

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Wednesday, 1st November, 2017
at 6.00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); the High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, McKee, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Beattie, Bell, Bunting, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds, McVeigh, Milne, Mullan, Newton, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Reynolds and Walsh.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman R. Patterson and Councillors Boyle and Howard.

Declarations of Interest

Alderman Kingston declared an interest whilst the minute of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee under the heading "City Centre Social Outcomes Fund Update – Proposed Recasting to Support the City's Growing Tourism Infrastructure" was being discussed, in that he was on the Board of the Argyle Business Centre, which was associated with the Shankill Mission hotel development project, and took no part in the discussion.

Minutes of Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister),
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland) and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 2nd October and the special meeting of the Council of 2nd October be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

New Member of the Council

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, welcomed Councillor Órla Nic Biorna, who had replaced former Councillor Austin, to her first meeting of the Council.

Congratulations

At the request of Councillor Magennis, the Council agreed that the Lord Mayor forward to Katie Taylor a letter congratulating her on her recent success in becoming the WBA Lightweight boxing champion of the world.

Request to Address the Council

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Ms. E. O'Keefe, the Chairperson of the Council's Youth Forum, seeking approval for two young people to address the Council in advance of the motion on voting rights for sixteen year olds which Councillor O'Hara would be proposing later in the meeting.

The Council acceded to the request and Ms. Megan McConnell and Ms. Tara Grace Connolly, representing the Council's Youth Forum and the Northern Ireland Youth Forum respectively, were welcomed to the meeting.

Ms. McConnell informed the Council that both the Council's Youth Forum and the Northern Ireland Youth Forum played an active role in highlighting issues such as poverty, homelessness, mental health, marriage equality and Irish language rights. She pointed out that young people had demonstrated continually that they were competent and capable of contributing effectively to society, yet they had no input into the electoral process, which often dictated the course of their lives.

Ms. Connolly explained that a sixteen-year-old person could, for example, marry, work, pay taxes, join the Armed Forces and consent to life altering medical treatment but, importantly, they were unable to vote. She referred to the fact that the majority of sixteen and seventeen year olds had been in favour of remaining within the European Union and that research had indicated that, had they been entitled to vote, that would have been reflected within the Referendum result. She added that, despite the fact that the Northern Ireland Assembly had, on 6th November, 2012, extended voting rights to sixteen year olds, that had yet to be implemented and urged Political Parties to call upon the Secretary of State and the Government to progress the issue.

Ms. Connolly and Ms. McConnell were thanked by the Lord Mayor and they retired from the meeting.

The Council noted the information which had been provided and that Members would have an opportunity to discuss the issue later in the meeting.

Change of Membership on Outside Body

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Ulster Unionist Party indicating that it wished to replace Alderman Rodgers with the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Copeland, on the Grand Opera House Trust.

The Council approved the change.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Alderman Convery,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 20th October, omitting the decision under the heading “City Centre Social Outcomes Fund Update – Proposed Recasting to Support the City’s Growing Tourism Infrastructure”, which, in accordance with Standing Order 47 and Section 41(1)(b) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, has been called-in, be approved and adopted.

Request for a Matter to be Taken Back for Further Consideration

Féile an Phobail 30th Anniversary/Birthday Events

Councillor Beattie requested that the Chairperson agree to the minute of the meeting under the heading “Féile an Phobail 30th Anniversary/Birthday Events” being taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

The Chairperson acceded to the request but it was declined by the Council.

Amendment

Féile an Phobail 30th Anniversary/Birthday Events

Moved by Councillor Beattie,
Seconded by Councillor Corr,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 20th October, under the heading “Féile an Phobail 30th Anniversary/Birthday Events”, be referred back to the Committee for further consideration.

On a recorded vote, twenty-four Members voted for the amendment and thirty-two against and it was declared lost.

<u>For 24</u>	<u>Against 32</u>
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Bell, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, Milne, Nic Biorna, O'Donnell, O' Hara and Walsh.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, McKee, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Bunting, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Long, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds, Mullan, Newton, Nicholl, O'Neill and Reynolds.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 20th October were thereupon approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Alderman Sandford,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 10th and 18th October be approved and adopted.

Anti-Social Behaviour in Parks and Open Spaces

At the request of Councillor Bunting, the Chief Executive confirmed that the report on the additional preventative measures which could be implemented in the Council's parks to address anti-social behaviour, which the Committee, at the special meeting on 18th October, had agreed would be submitted to a future meeting, should examine the potential for undertaking an advertising campaign to raise awareness amongst parents of the need to monitor the whereabouts of their children at all times.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the meetings of the People and Communities Committee of 10th and 18th October were approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor O'Donnell,
Seconded by Councillor Walsh and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th October be approved and adopted.

Licensing Committee

Moved by Alderman Spence,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 18th October, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Lyons,
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown and

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

Notices of Motion

(The Lord Mayor, Councillor McAllister, left the Chamber whilst the first motion was being discussed and was replaced by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Copeland.)

Voting Rights for 16 Year Olds

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor O'Hara proposed:

"This Council calls upon the British Government and the Secretary of State to bring forward legislation to extend the right to vote to everyone aged 16 or over, in time for the 2019 Local Government elections and for all future Assembly and Westminster elections and any referenda."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Nic Biorna.

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

<u>For 39</u>	<u>Against 13</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); Aldermen Browne, Convery, McGimpsey and Rodgers; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Beattie, Bell, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Corr Johnston, Dudgeon, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Hutchinson, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McReynolds, McVeigh, Milne, Mullan, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill and Walsh.	The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Kingston, McCoubrey, L. Patterson, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Bunting, Craig, Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, Newton and Reynolds.

Universal Credit

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

“This Council notes the well documented and evidenced hardship caused in England, Scotland and Wales by the roll out of Universal Credit.

The Council calls for an immediate halt to the rollout of Universal Credit across Northern Ireland, to protect the most vulnerable and the disadvantaged from poverty, rent arrears and homelessness and calls for all Political Parties to work to deliver a system that is fair, practical and compassionate.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to write to and seek a meeting with the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Communities about the implications of Universal Credit.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Kyle.

During his speech, the proposer, Councillor Attwood, requested that a report be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the possibility of the Council developing a Universal Credit plan, in order to direct people to organisations providing support services such as advice, food banks, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, housing rights, debt advice and employment and training.

The Council agreed to this course of action.

At the request of Alderman Rodgers, the proposer agreed to amend his motion to the effect that the Council would seek a meeting also with the Secretary of State.

The motion, as amended, was thereupon put to the meeting and passed.

Belfast Energy Transition Strategy

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

“This Council acknowledges the damage and disruption caused by Storm Ophelia, which additionally directly caused the death of three people. The insurance costs alone associated with Storm Ophelia are estimated to reach ten million pounds, and the economic and social consequences of school and business closures are as yet unquantified.

Whilst the science is not yet clear on whether Storm Ophelia is directly attributable to climate change, the majority of scientists agree that irregular weather patterns will become more frequent and more disruptive and that adverse weather events, as characterised by storm Ophelia, will become more commonplace as climate change progresses.

Whilst noting the devastating impact of climate change on the local people and economy and the pivotal role that carbon plays in global climate change, this Council, therefore, agrees to review and expedite previously-agreed plans for a Belfast Energy Transition Strategy.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

EU Single Market

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

"This Council recognises the critical importance of the EU Single Market to the economy of the City of Belfast and calls for a special deal to be put in place for Northern Ireland in context of Brexit that would facilitate continued participation in this Single Market.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to write to the UK Government and European Commission Taskforce in this regard."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lyons.

On a recorded vote, twenty-eight Members voted for the motion and seventeen against, with one 'no vote', and it was declared carried.

<u>For 28</u>	<u>Against 17</u>	<u>No Vote 1</u>
Alderman Convery; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Beattie, Bell, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McReynolds, McVeigh, Milne, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill and Walsh.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Kingston, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Bunting, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Hussey, Johnston, Newton and Reynolds.	Councillor Collins

The Chief Executive confirmed that the correspondence which had been received in response to a request within Councillor McAteer's motion, which had been passed by the Council on 1st June, to meet with the President of the European Commission, the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach to press the case for special designated status for Northern Ireland, would be circulated to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in advance of its special meeting on 21st November on Brexit.

Minibus Driver Licensing

At the request of Councillor Reynolds, the Council agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 13(i), that the motion standing in his name be withdrawn from the agenda.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson