

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 5th March, 2018
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); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Baker, Beattie, Boyle, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McConville, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds, Murphy, Newton, Nic Biorna, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Pankhurst, Reynolds and Walsh.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Bunting, Garrett, McCusker, Milne and Nicholl.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest 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 February be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

Welcome

The Lord Mayor welcomed Councillor Canavan, who had replaced former Councillor McVeigh, to her first meeting of the Council.

At the request of Alderman Rodgers, the Council welcomed Ms. L. Hamilton-Sturdy, Head of Marketing and Corporate Communications, to her first meeting of the Council.

Congratulations

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated Councillor McDonough-Brown and his partner, Daniella, on the birth of their daughter, Aoife.

She extended congratulations also to Councillor Nicholl and her husband on the occasion of their recent marriage.

Best Wishes

The Lord Mayor reminded the Members that this Council meeting would be the last at which Mr. D. Durkan, Director of Development, would be in attendance and thanked Mr. Durkan for the contribution which he had made to the work of the Council.

Councillor Hutchinson expressed his thanks Members for the get well messages he had received from Members and officers following his recent operation.

At the request of Alderman Spence, the Lord Mayor agreed to forward a letter to the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games team which would, in April, be competing in the Commonwealth Games 2018 in the Gold Coast, Australia, extending the Council's best wishes to the athletes participating in the Games.

Change of Membership on Committee and Outside Body

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Sinn Fein indicating that it wished Councillor Canavan to replace Councillor Baker on the Licensing Committee and Councillor Nic Biorna on the Belfast PCSP.

The Council approved the aforementioned changes.

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. C. Mac Giolla Bhéin from the organisation Conradh na Gaeilge to address the Council in the context of the motion which Councillor Collins would be proposing later in the meeting on the Irish Language Act.

The Council agreed to accede to the request and Mr. Mac Giolla Bhéin was welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Mac Giolla Bhéin outlined the need for an Irish Language Act and advised that broad support existed for the development of an Irish Language Act from a diverse background to protect the Irish language. He explained that Conradh na Gaeilge sought political party support for the Irish language which belonged to everyone. He suggested that, over 200 years ago, important work had been undertaken by Presbyterians to revive the language and ensure that it would be passed on to future generations and that the tradition was being maintained by the East Belfast Mission and the tourist project organised by Linda Irvine.

He informed Members that, last year, Conradh na Gaeilge had met with leaders of the Political Parties to discuss how the Irish Language could be accommodated and progressed, however, the events of the last few weeks had extinguished the hope that this could be resolved by the Northern Ireland Executive in the short term. He indicated that their campaign would continue and had gained cross party support.

He confirmed that an Irish language community already existed and had grown in the last few years. He advised that Irish Medium Education had grown, with four thousand children being educated in the medium of Irish, and the Gaeltacht Quarter in West Belfast had recently been awarded Network Status. He informed the Members that an Irish Language Act had been promised, as part of the St. Andrews Agreement which had been endorsed by the British and Irish Governments.

He stated that three public consultations had been undertaken, however, an Act had not been implemented. He advised that the most recent consultation had received over 13,000 responses, with 94.7% of responders supporting the implementation of an Irish Language Act. He suggested that an Irish Language Act would afford official recognition to the Irish language and to the Irish speaking Community. As no current legislation existed, the language, community, funding, schemes, schools and classes were dependant on the decisions made by Ministers and Department officials. He suggested also that legislation was required so that those who wished to use the Irish language had the choice and provision to do so. He made the point that that the Council should celebrate diversity over exclusion, celebrate rights and respect, and provide leadership on this issue.

Mr. Mac Giolla Bhéin was 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 Graham,
Seconded by Councillor O'Neill,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th February be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Northern Ireland Local Government Association – Forward Work Plan

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Alderman Spence,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th February, under the heading “Northern Ireland Local Government Association – Forward Work Plan”, be rejected and accordingly the Council agrees not to pay the annual subscription fee of £71,467 to renew its membership of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).

On a vote by show of hands, sixteen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-six against and it was declared lost.

Amendment

Motion – Transparency of Council Funding

Moved by Councillor McDonough-Brown,
Seconded by Councillor Long,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th February, under the heading “Motion – Transparency of Council Funding”, be rejected and accordingly the Council agrees to progress the actions as outlined in the motion.

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

<u>For 15</u>	<u>Against 37</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); Alderman Convery; Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Boyle, Collins, Corr Johnston, Heading, Hutchinson, Kyle, Long, Lyons, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds and O’Neill.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); Aldermen Browne, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Baker, Beattie, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Corr, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Johnston, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McConville, Murphy, Newton, Nic Biorna, O’Donnell, O’ Hara, Pankhurst, Reynolds and Walsh.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th January were thereupon approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Alderman Sandford,
Seconded by Alderman McCoubrey,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 31st January and 6th February be approved and adopted.

Affordable Warmth – Consultation Response

At the request of Councillor Carson, the Council, in relation to fuel poverty and the cuts to the neighbourhood renewal budget, agreed that a letter be sent to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Communities requests that the Department ring-fence the 2018 - 2019 budget to maintain the current level of spend for neighbourhood renewal, in line with the decision that had been made by the previous Minister, the direction given by the Acting Head of the Civil Service, and its legal obligations.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 31st January and 6th February were thereupon approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor O'Donnell,
Seconded by Councillor Magee,

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 7th and 21st February be approved and adopted.

Licensing Committee

Moved by Alderman Spence,
Seconded by Councillor O'Hara,

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

Planning Committee

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 13th February, omitting matters in respect of which the Council had 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 Dorrian and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee of 19th February, omitting matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

Criminalisation of Abortion

In the absence of Councillor Nicholl, the Council agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 13(i), that the notice of motion standing in her name be withdrawn from the agenda.

**Review of the Council's Code of
Practice on Smoking at Work**

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

"This Council will review and revise its Code of Practice on Smoking at Work on the use of e-cigarettes, in light of the new research published by Public Health England."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Kyle.

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

Epilepsy Support

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

"This Council acknowledges this year's 'Purple Day' on Monday, 26th March, and recognises the challenges that many people in Belfast, of all ages, face living with epilepsy in all its different forms.

The Council will commit to ensuring that proper information is circulated to its staff and through its network of centres and offices, to promote a better understanding of the condition and provide advice on how to react if an epileptic situation arises which requires assistance."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

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

Establishment of a Brexit Standing Committee

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

"The referendum result to leave the European Union presents unprecedented political, social and economic challenges for our city, for the North of Ireland and indeed the entire island.

Belfast, as a city, as demonstrated in motions adopted by this Council, supported remaining within the EU whilst also supporting the provision of special status for the North and remaining in the 'single market'.

As one of the world's one-hundred resilient cities, with economic resilience being a key focus, it is imperative that we understand the full implications that Brexit could bring.

To enable this, the Council will immediately establish a formal Brexit Standing Committee, made up of Elected Members, with appropriate officer support, to undertake all necessary work required to bring forward a report with recommendations to explore the impact of Brexit on Belfast and its citizens."

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.

All-Ireland Boxing Championships

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

“Belfast has produced world class athletes through the sport of amateur boxing who have consistently succeeded through every level of the sport and brought recognition to the city of Belfast through their successes.

We, as a City, are very proud of the achievements of boxers from this City and should seek to build on these successes by showcasing the talent this vibrant sport has to offer across Ireland.

This Council agrees to engage with the Irish Athletic Boxing Association to explore the possibility of bringing the All Ireland Boxing Championships to the City of Belfast.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Magennis.

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

Irish Language Act

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

"This Council notes the positive revival of the Irish language in Belfast over the past number of decades. Today, the city of Belfast has a historically large concentration of Irish speakers, which includes a growing number of Irish medium schools, providing for thousands of pupils and thousands more residents who speak the Irish language on a daily basis.

The Council also recognises the impressive grassroots movement that has developed in recent years calling for an Irish Language Act, in order to safeguard and strengthen rights for the Irish language community, a call that has received widespread political support.

The Council believes that such a move is crucial in delivering fair and proper treatment for the Irish language community and supports the introduction of an Irish Language Act."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lyons.

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

<u>For 30</u>	<u>Against 22</u>
<p>The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); Alderman Convery; Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Baker, Beattie, Boyle, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McConville, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds, Murphy, Nic Biorna, O'Donnell, O' Hara, O'Neill and Walsh.</p>	<p>The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); Aldermen Browne, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, Kyle, Johnston, Newton, Pankhurst, and Reynolds .</p>

Neighbourhood Renewal

In the absence of Councillor Milne, the Council agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 13(i), that the notice of motion standing in her name be withdrawn from the agenda.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson