted the update provided on the Belfast 2024 programme of events scheduled throughout the year.

**UNESCO Creative Cities
Network (UCCN) Annual Conference**

The Committee was advised that an invitation had been received to the XVI Annual Conference of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) to be held in Braga (Portugal), from 1st - 5th July 2024, under the theme "Bringing youth to the table for the next decade" which sought approval for council engagement in, and representation at the event.

The Committee noted the contents of report and agreed to the attendance of the Lord Mayor and relevant officials, up to a maximum estimated cost of £5000, at the Conference.

(Councillor Walsh in the Chair.)

Strategic and Operational Issues

2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the Report and associated appendices until its meeting on 29th May, to allow Members time to review the Committee and Work Plans further.

(Councillor Nic Bhranair in the Chair.)

Approval for 2 Markets at 2RA

The Committee approved the following two external markets to take place in 2RA:

- 'Crafted with Pride' Market on Saturday, 21st July 2024; and
- Belfast Potters Market on Saturday 10th August 2024

Minutes of the Belfast Stories Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the Minutes of the Belfast Stories Working Group of 24th April.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 29th May, 2024

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Nic Bhranair (Chairperson);
Councillors Abernethy, Canavan, Garrett,
Maskey, F. McAteer, McCabe, McDowell,
McKay, and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Ms. L. Toland; Senior Manager, Economy;
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance
Coordinator.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Duffy, McDonough-Brown, Murray and Smyth.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Nic Bhranair declared an interest in items 3.a) 2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans in that she had recently been employed as a Special Advisor to a Minister in the Executive, however, on advice from the Democratic Services Manager it was not deemed necessary that she should leave the room as the report provided the Members with overarching Workplans.

Restricted Item

The information contained in the report associated with the following item was restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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

Members were also reminded that the content of 'restricted' reports and any discussion which took place during closed session must be treated as 'confidential information' and that no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

Presentation

Translink - Belfast Grand Central Update

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. D. McAllister, Head of Belfast Grand Central Station Programme, Mr. D. Curry - General Manager Bus Services, and Ms. L. Shannon, Corporate Communications Manager, representing Translink to the meeting.

The representatives provided an update of the Belfast Grand Central Station/ Weavers Cross Transport Led Regeneration Project which included details of the Construction Work timeline, Rail engineering works, Public Transport Interventions, Bus and Rail timetable changes, event management and customer information and accessibility.

The representatives thanked the Committee for its support and continued engagement.

During discussion, the representative's answered a range of questions in relation to project spend and engagement with schools on the impact of service changes. In response to a Member's question in relation to further communication and the potential to animate park and ride sites during quiet periods to engage with the impacted communities, Ms. Shannon advised this would be explored.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the contents of the Presentation and that further updates would be received at future Special Committees, if required.

Strategic and Operational Issues

2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans

The Committee considered the undernoted report and associated appendices:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To provide an end of year report on the key actions contained in the 2023-24 City Growth and Regeneration (CG&R) Committee Plan, as agreed by this Committee in September 2023.**
- 1.2 To present to Committee the draft City Growth & Regeneration Committee Plan for 2024-25 and associated programme workplans highlighting programme costs seeking committee approval.**

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of the end of year report as set out in Appendix 1;
- Approve the City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan for 2024-25 attached at Appendix 2;
- Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Enterprise and Business Growth workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 3;
- Note and agree a financial commitment of £25,000 to HIRANI to support the delivery of the 'Health and Life Sciences Launchpad' in Northern Ireland;
- Note and endorse the proposal to invest in the Way to Scale programme and extended support to innovation-focused businesses up to a maximum of £50,000 (work to be coordinated through Catalyst);
- Note and endorse the contribution to support the ongoing development of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (work to be coordinated through Newry, Mourne and Down District Council) up to a maximum of £35,000;
- Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Employability and Skills workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 4;
- Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the European and International Relations workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 5;
- Note and agree a financial commitment of £15,000 to Eurocities as part of annual membership of the Network;
- Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Culture workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 6; and
- Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Tourism and Events workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 7.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8th May, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the Report and associated appendices until its meeting on 29th May, to allow Members time to review the Committee and Work Plans further.**

3.2 CG&R Committee Plan 2023-24 End of Year Report

While the Committee receives regular updates on progress for specific programmes and initiatives, Appendix 1 sets out an overview of progress against the main commitments in the CG&R Committee Plan 2023-24 as of the 31st March 2024. This builds on the report that members received at the November committee meeting which provided a six-monthly update. At the year end, officers undertook an assessment of individual projects and workstreams, allocating a traffic light rating as follows:

- **Green - actions have been delivered as expected, to budget and with no significant risks.**
- **Amber - there have been some delays, impact on budget or risks that have emerged.**
- **Red - work has been significantly delayed; the final outcome is not as expected; significant additional budget is required; or significant risks have emerged.**

3.3 In summary, from a total of 43 workstreams, 27 were rated as green, 15 as amber and 1 red. Committee should also note that due to the reporting timelines, some of the figures provided are provisional and subject to final audit.

3.4 Summary highlights of the year include:

- **56 organisations supported through the council's Cultural multi-annual funding including support for Arts/ Heritage organisations and Festivals/Events.**
- **21 community festivals support**
- **124,000 people attended our four signature City Events (check).**
- **260 people progressed onto a job or better job via an employment academy.**
- **New NI Enterprise Support Service launched during Global Entrepreneurship Week.**
- **119,135 Belfast Bike journeys during the 2023 calendar year.**
- **18 applications approved for Vacant to Vibrant and assisted 33 businesses through our 'Matchmaking' service, helping them to identify city centre rental units.**
- **Launched the process which seeks procurement for a long-term partner for the delivery of £630m GDV housing led placemaking regeneration.**

3.5 CG&R Committee Plan 2024-25

Each year the Committee is tasked with agreeing a Committee Plan for the year ahead. This year's Committee Plan has been developed based on feedback received from the Committee Planning workshop held in October 2023 and decisions relevant to the Committee agreed through the rates setting process. It has also been structured to align to the recently approved Belfast Agenda and the council's draft Corporate Delivery Plan.

3.6 The Corporate Delivery Plan will be presented to the May meeting of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee. Should any changes be required, an update of the committee plan will be brought to the attention of members at a future meeting.

3.7 In particular, this Plan contains actions that make a contribution to the 'Our Economy' and 'Our Place' themes of the refreshed community plan. At its planning workshop in October 2023, members requested that consideration be given to measuring progress and impact on agreed programmes. To that end, this year's committee plan includes a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which will be reported on a six-monthly basis together with a more detailed progress report against all commitments.

3.8 Workplans/ Programme Budgets

Many of the activities outlined within the draft Committee Plan will be resourced through the respective departmental budgets for 2024-25 in line with the Scheme of Delegation and in accordance with section G of the Financial Regulations. On that note, priority work areas for the 2024-25 financial year and their allocation from their respective budgets are presented in Appendices 3-7.

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

The draft Committee Plan 2024-25 and the subsequent work plans are aligned with the budget agreed by the Special Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 9th February 2024, namely a cash limit for the CG&R Committee of £21.55 million as set out in Appendix 2.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

Strategies, programmes and actions within the Committee Plan are developed and delivered in consultation with the Council’s Equality & Diversity Officers and subject to appropriate equality, good relations and rural needs assessment.”

During discussion, a Member raised the importance of further and continued engagement with communities in relation to realising the full potential of the Waterfront opportunities, under the Connectivity and City Infrastructure Strategic Priority - Bolder Vision (Appendix 2). The Director of City Regeneration and Development advised that this had been raised within the Waterfront Neighbourhood Network, and how this group feeds in and is represented on the Waterfront Task Force, however, she would continue to progress.

In relation to a Member’s question on the Employment Academies Project and the allocation of Classroom Assistant Academy providers, the Senior Manager, Economy advised that there would be a new Framework for the delivery of academies and she would confirm the current status of the Classroom Assistant Academy process.

In response to Members suggestions to provide a timeline of key project stages to monitor the progress of critical items such as the Housing Led Regeneration deliverables within the Committee Plan, the Strategic Director advised that targets and updates in this regard would be provided to the Committee at regular intervals.

The Committee:

- Noted the contents of the end of year report as set out in [Appendix 1](#);
- Approved the City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan for 2024-25 ([Appendix 2](#));
- Noted continued engagement with communities in relation to realising the full potential of the Waterfront opportunities, under the Connectivity and City Infrastructure Strategic Priority - Bolder Vision;
- Noted that a timeline of key project stages to monitor the progress of critical items within the Committee Plan would be provided and updates submitted to the Committee for consideration;
- Approved the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Enterprise and Business Growth workplan for 2024-25 ([Appendix 3](#));
- Noted and agreed a financial commitment of £25,000 to HIRANI to support the delivery of the ‘Health and Life Sciences Launchpad’ in Northern Ireland;
- Noted and endorsed the proposal to invest in the Way to Scale programme and extended support to innovation-focused

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 8th May, 2024**

businesses up to a maximum of £50,000 (work to be coordinated through Catalyst);

- Noted and endorsed the contribution to support the ongoing development of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (work to be coordinated through Newry, Mourne and Down District Council) up to a maximum of £35,000;
- Approved the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Employability and Skills workplan for 2024-25 ([Appendix 4](#));
- Approved the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the European and International Relations workplan for 2024-25 ([Appendix 5](#));
- Noted and agreed a financial commitment of £15,000 to Eurocities as part of annual membership of the Network;
- Approved the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Culture workplan for 2024-25 ([Appendix 6](#)); and
- Approved the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Tourism and Events workplan for 2024-25 ([Appendix 7](#)).

Standing Order 14 - Submission of Minutes

In accordance with Standing Order 14, the Committee agreed, as the meeting had been held later than seven clear days before the meeting of the Council, that the minutes of the meeting be submitted to the Council on 3rd June for ratification.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 14th May, 2024

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Aldermen Lawlor, McCullough and Rodgers;
Councillors Anglin, Bell, Bradley, T. Brooks,
Carson, Doherty, P. Donnelly, S. Douglas,
Doran, Ferguson, Groogan, Maskey,
McCann, Nic Bhranair and Whyte.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;
Mr. K. McDonnell, Solicitor (Regulatory and Planning)
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management);
Mr. D. O’Kane, Acting Planning Manager (Plans and Policy);
Ms. C. Reville, Principal Planning Officer
Ms. L. Walshe, Principal Planning Officer
Mr. C. Campfield, Principal Planning Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 16th April, 2024 were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 7th May, 2024, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor T. Brooks declared an interest in relation to item 8a - LA04/2023/3635/RM - Redevelopment of existing surface level car park for erection of residential development comprising of 205 No. units, car parking, landscaping and all associated site works. Lands bound by Glenalpin Street, Wellwood Street and Norwood Street, in that she owned an apartment on Victoria Street.

Councillor T. Brooks declared an interest in relation to item 7e - Advanced Notice of Listed Buildings - All Saints Church, Canterbury Street and Queen's University, University Road, in that she was employed by Queen’s University, Belfast.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in relation to item 8a - LA04/2023/3635/RM - Redevelopment of existing surface level car park for erection of residential development comprising of 205 No. units, car parking, landscaping and all associated site works. Lands bound by Glenalpin Street, Wellwood Street and Norwood Street, in that she had she had

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 14th May, 2024**

previously declared an interest to the outline planning permission – LA04/2019/0127/O in June, 2019.

Withdrawn Items

The Committee noted that the following items had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- Model Section 76 Planning Agreements; and
- Committee Decisions on Planning Applications awaiting issuing.

Committee Site Visits

Note of Committee Site Visits

The Committee noted the Committee site visits and agreed to defer consideration of the following three items on the agenda, in order that the Committee would undertake site visits to the application sites:

- LA04/2023/3936/O - Outline planning for proposed replacement dwelling and all associated site works - 89a Upper Springfield Road
- LA04/2023/4162/F - Change of use from retail unit to amusement arcade and adult gaming centre. - 51 Rosemary Street
- LA04/2023/2748/A - 1 Digital Advertisement Display - 12-13 Shaftesbury Square

**Request for agreement to hold a Special Meeting
of the Planning Committee (if required)**

The Committee agreed to hold an additional meeting of the Committee in June, if required.

**Notifications of Provision/Removal
of Accessible Parking Bay**

The Committee noted the provision of accessible parking bays at the following locations:

- 3 Edenvale Grove;
- 4 Knocknagoney Road;
- 6 Vandyck Gardens;
- 13 Lancefield Road;
- 27 Knock Grove;
- 91 Grace Avenue;
- 24 Knock Green; and
- 162 Cliftonville Road.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 14th May, 2024**

Appeals

The Committee noted the appeals decisions.

Planning Decisions Issued

The Committee noted the planning decisions issued in April, 2024.

Miscellaneous Reports

**Delegation of Local Applications
with NI Water Objections**

The Committee agreed to delegate to the Director of Planning and Building Control, those local planning applications to which NI Water had objected to.

**Department for Infrastructure Memoranda of
Reply to the recommendations of the Public
Accounts Committee on the NI Planning System**

The Committee noted the content of the report, that included the Memorandum of Response and the update on the Regional Planning Improvement Programme.

**Advanced Notice of Listed Buildings - All Saints
Church, Canterbury Street and Queen's
University, University Road**

The Committee noted the content of the report and agreed to support the proposed listing of:

- All Saints' Church, Canterbury Street, Belfast, BT7 1LB; and
- International Research Centre for Experimental Physics, The Queen's University of Belfast, University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NN.

**Consultation of revised timetable and new
SPG for Mid and East Antrim Council's SPG**

The Committee noted the update which set out Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's revised Local Development Plan timetable and the three draft Supplementary Planning Guidance documents.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 14th May, 2024**

Planning Applications previously considered

(Councillors T. Brooks and Groogan left the meeting while the following item was under consideration.)

LA04/2023/3635/RM - Redevelopment of existing surface level car park for erection of residential development comprising of 205 No. units, car parking, landscaping and all associated site works. - Lands bound by Glenalpin Street, Wellwood Street and Norwood Street

The Planning Manager outlined the application to the Committee and explained that it was an application which sought approval of the details pursuant to the outline planning permission and that the principle of development was established through the outline permission.

He stated that the Committee's consideration was limited to the evaluation and acceptability of the following reserved matters:

- Siting;
- Design;
- External appearance;
- Means of access; and
- Landscaping.

He explained that Condition 5 required that the shoulder heights of the building should be no higher than on drawing number 10A and that the reserved matters were within those parameters. He added that a condition to require the provision and retention of the amenity area was recommended.

He reported that, having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the reserved matters were considered acceptable and that it was recommended that the reserved matters were approved.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. S. Beattie KC, Mr. P. Stinson and Mr. M. Gordon to the meeting.

Mr Beattie stated that it would be remiss not to acknowledge the detailed engagement of the Council officers in the design process at the outline application stage, which was reflected in the outline condition five, that firmly framed the scale and massing of the building.

He stated that the Plan Strategy had also been considered as part of the detailed design of the development and that the proposal provided a variety of types and sizes of units in accordance with the requirements of HOU 6 and all units had been designed to ensure they were adaptable and accessible throughout all stages of life in accordance with HOU 7.

He explained that the amenity space provision for the development was controlled by the building's envelope which was fixed at outline stage and the provision was inclusive of a

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 14th May, 2024**

gym, break out areas and two external terrace areas. He added that the noise levels associated with these areas and their potential impact on adjacent residential properties had been fully considered by Environmental Health and were considered acceptable, subject to mitigation, controlled by conditions.

He concluded by stating that the issue of affordable housing was the subject of careful consideration by the Committee at the outline stage and that the application had been deferred to seek further advice from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on the matter, and that having considered that advice, the Committee had declined to impose conditions on that issue.

In response to a query from a Member with regard to amenity space, the Planning Manager explained that it was not unusual for a city centre development to have a lower than 10 metre average amenity space, regard was also had to the proximity of local play parks. On balance, the level of amenity space was considered acceptable.

Proposal

Moved by Alderman McCullough,
Seconded by Alderman Lawlor,

“That the application be refused on the grounds of a lack of amenity space and housing mix.”

On a vote by show of hands, eight Members voted for the proposal and nine against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Chairperson put the officer recommendation to the Committee and the Committee approved the reserved matters and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions, subject to the resolution of outstanding issues which had been raised by DfI Roads, and to deal with any other matters that might arise, provided that they were not substantive.

**LA04/2023/4208/F - Change of use from
Dwelling to HMO (6 Beds) - 24 Orient Gardens**

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the application which had been deferred for a site visit at its meeting in March.

He highlighted policy considerations that included:

- Policy HOU10 allowed for up to 4 HMO properties on Orient Gardens and there was currently one HMO and so the proposal fell below the 10% policy threshold and was acceptable in principle;
- The proposal met the space standards required by Policy RD1; and
- The parking survey carried out which shows capacity in the location streets.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 14th May, 2024**

He stated that it was recommended that the application was approved, subject to conditions.

A number of Members raised concerns with regard to bin storage space at the rear of the property and a lack of space.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor Carson,

“That the Committee agrees to refuse the application on the grounds of lack of space for adequate bin provision and amenity and delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Building control to finalise the wording of the reasons for refusal.”

On a vote by show of hands, nineteen Members voted for the proposal and none against and it was declared carried.

New Planning Applications

**THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PURSUANCE OF THE
POWERS DELEGATED TO IT BY THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(e)**

(Councillor Whyte left the meeting while the following item was being considered.)

LA04/2023/3143/F - Part demolition of the existing school building and removal of 3 no. temporary classrooms on the Derryvolgie Ave campus and construction of a new single storey extension. Construction of a new single storey 8 class school building and off-road drop-off / collection lay-by on Windsor Ave campus including a new access onto Windsor Ave. Alterations to existing car parking, accesses and play areas and associated landscaping and site works. - St Bride's Primary School, Derryvolgie Avenue

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the application to the Committee and highlighted the following key issues for consideration:

- Principle of the proposal;
- Design and impact on the Conservation Area;
- Impact on Listed Buildings;
- Impact on amenity;
- Access and transport;
- Climate change; and
- Pre Application Community Consultation.

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 14th May, 2024**

He explained that the application involved an extension of the existing Derryvolgie campus and a new build classroom situation on a tarmac area within the Windsor Avenue campus and that the proposal was situated within the existing school campus and made good use of the existing land.

He reported that no objections had been received from consultees and that there was an outstanding response from Shared Environmental Services, however, no objection was expected given a positive response from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

The Committee agreed to approve the application, subject to conditions and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and to deal with any other issues that might arise, to include those raised in the further consultation response from Shared Environmental Services, provided the issues were not substantive.

(Councillor Whyte returned to the meeting.)

**LA04/2023/3483/F - Proposed Michael Davitt
Heritage & Community Centre, Reception,
Toilets and associated Car Parking with
Exhibition Signage to existing Trim Trail - Land
North of Former Corpus Christi College,
Accessed off Michael Davitts GAC Grounds, Via
St Mary's Gardens**

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the application and explained the following key issues for consideration:

- Principle of the proposal;
- Design, massing and scale;
- Impact on amenity;
- Environmental protection;
- Climate change; and
- Pre-Application Community Consultation.

She stated that the proposed building was considered to integrate within the local context and the existing GAG, and was modest in scale and massing which ensured that it did not dominate the residential uses nearby.

She reported that there had been no objections from consultees or third parties and that a response was outstanding from Environmental Health following the submission of a Noise Impact Assessment and Generic Quantitative Rise Assessment.

She stated that, having regard to the Development Plan and material considerations, it was recommended that planning permission was granted, subject to conditions.

The Committee agreed to approve the application, subject to conditions and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and to deal with any other issues that might arise, including those raised in

**Meeting of Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 14th May, 2024**

the further consultation responses from Environmental Health, provided that the issues were not substantive.

LA04/2024/0168/F - Demolition of detached garage and erection of single storey rear/side extension - 26 Eastleigh Drive

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the application to the Committee and explained that, due to the minor nature of the proposal, no consultation had been required and that no third-party representations had been received.

She stated that, having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the proposal had been considered acceptable and it was recommended that planning permission would be granted, subject to conditions.

The Committee agreed to approve the application, subject to conditions and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and to deal with any other matters that might arise prior to issuing the decision, provided that they were not substantive.

Restricted Items

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

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

LDP SA Scoping Report

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an update on the preparation of the Sustainability Appraisal of the draft Local Policies Plan 2035, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report, 2024.

The Committee noted the report.

Chairperson

Standards and Business Committee

Thursday, 23rd May, 2024

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM

Members present: Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson);
Aldermen Lawlor and Rodgers; and
Councillors Abernethy, Bradley, M. Donnelly,
P. Donnelly, D. Douglas, Duffy, Groogan, Kelly,
Magee, Maghie, F. McAteer, McCormick,
McDowell and R. McLaughlin.

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

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McCullough and Councillors Lyons and G. McAteer.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 30th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 7th May.

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 3rd June:

Notice of Motion - High Costs of Childcare

The Committee agreed that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Doherty and seconded by Councillor de Faoite, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restriction to be placed on the number of speakers.

**Standards and Business Committee,
Thursday, 23rd May, 2024**

Notice of Motion - Ireland's Ancient East

Proposal

Moved by Councillor McDowell,
Seconded by Alderman Lawlor,

That the motion be rejected.

Amendment

Moved by Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor R. Laughlin,

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

On a vote by show of hands, eleven Members voted for the amendment and six against and it was declared carried.

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

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McKeown and seconded by Councillor de Faoite, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restriction to be placed on the number of speakers.

Notice of Motion - Going for Growth Strategy

The Committee agreed that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Smyth and seconded by Councillor Flynn, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restriction to be placed on the number of speakers.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Official Announcements (Councillor R. McLaughlin to raise)

In relation to the volume of Official Announcements being received during Council Meetings, Councillor McLaughlin requested that options be explored on how the purpose of Official Announcements could be better utilised.

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future Committee to outline options in relation to a potential new procedure for raising Official Announcements during Council Meetings.

Chairperson