

# Council

## SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Wednesday, 2nd August, 2017  
at the hour of 6.30 o'clock p.m., pursuant to Notice.

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

### Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland), Alderman McKee and Councillors Armitage, Bell, Johnston, McDonough-Brown and Nicholl.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### Requests to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive reported that requests had been received from a number of broadcasting companies to film the meeting.

The Council agreed to accede to the requests.

### Notice of Motion

#### Removal of Bonfire Materials

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

“This Council gives permission to our Council officers to remove bonfire materials or employ contractors to facilitate the removal of bonfire materials from Council sites and other sites which belong to Statutory Agencies and those which are in private ownership.”

Prior to addressing the Council, the proposer sought its approval to alter his motion to provide for the deletion of everything after the words “This Council” and the insertion of the following:

“is opposed to bonfires where they present a threat to life, to property, to the environment, where they cause damage to public amenities and where they facilitate hate crime activities.

On the basis of these concerns, this Council gives permission to our Council officers to remove bonfire materials or employ contractors to facilitate the removal of bonfire materials from Council sites and other sites which belong to Statutory Agencies and those which are in private ownership.”

The Council declined his request.

On a recorded vote, thirty-two Members voted to accept the revised wording and twenty-one against and it was declared carried.

<b><u>For 32</u></b>	<b><u>Against 21</u></b>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); Alderman Convery; and Councillors Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Boyle, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McCusker, McReynolds, McVeigh, Milne, Mullan, O’Donnell, O’Hara, O’Neill and Walsh.	The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Browne, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Bunting, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, Kyle, Newton and Reynolds.

The motion, as altered, was seconded by Councillor Hargey.

Councillor Collins requested that the proposer amend his motion to provide for the insertion of the following wording between the first and second paragraphs:

“In the event of Belfast City Council acting to remove bonfire material, the Council urges officers to engage in a community consultation, which would include a survey of local residents of the affected areas and take into consideration the opinions of trades unions which represent Council staff affected, in order to ensure support and cohesion for these efforts.”

The Chief Executive explained that the proposed amendment could incur additional expenditure for the Council in terms of the requirement to undertake a community consultation process for each bonfire.

Accordingly, the Lord Mayor ruled that, under the provisions of Standing Order 13 (I), the proposed amendment was not competent.

**Amendment**

Moved by Alderman R. Patterson,  
Seconded by Councillor Bunting,

That the motion standing in the name of Councillor McVeigh, as altered, be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words "This Council" and the insertion of the following: ",in the interest of transparency, requires the review of the bonfire programme to be completed and published before further consideration is given as to whether bonfire materials should be removed from any bonfire sites with local agreement."

On a vote by show of hands twenty-one Members voted for the proposal and thirty-two against and it was declared lost.

At the request of Councillor Long, the proposer agreed to amend his motion to include the following wording at the end of the final paragraph: "Any new policy should be considered through the upcoming review, with the Committee process respected, and that this review should take account of other parallel processes."

Accordingly, on a vote by show of hands thirty-one Members voted for the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McVeigh and seconded by Councillor Hargey, as amended, and twenty-one against and it was declared carried:

"This Council is opposed to bonfires where they present a threat to life, to property, to the environment, where they cause damage to public amenities and where they facilitate hate crime activities.

On the basis of these concerns, this Council gives permission to our Council officers to remove bonfire materials or employ contractors to facilitate the removal of bonfire materials from Council sites and other sites which belong to Statutory Agencies and those which are in private ownership.

Any new policy should be considered through the upcoming review, with the Committee process respected, and that this review should take account of other parallel processes."

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson