

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 4th December, 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, R. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, 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, McCusker, 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

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Howard.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were reported.

Minutes of the 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 1st November be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

Congratulations

The Lord Mayor referred to the fact that the Belfast Waterfront Hall had recently attained a national award as the United Kingdom's Best Event Space for

2017 and, on behalf of the Council, congratulated the Managing Director and staff of the venue on their outstanding achievement.

At the request of the High Sheriff, the Lord Mayor agreed to forward, on behalf of the Council, a letter congratulating His Royal Highness, Prince Harry, and Ms. Meghan Markle on their recent engagement.

Request to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from the BBC seeking to film part of the meeting.

The Council agreed to accede to the request.

Request to Address the Council

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Mr. Jimmy Kelly, Regional Secretary of Unite the Union, seeking approval for representatives of the Union to address the Council in advance of the motion on Bombardier, which Councillor Heading would be proposing later in the meeting.

The Council acceded to the request and Mr. R. Corbett and Ms. G Partridge were welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Corbett informed the Council that he was employed as a tool maker in Bombardier's main factory and that employees in many departments, including the one in which he worked, had, in the previous week, been informed that their jobs were at risk. He explained that Bombardier employed currently over 4,500 workers, the majority of whom worked and lived in the Belfast area. The company offered high quality engineering opportunities and had gained a worldwide reputation for its work in engineering, manufacturing and aircraft assembly. It offered also graduate programmes through local universities and provided employment for many sub-contractors across Northern Ireland. He stressed that the tariffs being proposed by the United States Department of Commerce on Bombardier's C-Series aircraft were anti-competitive and that, if implemented, they would have a detrimental effect upon current and future jobs and the Northern Ireland economy.

Ms. Partridge reported that she acted as Chair of Unite the Union's Shop Stewards' Committee in Bombardier. She explained that, over the years, the company had invested significantly in developing its workforce and provided examples of various training initiatives which had been implemented. She highlighted the fact that approximately 25% of the workforce were employed currently on the C-Series project and that that figure had been due to rise to around 60% within the next five years. However, the proposed 300% tariff being proposed by the United States Department of Commerce on imports of that aircraft, which she pointed out was more than twice the tariff which Boeing had sought initially and was without justification, would, effectively, prevent its sales in the United States and make its manufacture uncompetitive. Should that lead to Bombardier reducing its operation in Northern Ireland, it would have a devastating impact upon employees and the local economy generally.

Accordingly, she invited the Council to support Councillor Heading's motion.

Mr. Corbett and Ms. Partridge were thanked by the Lord Mayor.

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

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Alderman Browne,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th November be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Announcement by the European Commission

Moved by Councillor Dudgeon,
Seconded by Alderman McGimpsey and

Resolved - That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th November, under the heading "Announcement by the European Commission", be amended to provide for the addition of the following wording: "The Council calls on the EU Director-General for Education and Culture, Martine-Reicherts, to review her decision to exclude the bid by Belfast City Council and Derry and Strabane District Council for European Capital of Culture 2023. The Council agrees to organise a cross-party delegation, including representatives from our partner city and from the business and voluntary sectors, to travel to Brussels to meet with the relevant EU body with a view to seeing the decision overturned."

Amendment

Cash Flow for Events – Councillor McVeigh

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Alderman Spence,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th November, under the heading "Cash Flow for Events – Councillor McVeigh", be rejected and accordingly the Council agrees not to proceed with the cash flow facility.

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

<u>For 27</u>	<u>Against 31</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, McKee, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Boyle, Bunting, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Mullan, Newton and Reynolds.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Beattie, Bell, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Heading, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds, McVeigh, Milne, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O' Hara, O'Neill and Walsh.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendment, the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 24th November 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 7th and 13th October be approved and adopted.

Update on the Affordable Warmth Scheme

At the request of Councillor McCusker, the Council agreed that the Department for Communities be invited to meet at the earliest opportunity with the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson and other Members of the Committee in order to discuss the resourcing of the Affordable Warmth Scheme, in light of the increasing demand for assistance under the scheme.

Congratulations

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Council, congratulated those officers who had contributed to the Cregagh Green attaining a Fields in Trust award and to the Lower Oldpark Community Association and the Upper Springfield Youth Programme each securing a Pride of Place award.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the meetings of the People and Communities Committee of 7th and 13th October were approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor O'Donnell,
Seconded by Alderman Kingston and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 8th and 21st November be approved and adopted.

Licensing Committee

Moved by Alderman Spence,
Seconded by Councillor Hussey and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 9th November, 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 Armitage and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 14th November, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.
Shareholders' Committee

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee of 6th November be approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

Belfast's Historic Environment

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

"Belfast boasts a rich historic environment that is both distinctive and irreplaceable. The continued care and conservation of these unique assets and their re-use as part of the heritage-led regeneration of Belfast will not only recognise the intrinsic value of the City's historic built environment but also ensure that these invaluable assets will

significantly contribute to prosperity, culture, pride of place, tourist income generation and a general sense of health and wellbeing.

This Council will encourage imaginative and creative approaches to Belfast's conservation and heritage assets to ensure that they are protected, re-purposed and developed as an important driver for sustainable economic development and job creation, the provision of much needed housing, community and cultural animation and the creation of environments and public spaces that citizens and visitors alike can enjoy.

This Council will work to inform, shape and embed imaginative and creative approaches to Belfast's conservation and heritage assets in the outworking of the Belfast Agenda, the Local Development Plan, the European Capital of Culture, Belfast City Deal and the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Campbell.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

Not-For-Profit Energy Company

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

"This Council notes that the Scottish Government and a number of local authorities have established not-for-profit energy firms in search of new revenue, to restore faith in public services and tackle fuel poverty.

The Council notes that the first and best-known publicly owned energy companies, Robin Hood Energy in Nottingham and Bristol Energy, have given consumers, particularly those on low incomes, more choice and the option of a supplier whose only job is to secure the lowest price for consumers.

The Council agrees to explore the potential benefits of establishing a Belfast City Council owned not-for-profit energy company to tackle fuel poverty in Belfast."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Milne

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

Bombardier

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

"This Council recognises the vital significance of Bombardier Aerospace, formerly Shorts, for the Northern Ireland economy, with four thousand three hundred workers directly employed and a further twenty thousand employed indirectly in the supply chain or through induced economic activity. The Council express its profound concern

at the threat posed to these jobs by the recent protectionist judgements by the US International Trade Commission which effectively placed a 300% surcharge on the C Series aircraft in an attempt to close the US market.

The Council expresses its full solidarity with the workforce and company at this time of trial and agrees to write directly to the Prime Minister, Theresa May MP to request that the government make it known to Boeing that if they do not withdraw their case then they will be excluding themselves from UK procurement opportunities both current and future. The Council also agrees to write to the European Trade Commissioner to request an immediate escalation through existing trade disputes mechanisms.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Kyle.

On a recorded vote, fifty-six Members voted for the motion and none against and it was declared carried.

<u>For 56</u>	<u>Against 0</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Browne, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, R. 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, McCusker, McDonough- Brown, McReynolds, McVeigh, Milne, Mullan, Newton, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Reynolds and Walsh.	

Homelessness

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

“This Council notes the concerns around the lack of suitable provision for families and individuals who present as homeless, requiring temporary accommodation. With an increase of 32% in the number of

people presenting as homeless in the past five years and a recent report that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) strategy at reducing homelessness has had limited success, the Council calls on NIHE to undertake an urgent review of the current provision. The Council also notes that we still have rough sleepers in the city and calls on all organisations, including the Council and NIHE, to meet urgently to ensure their needs are being met as the weather conditions continue to decline."

The motion was seconded by Councillor O'Neill.

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

Education Support

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

"This Council notes the continued Tory led cuts to the Department of Education's budget and the resulting devastating impact on the Education Authorities, schools and youth providers. Schools, youth providers, children, parents and the wider community are now at breaking point with continuing threats to services. The Council strongly opposes these cuts.

The Council also notes the work being carried out by the various Partnership Boards and schools across Belfast to improve standards of literacy and numeracy amongst our young people, particularly those living in areas of high social deprivation. The Council commends the Partnership Boards and schools for their successes to date in improving standards of literacy and numeracy, especially at GCSE level, through their various Easter schools, mid-term schools, community based classes and efforts outside of the classroom. It should be noted that the Council itself also provides educational support through homework clubs (for 5-11 years old) and parent and toddler groups.

For these reasons, this Council agrees to task Council officers to investigate ways in which it can contribute to the continued improvement and academic achievement in literacy and numeracy within local communities and will look at how it can help to overcome various barriers to learning at post primary level."

The motion was seconded by Councillor O'Hara.

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

Amendment to Standing Order 30

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

"This Council agrees that 'Standing order 30: "A Member shall not impute motives or use offensive expression in reference to any Member of the Council" be amended to read: "A Member shall not impute motives or use offensive expression in reference to any persons or sections of society, that shows contempt on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious belief, age or disability".

The motion was seconded by Councillor O'Neill.

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

Support for Positive Life HIV Charity

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

"This Council notes the increasing number of people diagnosed with HIV in Belfast year on year; is concerned at the levels of stigma experienced by people living with HIV; acknowledges the need for a new campaign to promote awareness and prevention, specifically tailored to Northern Ireland and the City of Belfast; commends the work of Belfast based, Positive Life, Northern Ireland's only dedicated charity working to support people diagnosed with HIV; and agrees to support this organisation in the development of a centre of excellence at its new headquarters."

The motion was seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown.

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

Progressive Taxation System

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

"This Council notes the recent revelations surrounding the 'Paradise papers', which exposed the extent to which some of the richest sections of society continue to avoid paying taxes. The Council is outraged at this practice and views it as economic injustice. Moreover, the Council is deeply concerned with plans to lower corporation tax as indicated in the Fresh Start Agreement. The Council is opposed to any future plans to lower the rate of corporation tax in the North, and instead calls for a more progressive taxation system which would better fund public services."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Milne.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Armitage,
Seconded by Councillor Nicholl,

That the motion, as proposed by Councillor Collins, be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the word “injustice” and the insertion of the following: “and calls for a more progressive taxation system that would better fund public services.”

On a recorded vote, forty-one Members voted for the amendment and five against, with four ‘no votes’, and it was declared carried.

<u>For 41</u>	<u>Against 5</u>	<u>No Vote 4</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Kingston, McCoubrey, L. Patterson, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Beattie, Bell, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Corr, Craig, Dorrian, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds, McVeigh, Newton, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Reynolds and Walsh	Councillors Collins, Corr Johnston, Hutchinson, Kyle and Milne.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); Alderman Rodgers; and Councillors Dudgeon and Johnston.

The following motion, as amended, was thereupon put to the Council and passed:

“This Council notes the recent revelations surrounding the ‘Paradise papers’, which exposed the extent to which some of the richest sections of society continue to avoid paying taxes. The Council is outraged at this practice and views it as economic injustice and calls for a more progressive taxation system that would better fund public services.”

Lord Mayor
Chairperson