

# 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 monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall on Thursday, 1st November, 2018 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 - 12)
5. Official Announcements
6. Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 13 - 38)
7. People and Communities Committee (Pages 39 - 64)
8. City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 65 - 94)
9. Licensing Committee (Pages 95 - 98)
10. Planning Committee (Pages 99 - 116)
11. Brexit Committee (Pages 117 - 130)
12. Notices of Motion

a) "On the Ball" Campaign

Proposed by Councillor O'Neill,

Seconded by Councillor Nic Biorna,

"This Council supports the 'On the Ball' campaign, the aim of which is to provide free sanitary products in as many sporting grounds and public buildings as possible to combat the ever growing issue of period poverty.

As an initial step, the Council will examine the feasibility of providing these products in the City Hall, in all Council offices, and, in keeping with the 'On The Ball' campaign, also look at the feasibility of providing free sanitary products in our sporting and leisure facilities.

It should be the norm in schools, universities colleges, workplaces, football grounds, concert venues for free access to sanitary product provision to help combat the ever growing issue of period poverty."

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the  
Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

b) Climate Change

Proposed by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McDonough-Brown,

Seconded by Councillor McReynolds,

"This Council agrees that Climate Change is one of the biggest global challenges of our time, affirms that the Council has an important leadership role in creating a low carbon future and, accordingly, agrees that officers bring back a report on the possibilities of Belfast City Council becoming a Carbon Neutral Council, including possible timescales for achieving carbon neutrality and the deployment of electric vehicles in service of this aim."

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the  
Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

c) Social Housing

Proposed by Councillor Heading,

Seconded by Councillor McCusker,

“This Council congratulates the children and families of the Build Homes Now and Homes Now campaign on the production of their film ‘Waiting on a Childhood’, which documents their experiences and campaign to tackle homelessness.

The Council recognises that we are in the midst of a housing and homelessness crisis.

The Council recognises the impact of homelessness on the children of Belfast. Recent figures from the Housing Executive show that there are at least 20,950 children on the housing waiting list in total. At least 13,636 of these children are said to be in ‘housing stress’ and at least 11,372 are full duty housing applicants. On three separate occasions in the last 10 years, the United Nations has intervened, urging the Westminster Government and the devolved Stormont Executive to intensify their efforts to address and overcome persistent religious inequalities in social housing.

The Council calls upon the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to work with the Council to use all available powers, including powers of vesting, zoning and planning, to ensure that housing provision meets current and projected needs in the city of Belfast.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the  
Planning Committee)**

d) Belfast Central Library

Proposed by Councillor Lyons,

Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

“This Council:

- congratulates the Belfast Central Library on the recent celebration of its 130th Anniversary;
- notes that the Belfast Central Library has for 130 years provided free public access to a wide range of social, cultural and educational material and services, and is the oldest civic building in Belfast to continue to serve in its original function;
- further notes that the Belfast Central Library is uniquely positioned to contribute to the regeneration of its locality and enhance opportunities provided by recent nearby developments such as the relocation of the Ulster University and the cultural provisions of the Cathedral Quarter; and
- agrees that an all-party delegation meet with representatives of Libraries NI and the Department for Communities, in firm support of the proposals to have the Belfast Central Library restored and extended.”

**(To be debated by the Council)**

e) No Grey Zone Campaign

Proposed by Councillor Nicholl,

Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McDonough-Brown,

"This Council notes the PSNI led "No Grey Zone" awareness campaign, which clearly sets out what constitutes sexual assault, debunks myths and provides information on available support.

The Council believes that everyone in our City should feel supported and empowered to speak out when a sexual assault occurs. Accordingly, the Council declares every Belfast City Council premise to be a #NoGreyZone and resolves to arrange a cross-party delegation, to include Council Communications officers, to meet with the PSNI, prosecutors, sexual violence charities and student representatives to identify how to effectively support the campaign in Belfast City Council premises."

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the  
Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

f) Household Recycling

Proposed by Councillor McReynolds,

Seconded by Councillor Long,

“This Council is committed to increasing household recycling across the city of Belfast; notes the colossal impact which waste is having on our oceans, cities and countrysides; welcomes the recent waste consultation; and will commit to introducing glass recycling in households across the city of Belfast as soon as possible.”

**(To be referred without discussion to the  
People and Communities Committee)**

g) Definition of Antisemitism

Proposed by Councillor Craig,

Seconded by Councillor Boyle,

“In recognition of the 80th Anniversary of Kristallnacht, 9th-10th November 1938, this Council follows the example shown by other public bodies in the United Kingdom and adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism, which is:

*‘Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.’*

Furthermore, the Council agrees that this definition and associated examples of anti-Semitism, published by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance on 26th May 2016, are fully incorporated into this Council’s Good Relations strategy and associated policies.”

**(To be referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee)**

h) Westminster Bills

Proposed by Councillor Dudgeon,

Seconded by Alderman McGimpsey,

“This Council supports the passing into law at Westminster of these two Bills:

- The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) (Northern Ireland) (No. 2) Bill, sponsored by Conor McGinn MP (St Helens North) and scheduled for 2nd reading in the House of Commons on Friday 26th October 2018; and
- The NIO’s Northern Ireland (Executive Formation and Exercise of Functions) Bill with its new clause 7 entitled Equal Rights for People of Northern Ireland, agreed in the House of Commons on 24th October 2018 by 207 votes to 117, against the wishes of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, which new clause reads:
  - (1) In the absence of Northern Ireland Ministers to address the matters identified by recent, current and future court proceedings in relation to the human rights of the people of Northern Ireland, the Secretary of State must issue guidance to senior officers of all Northern Ireland departments which will specify how to exercise their functions in relation to:
    - (a) the incompatibility of the human rights of the people of Northern Ireland with the continued enforcement of sections 58 and 59 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861 with the Human Rights Act 1998, and
    - (b) the incompatibility of the human rights of the people of Northern Ireland with the continued enforcement of section 13(e) of the Matrimonial Causes (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 where they pertain to the provision and management of public services in Northern Ireland.
  - (2) The Secretary of State shall report guidance under this section on a quarterly basis to the House of Commons and set out her plans to address the impact of the absence of Northern Ireland Ministers on human rights obligations within three months of the day on which this Act is passed.”

**(To be debated by the Council)**

i) Welfare Reform

Proposed by Councillor Collins,

Seconded by Councillor Heading,

"This Council notes that this month marks three years since the Northern Ireland Assembly voted to give consent to the Welfare Reform Bill (2015) being taken forward by the Westminster Parliament.

The Council believes that, since then, Welfare Reform has been a disaster for benefit claimants here and has resulted in thousands of our most vulnerable unfairly losing money, through the introduction of PIP, Universal Credit and the Bedroom Tax.

In the absence of an Assembly sitting at Stormont, the Council has an important role to play in articulating the negative impact of welfare reform and benefit cuts in this city. To this end, the Council calls on the British government to immediately halt the roll out of PIP and Universal Credit and to scrap the Bedroom Tax for all benefit claimants."

**(To be debated by the Council)**

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Suzanne Wylie".

Chief Executive

## **Council**

### MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 1st October, 2018  
at 6.00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Hargey) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown); the High Sheriff (Councillor Howard), Aldermen Browne, Convery, Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, L. Patterson, R Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Attwood, Baker, Beattie, Boyle, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McConville, McCusker, McReynolds, Mullan, Murphy, Newton, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, 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 Alderman McGimpsey and Councillors Armitage and McAteer.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

- Councillor Long declared an interest in the Strategic Policy and Resources Minutes – Area Working Update insofar as he was a member of the Bloomfield Church;
- Councillor Reynolds declared an interest in the Strategic Policy and Resources Minutes – Physical Programme Update; and
- Councillor Nicholl declared an interest in relation to the Notice of Motion – Letting Agents' Administration Fees/Applications Fees as she was employed by Queen's University Belfast Students Union who had been involved with the item being considered.

#### **Minutes of the Council**

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Hargey),  
Seconded by the Councillor Corr Johnston and

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st October, 2018**

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 3rd September be taken as read and signed as correct.

**Official Announcements**

**Local Government Commissioner for Standards –  
Suspension of Councillor Bunting**

The Chief Executive reported that Councillor Bunting had been suspended from Belfast City Council for a period of four months by the Local Government Commissioner for Standards whilst it investigated potential breaches of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct. She advised that, whilst the investigation was ongoing, Councillor Bunting would not be permitted to attend any Council meetings, Committee meetings, Working Group meetings or meetings of outside bodies to which she had been appointed as a Council representative.

**East Belfast Football Club – Point of Information**

The Chief Executive advised that JWB Consulting had requested that the Council was informed that JWB Consulting operated as a sole trader and it was in that capacity that it had made the submission in respect of the East Belfast Football Club at the September meeting of Council.

**Expression of Sympathy**

The Lord Mayor referred to the death of the sister of Councillor McAteer, Mrs. Tish Holland, who had been a former Member of Belfast City Council, and extended to Councillor McAteer their deepest condolences.

**Councillor Campbell**

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, extended congratulations to Councillor Campbell on the occasion of her fiftieth birthday.

**International Relations - Nashville**

The Council was advised that Councilman J. Shulman had recently been elected as the Vice Mayor of the Metropolitan Council of Nashville and Davidson County.

The Lord Mayor advised that, given the Sister City relationship between Belfast and Nashville, a letter expressing the Council's congratulations had already been forwarded.

**Death of Lexi Moore**

The Council was advised of the recent death of Mr. Lexi Moore, who was the last survivor from the famous Belfast Celtic Football Team that had defeated Scotland, who had been British champions at the time, during a tour of America in 1949.

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st October, 2018**

Following a request, the Lord Mayor undertook to examine the options available to mark the forthcoming 80th Anniversary of Belfast Celtic Football Team's last domestic match on 26th December 2018.

**Change of Membership on Committee**

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Alliance Party of the following change to Committee Membership:

- Councillor McAllister to replace Councillor Armitage on the People and Communities Committee.

The Council approved the change.

**Request to Address the Council**

The Chief Executive reported that Mr. Malachy Turley and Mr. Charlie McGarry had sought approval to address the Council in advance of the motion on a Homeless Hostel for Females which Councillor McCusker was due to propose later in the meeting.

The Council agreed to receive the representatives and they were welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Turley advised that he wished to raise awareness of the problems faced by those who suffered from alcoholism which was an illness that he himself had suffered from and proceeded to outline his own personal experience.

He stated that it was an illness that had a severe negative impact on the lives of many of our citizens, both male and female, and that problems with alcohol were often part of a person's spiral into homelessness.

Mr. Turley explained that, having experienced alcoholism, he understood the help that people needed and he stated that without that support he could not have turned his life around. He stated that he wished to highlight the plight of vulnerable people in the City, particularly women, who needed specialist assistance to try and overcome addiction and he highlighted that there was currently no specialist all-women's hostel in Belfast and he outlined his desire to have facility, similar to the all-male Rosemount House facility.

Mr. McGarry advised that, he too, wanted to raise as much awareness as possible of the need for a specialist women's hostel in Belfast, a safe space, where females could feel at ease to address their specific addiction. He explained that, in some cases, a mixed environment could hinder chances of recovery and it was his belief that a rehab centre specifically for females could provide a supportive environment for individuals to try and overcome their addiction.

The representatives concluded by asking that the Council to support the campaign to deliver a specialist all-women's hostel in Belfast.

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st October, 2018**

The Lord Mayor thanked the representatives for their attendance 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 matter later in the meeting.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**

Moved by Alderman Rodgers,  
Seconded by Alderman Convery,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Fire at Bank Buildings**

The Lord Mayor again expressed her gratitude to the emergency services who had responded within minutes to the fire, to the staff in the Primark store for having evacuated the building so quickly with no reported injuries and to all the Council staff, external partners and stakeholders who had worked tirelessly in the wake of the event to progress the recovery plan for the area.

A number of Members welcomed the City Recovery Investment Programme that had been approved at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to assist with the medium term recovery of the City and stressed the need to implement the proposed plan as soon as possible given that the Christmas trading period was imminent.

Several Members expressed concern for the surrounding businesses and outlined how businesses outside of the cordon were also being affected as a result of the fire.

The Chief Executive provided assurances around the work that the Council was taking to support city centre economic recovery, she confirmed that discussions were ongoing with the Secretary of State and the Civil Service to ascertain if any funding or assistance could be made available to assist with the long term recovery programme.

The Members were advised that a further meeting was taking place on Tuesday, 2nd October with the various stakeholders regarding the implementation of the medium term recovery plan and the Chief Executive undertook to update the Members on the outcome of this meeting.

**Amendment**

**Personal Independence Payment**

Moved by Councillor O'Hara,  
Seconded by Councillor Garrett and

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st October, 2018**

Resolved – That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st September, under the heading “Motion – Personal Independence Payment”, be amended to provide that the Council agrees that an All-Party Deputation meet with the Department for Communities to discuss the criteria used in respect of Personal Independence Payments.

**Amendment**

**Update on the Implementation of the  
Independent Review of Leisure**

Moved by Councillor Collins,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st September, under the heading “Update on the Implementation of the Independent Review of Leisure”, be amended to allow for the deletion of the following wording “acknowledged the detrimental impact to the Leisure Development Programme, and the rate payer, in the event of the Council bringing the leisure operating mode back in-house, and rule out any further consideration at this time”.

As there was no seconder for the proposal, it was not put to the meeting.

**Amendment**

**Area-Based Festivals**

Moved by Councillor McAllister,  
Seconded by Councillor Long,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st September, under the heading “Area-Based Festivals”, be rejected and accordingly the Council agrees not to release the funding agreements to Belfast South Community Resources and the Ulster Scots Community Network.

On a recorded vote, eleven Members voted for the amendment and thirty-nine against, with four “no votes” and it was declared lost.

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Monday, 1st October, 2018**

<b><u>For 11</u></b>	<b><u>Against 39</u></b>	<b><u>No Vote 4</u></b>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown); The High Sheriff (Councillor Howard); and Councillors Attwood, Heading, Long, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McReynolds, Nicholl and O'Neill.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Hargey); Aldermen Browne, Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, L Patterson, R Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Baker, Beattie, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McConville, Murphy, Newton, Nic Biorna, O'Donnell, O'Hara, Pankhurst and Walsh.	Alderman Convery and Councillors Boyle, Collins and Mullan.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing addition and amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st September were thereupon approved and adopted.

**People and Communities Committee**

Moved by Councillor Nicholl,  
Seconded by Councillor Corr Johnston and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 4th September be approved and adopted.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee**

Moved by Councillor Lyons,  
Seconded by Councillor Kyle and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 12th September be approved and adopted.

**Licensing Committee**

Moved by Councillor O'Hara,  
Seconded by Councillor Dudgeon and

**Meeting of Council,  
Monday, 1st October, 2018**

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 19th September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Planning Committee**

Moved by Councillor Garrett,  
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 11th September, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Brexit Committee**

Moved by Councillor Walsh,  
Seconded by Councillor Carson,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 20th September be approved and adopted.

**Amendment**

**The People's Vote**

Moved by Councillor Nicholl,

That the decision of the Brexit Committee of 20th September, under the heading "Motion Brexit – The People's Vote", be amended to read as follows

*"This Council acknowledges the result of the EU Referendum of June 2016, recognises that the majority of people in Northern Ireland voted to remain and asserts that no one in Belfast voted for a bad deal, or no deal, that could wreck our economy and jeopardise our peace process.*

*The Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State and to the Prime Minister expressing its support for the growing demand for a People's Vote on the final Brexit deal, where no deal has been negotiated and in both cases remaining in the EU must be an option".*

At the request of Councillor O'Hara, the proposer agreed to amend her proposal and include the following wording:

*"based on the bottom line which has been expressed by the majority of elected MLAs which supports:*

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- *no diminution of Human Rights and equality provisions which must be protected;*
- *we cannot withstand exclusion from the single market or customs union;*
- *that we must protect the Good Friday Agreement in all of its parts; and*
- *that the backstop agreed by both the British Government and the EU27 is the bottom line in order to safeguard our political and economic stability now and for the future.”*

The proposal, as amended, was seconded by Councillor Garrett.

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

<b><u>For 31</u></b>	<b><u>Against 21</u></b>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Hargey); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown); The High Sheriff (Councillor Howard); and Alderman Convery; and Councillors Attwood, Baker, Beattie, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Heading, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McConville, McCusker, McReynolds, Murphy, Nic Biorna, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill and Walsh.	Aldermen Browne, Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, L Patterson, R Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Newton and Pankhurst.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Subject to the foregoing amendment in relation to the Motion Brexit – The People's Vote, the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 20th September were thereupon approved and adopted.

**Notices of Motion**

**Robert McCartney Murder**

The Council noted that this notice of motion had been withdrawn from the agenda.

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Monday, 1st October, 2018**

**Greening of Derelict Spaces**

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

*“Creating green spaces in cities produces significant benefits, not least in the area of mental health. Recent research has shown a 40% reduction in feelings of depression and a 50% reduction in feelings of worthlessness among residents, as a result of greening derelict plots of land. The benefits were even greater in areas of deprivation.*

*Simple interventions, such as clearing rubbish, sowing grass, planting trees and marking the boundary with a low fence, can produce health benefits, remove eyesores and reduce antisocial behaviour.*

*This Council will carry out an audit to identify derelict sites in public ownership. It will establish a budget in the coming year and engage with other statutory bodies in order to create a programme of work whereby derelict plots of land are cleared, grassed and fenced, thus enhancing neighbourhoods and improving wellbeing.”*

The motion was seconded by Councillor Attwood.

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

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

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

*“This Council notes the Concluding Observations of the United Nations Committee on the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Following an examination of the UK’s compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in August 2017, this Council is concerned at the lack of actions and consistency from either the Northern Ireland Executive or the UK Government in respect of the Concluding Observations. The Council recognises the valuable contribution that those living with disabilities make to our society and will undertake to prepare a review on how the council meet local obligations within the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.*

*The Council will write to the Prime Minister, Theresa May, seeking an update on the steps which the Government is taking to meet the recommendations contained within the Concluding Observations.”*

The motion was seconded by Councillor McCusker.

After discussion, the motion was put to the meeting and passed.

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**Homeless Hostel for Females**

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

*“This Council notes the growth of alcohol and drug addiction among the female population and the impact which this has on families and communities. The Council further notes the lack of a dedicated hostel and programme to assist in the recovery of women suffering addiction and calls on the relevant statutory funders to recognise the urgent need of a hostel, similar to the all male Rosemount House facility, and to support those organisations involved in delivering this service.*

*The Council, therefore, agrees that an all-party delegation meet with representatives of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Department of Health to discuss the establishment of an all-female hostel.”*

The motion was seconded by Councillor Campbell.

After discussion, the motion was put to the meeting and passed.

**Letting Agents' Administration/Application Fees**

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

*“This Council notes the June 2018 legal case of Loughran v Piney Rentals Limited and F5 Property Limited, which determined that the practice of letting agents charging letting fees, commonly referred to as administration fees or application fees, when renting properties on behalf of a landlord is unlawful under The Commission on Disposals of Land (Northern (Ireland) Order 1986.*

*The Council further notes that this practice has been widespread in the private rental sector in recent times, particularly where the demand for privately rented accommodation is high. Despite the recent legal case, it is apparent that some letting agents are continuing to charge these fees unlawfully.*

*Accordingly, the Council welcomes the decision of the court and agrees to work with other relevant agencies such as Trading Standards, the Association of Residential Letting Agents and Housing Rights to ensure that letting agents are aware that the practice of charging these fees should immediately be ceased and that appropriate action is taken against those who refuse to do so. The Council agrees also to explore ways to let citizens know their rights in relation to this issue, through the media and through the Council's publications.”*

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

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After discussion, the motion was put to the meeting and passed.

Lord Mayor  
Chairperson

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## Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 5th October, 2018

### SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Rodgers (Chairperson);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor McDonough-Brown;  
Aldermen Browne, Convery, Haire and Spence; and  
Councillors Beattie, Carson, Garrett, Graham, Reynolds  
and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillor Lyons.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development  
Ms. G. Long, Commissioner for Resilience;  
Mr. A. Thatcher, Director Planning and Building Control; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of the Councillors Campbell, McAteer and O'Donnell.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Alderman Spence declared an interest in that he was member of the Ulster Reform club.

#### **Restricted Item**

Prior to the report on the proposal for the use of the Primark Fund for businesses being tabled, the Chief Executive advised the Members that there would be some confidential information which would be supplied to the Committee regarding the building and that require would the discussion around the report to be restricted. However, following the Committee's decision and the subsequent release of a press statement, the restriction would be lifted and the report made available to anyone who requested it.

**The information contained in the report relating to 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 of this item as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

**Bank Buildings: Proposal for the use of the  
Primark Fund for Businesses**

The Committee was reminded that, following the fire at the Bank Buildings, Primark had announced on 18th September that it would be *“donating £500,000 to the Council’s recovery programme as a gesture of goodwill. The Council will manage the distribution of the recovery fund to those local businesses impacted by the fire”*.

The Chief Executive then tabled a report for the Committee’s consideration and informed the Members that there were three key assumptions set out in the paper:

- That the priority investment for the £500,000 fund was to be focused on activities to provided direct support to affected businesses, in line with the Primark statement. If the funding was not all allocated to the businesses within the proposed six-week period, the balance may be re-deployed to the wider city centre recovery fund. The decision-making process relating to that balance and the level of consultation related to that decision would be commensurate with the balance available;
- That the resources are to be focused on “local” businesses, in keeping with the Primark statement. In consultation with traders and business representative groups. The following criteria are recommended to define ‘local businesses impacted by the fire’
  - Independent retailers with less than fifty employees
  - Charities
  - Offices which were displaced by the fire
  - Single local franchises with less than fifty employees; and
- That there is a differentiated level of funding for businesses within the cordon compared with those outside the cordon. In these proposals, businesses within the cordon have been allocated a more substantial level of support than those outside the cordon, given the increased level of impact on their business.

The Director of Economic Development then reviewed the proposed boundary for the funds, the eligible businesses, a breakdown of properties, the impact of insurance claims and the process for allocating funding.

That the Committee agreed:

- i. The proposal for the Primark £500,000 towards business recovery; and
- ii. The proposed process for dispersing the money designed and agreed in conjunction with PWC.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
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**Building Status – Update**

The Committee noted an update, which had been provided by the Director Planning and Building Control, on the status of the building and information on the first listed building consent application from Primark.

Chairperson

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# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 19th October, 2018

## MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Rodgers (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Browne, Convery, Haire and Spence;  
Councillors Attwood, Campbell, Carson, Craig,  
Garrett, Graham, Hutchinson, Long, McAllister,  
McAteer, O'Donnell, Reynolds and Walsh.

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown) and Councillor Beattie.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 21st September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Alderman Rodgers declared an interest in relation to item 2e Request for Cash Flow, insofar as he was a shareholder with Glentoran Football Club, and he left the meeting whilst this item was under consideration.

### **Change of Date of Meeting in November**

The Committee was reminded that the rate setting process for the financial year 2019/20 was currently underway. An updated report to highlight key issues and scenarios was scheduled to be submitted to the November meeting of the Committee. In order to allow that report to contain the most current information, it was suggested that the Committee meeting scheduled for November be moved from Friday 16th till Friday 23rd.

The Committee agreed to the change of date.

**Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following five 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 Committee meeting during discussion of these items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

**City Recovery Spend**

Mr J. Greer, Director of Economic Development, Mr A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control, and Mrs L. Toland, Head of Economic and International Development, attended in connection with these items.

**Update on the Status of Bank Buildings**

The Committee noted an update on the status of the Bank Buildings which had been provided by the Chief Executive and the Director of Planning and Building Control.

**Animation Proposals**

The Committee considered a report which, as part of the City Recovery Investment Plan, provided details and proposals in relation to a substantial programme of infrastructure and events for the City Centre to drive footfall into the area and in turn drive spend. The Committee was advised that the programme would run until spring 2019. However, since the Council was purchasing semi-permanent structures, these would be available to the city for future events programmes.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted and agreed the approach for an enhanced level of city infrastructure, programming, and events to accelerate the economic recovery of the City Centre following the Bank Buildings fire;
2. noted that the total cost of the programme was £1.69m of which £900k would be funded through the existing City Recovery Fund;
3. agreed, given the immediate need for implementation, to cash flow the balance of £790k in the first instance;
4. agreed to consider a further report on the level of financial support achieved for the Programme from other funders and any deficit in funding at the Committee in November; and
5. agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (2) (c), that the decisions be not subject to call-in on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or public's interest.

**Update on Primark Fund for Businesses**

The Committee was reminded that, following the fire at the Bank Buildings, Primark had announced on 18th September, 2018 that it would be *“donating £500,000 to Belfast City Council’s recover programme as a gesture of good will. The Council will manage the distribution of the recovery fund to those local businesses impacted by the fire”*.

At its meeting on 5th October, the Committee had agreed a process for the allocation of funds, as well as the funding amounts due to eligible businesses both inside the cordon and outside the cordon but located in those areas worst affected by the fire. Following that decision, officers had been processing the applications for support from affected businesses. The Director of Economic Development tabled a report which provided an update on the status of the applications and approvals to date. The report flagged up also a number of issues that had arisen since the scheme opened.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted the progress in the processing and allocation of the Primark fund for businesses;
- noted the issues that had arisen since the opening of the scheme and the internal management and oversight considerations around these issues;
- agreed that the eligibility criteria be revised to include businesses outside the existing cordon, but which were closed for a number of days following the fire. The additional spend required to fund this change would be sought from Primark. If Primark did not agree to fund, the Council would first look to any underspend in the £500,000. In the event that the £500,000 was depleted, authority was granted to cash flow up to £50,000 from the Council allocation at this stage. An update would be reported back to the Committee in November.
- agreed that requests for support from offices outside the cordon but within the eligible boundary should not be approved; and
- agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (2) (c), that the decisions be not subject to call-in on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or public's interest.

The Committee agreed further that Party Leaders and the Lord Mayor would seek to meet, as a matter of urgency, with both the Secretary of State and the Head of the Civil Service to discuss financial support for this package and the long term recovery of the City Centre.

**Organisational Update**

(Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy, attended in connection with this item)

The Committee was reminded that the Council had embarked on an extensive re-organisation over the last couple of years which had resulted in the creation of new high-

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level structures aligned with the objectives of the Belfast Agenda. Since then, some Directors had been implementing new departmental structures involving the reconfiguration of some posts within budget. In addition, as a result of a number of recruitment exercises that had been undertaken involving the use of external advisors and incorporated various assessment centre exercises, a number of appointments had been made which were aligned with Directorate structures.

The Committee noted the appointments as set out in the report and approved the structural change aligning HR and OD with City and Organisational Strategy Directorate and continued work within Marketing and Communications.

**Review of Council Posts Filled  
on a Temporary Basis**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update on the plan to reduce the number of Council posts currently filled on a temporary basis and agreed the approach to create more permanency.

**Customer Focus Programme Update**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th August, it had considered a report on the progress of the Customer Focus Programme and had approved the design principles emerging from the Discovery Phase and agreed that those should be used to inform the priorities and development of the evolving customer focus implementation plan.

The Committee had also agreed that an Elected Member workshop should be held so that Members could be more fully briefed on the emerging findings from the Discovery Phase and to provide Members also with an opportunity to directly influence and shape the development of the evolving customer focus implementation plan. All Members had been invited to the workshop which had taken place on the 4th October.

The Director of Finance and Resources reported that, to complete the Customer Focus Discovery phase, a final workshop had taken place on 9th October with the Trade Union co-ordinators. The emerging findings from the Discovery Phase had been presented and had been broadly welcomed.

After discussion, the Committee:

- endorsed the findings of the Customer Focus Discovery Phase as presented by Deloitte;
- noted that, as previously agreed, the next step in the Customer Focus programme would be the development of a detailed Customer Focus Implementation Plan. The detailed plan would be presented to the Committee in March 2019 for consideration; and
- agreed that the selection panel for the Programme Director - Customer Focus be comprised of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Committee (or their nominees) and Councillor Hutchinson, who, along with the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and the Director

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of Finance and Resources, would balance the panel in terms of gender and community background.

**Request for Cash Flow**

The Director of Finance and Resources advised the Members that a request for a cash flow had been received from Glentoran Football Club. He outlined the rationale for the request, the amount which had been requested and, should the Council be minded to approve it, how any monies might be recouped by the Council.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that due diligence be undertaken in relation to the request for a cash flow which had been received from Glentoran Football Club.

**Governance/Members' Issues**

**Revision of the Council's Scheme of Allowances**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report on the revision of the Council's Scheme of allowances and that a letter be forwarded to the Local Government Commissioner for Standards to ascertain clarification on the imposing of sanctions on Councillors who had been found to have breached the Northern Ireland Code of Conduct for Councillors, following the response to which, a briefing on the matter be held for all Members of the Council

**Physical Programme and Asset Management**

**Asset Management**

**Licence to Install and Operate  
Water Aerator at Maysfield**

The Committee approved entering into a Licence Agreement with Allstate NI Ltd for the installation and operation of a water aerator in the water inlet at Maysfield, subject to terms being agreed with the Estates Unit and the City Solicitor.

**Proposed Appropriation of Beechvale Farm**

The Committee approved the appropriation of Beechvale Farm by the Property and Projects Section from City and Neighbourhood Services, for holding in the Corporate Landbank.

The Committee agreed also that a report on the land held in the Corporate Landbank be submitted to a future meeting.

**Proposed Lease to Northern Ireland Electricity  
Networks Ltd (NIE) for a Substation and Cable Wayleave  
at Andersonstown Leisure Centre**

The Committee granted the required 999 year lease and cable wayleave to NIE at a nominal/nil rent for the purpose of providing an electricity supply to the new Andersonstown Leisure Centre, with detailed terms to be agreed by the Estates section and the City Solicitor.

**Proposed Acquisition of a Road  
at Sally Gardens, Poleglass**

The Committee approved the proposed acquisition of the roadway known as Sally Gardens Lane from the Department for Communities.

**Jaffe Fountain – Victoria Square**

The Committee approved the extension of the Loan Agreement for the Jaffe Fountain with the owners of Victoria Square for a further period of 15 years from the end of the existing agreement and approved the restoration of the Fountain to provide drinking water in accordance with the terms of the Agreement.

**Area Working Update**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of the area working groups, that is, North Area Working Group 18th September; West Area Working Group, 27th September; and East Area Working Group 4th October.

**Finance, Resources and Procurement**

**Belfast City Council Discretionary Policies  
under the Local Government Pension Scheme  
(Northern Ireland) Regulations and other  
Related Regulations**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th November, 2007, it had agreed the discretionary policies the Council would operate under the provisions of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007. Subsequently, at its meeting on 17th February, 2017, the Committee had agreed the discretionary policies that Belfast City Council would operate in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations applicable at that time.

The Director of Finance and Resources reported that the Council was periodically notified by NILGOSC where specific areas of discretionary policy were required to be updated. Accordingly, the policy statement on discretionary policies had been updated with the following amendments:

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- updated monetary amounts with current figures, where appropriate;
- the inclusion of reference to the 85-year rule, to align the discretionary policy for employees who are active members after the 31 March, 2015 and members who cease active membership after the 31 March, 2015;
- clarification of the treatment of employer contributions in calculating statutory redundancy payments.

The Committee approved the policies on the discretions to be exercised under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations as set out.

**Public Service Pensions Employer  
Cost Cap Consultation**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 To propose a draft response to the Department of Finance consultation on ‘Public Service Pension Valuations and Employer Cost Cap Amendment Directions Northern Ireland.’**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- **Agree that the draft letter (Appendix 2) be issued to the Department of Finance in response to the consultation.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

**3.1 In 2015, following the review by Lord Hutton, changes were introduced to public service pensions, including the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). These involved a shift from a ‘final salary based’ pension, to a ‘career average’ pension and an increase in retirement age.**

**3.2 The changes also introduces an employers’ ‘cost cap’ to protect against unforeseen changes in pension scheme costs.**

**3.3 Under the ‘cost cap’ arrangements the employers’ scheme costs, are valued over the next three year period and employee benefits are then either increased or decreased if the valuation is more than 2% above or below the cost cap target. The cost target for the LGPS was set at 17%.**

- 3.4 The Department of Communities has advised that the revised cost cap for the LGPS is likely to be more than 2% below the benchmark, meaning that scheme benefits will improve and therefore the costs of the scheme will increase.
- 3.5 The majority of public service pension schemes are unfunded i.e. where no assets are set aside for future liabilities and benefits are financed when they are paid. While the cost cap applies to all public sector schemes, its main aim was to limit the employer costs of unfunded schemes.
- 3.6 The Local Government scheme is a funded scheme i.e. funds are collected through employee and employer contributions and investment in assets are made to plan to meet the costs of accrued benefits. The employer's contribution rate is set after each Triennial Valuation. The cost cap mechanism is a separate process to the Triennial Valuation.
- 3.7 The NILGOSC Chief Executive has written to the Department of Finance in response to the consultation referring to the serious disconnect between the Government 'cost cap' process and the Local Government Pension Scheme valuation used to set employer rates. The response has highlighted that the 'cost cap' process was introduced to protect public funds but it appears that, as a result of its implementation, scheme benefits will become more generous and therefore the cost of the scheme will rise, the polar opposite of Government's original intention.
- 3.8 The NILGOSC Chief Executive has suggested that Employers should also make their views known to the Department.
- 3.9 The closing date for consultation submissions is Friday 19 October 2018.
- 3.10 Financial & Resource Implications
- Potential additional costs of increased benefits arising from the recalculation of the cost cap.
- 3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
- None."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

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**Contracts for Award**

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement and acceptance of tenders as listed in Appendix 1, Table 1 through the Council's electronic procurement system;
- granted delegated authority to the appropriate Director using pre-agreed criteria to accept the most economically advantageous tender; and
- agreed to accede to Standing order 55(a) - exceptions in relation to contracts by direction of the Council acting on the recommendations of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances for the contract set out in Appendix 1, Table 2;

**Appendix 1 - Schedule of tenders for consideration**

**Table 1 – New tenders**

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Provision of De-icing and Snow Clearance Service	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
Gamechanger – Personal Development Project for Young People at risk	Nigel Grimshaw	3 years

**Table 2 Direct Award Contracts (Single Tender Action)**

System / product	Supplier	Estimate
To engage a consultant to undertake projects to mitigate against the impact of the Bank Buildings fire	PWC	£95,000

**Equality and Good Relations**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 8th October and agreed to the following:

**Update and Review of the Shared City Partnership**

To endorse the appointment of Mr. Jim Donnelly to represent the community and voluntary sector for the west of the City on the Shared City Partnership.

**Outcomes Monitoring Report**

That the Good Relations Unit proceed to adopt the recommendations in relation to the monitoring of the Good Relations outcomes and that they be communicated to other partners where appropriate.

**Request Regarding Offer of a Statue from Representatives of Stena Line**

The Committee was advised of an offer of a statue to the City of Belfast which had been received from Stena Line, along with a funded programme regarding non violence for young people.

The Committee agreed that officers explore options with Stena Line and a further report be submitted to the Committee in due course.

**Council Funded Events to Mark the Centenary of the End of World War I**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 To advise members of the Council funded initiatives which have been agreed to mark the centenary of the end of World War 1 and to ask for consideration regarding the lighting of a beacon on 11th November as part of ‘A Nation’s Tribute’ project.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to;**

- Note the agreed programme of events and advise if they wish to support the lighting of a beacon on 11th November 2018 as part of the ‘A Nation’s Tribute’ project.**

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 Members will be aware that a comprehensive outline series of themes has been developed in relation to marking the Decade**

of Centenaries from 2018-22 which Council has previously approved.

3.2 Members will also be aware of the wider Centenaries programme contained within the PEACE IV Plan. This programme will be an engagement programme within communities, whereas the Council's programme will be more of a Civic Programme of events as has been the case thus far. Corrymeela have been awarded the contract and delivery of this programme has now commenced.

3.3 The following initiatives have been undertaken or are being supported by the Council:

1. 23 August – 16 September 2018 – Shrouds of the Somme – an art piece displayed in the Cenotaph, which commemorated the thousands of servicemen from the Ulster and Irish regiments, or from Belfast, who died in the Battle of The Somme and have no known graves.
2. Friday 12 October 2018 – Greater Love. Council in association with New Irish Arts is hosting the final performance of Greater Love in City Hall - Stories, music and images to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War 1. All Members of Council were invited to this event.
3. Friday 9 November 2018– Inspire Event at City Hall. This event is part of a wider series of high profile and simultaneous events that will take place in Cathedrals and other public venues across GB, designed for children and young people, on that date. These events will mark the centenary of the end of the 'Great War' and are designed to inspire a new generation of young people to take positive action to work for peace and conflict resolution, not only across the world, but also in their own communities. The Corrymeela Community are delivering the main Inspire event in Northern Ireland, with funding and other staff support from the Council's Good Relations team.
4. A further two initiatives regarding the centenary of World War 1 have been funded through the City Growth and Regeneration Committee under the Events and Festivals Funding: A concert in the Waterfront Hall marking the Centenary and a community programme which will be undertaken throughout the year entitled 'Every Day Remembered'.

5. Council will host the annual ceremony to mark Remembrance Day at the Cenotaph on Sunday 11 November at 11 am and as this falls on Armistice Day this year the Royal British Legion will not be marking it with the separate informal gathering in the Garden of Remembrance.

In addition, there will be a service at St Anne's cathedral on the afternoon of Sunday 11 November, the timing of which has not been decided yet.

- 3.4 Council has also been approached regarding a project entitled 'A Nation's Tribute' to mark the Centenary of the Armistice which includes Councils across the UK hosting the lighting of a beacon within their Council areas at 7pm on 11 November. We are aware that at least six other councils in NI have agreed to light beacons on this date. It is worth noting that there is significant pressure on 11 November, following the ceremony, for the market build and the erecting of the Christmas tree.

- 3.4 However, if Council wished to host the lighting of a beacon this might be possible if the beacon was located on the west lawn in the grounds of City Hall, and it was a small event. The service at Westminster Abbey will be broadcast live across the UK at 7pm and it is difficult to gauge whether this would have an adverse effect on members of the public attending the Belfast lighting of a beacon.

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

It is estimated that the cost of the beacon event could be in the region of £1,500 to cover the cost of the beacon and associated programme around its lighting. This would be covered through the Council's civic budget.

All other events are covered through existing budgets.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The Decade of Centenaries programme has been screened through the District Council Good Relations Plan."

The Committee noted the agreed programme of events and agreed to support the lighting of a beacon on 11th November, 2018 as part of "A Nation's Tribute" project.

**Operational Issues**

**NILGA Consultation - Devolution within  
Northern Ireland**

The City Solicitor submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

**"1.0 Purpose of Report**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to:**

- seek approval from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for the draft response to the NILGA Consultation paper 'Devolution within Northern Ireland'.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that Committee:**

- notes and reviews the attached New Policy Institute (NPI) Report by NILGA at Appendix 1
- notes the list of neighbourhood services at Appendix 2
- notes the illustrative timeline at Appendix 3
- approves the draft council response at Appendix 4 subject to any amendments

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) has commissioned and published a 'Devolution within Northern Ireland' report completed by the New Policy Institute (NPI).**

**3.2 This evidence based report, drawing on direct communication with all strands of government and wider society, together with policy and data benchmarking across all neighbouring jurisdictions, is provided to the Council for corporate comment by 26 October 2018 (deadline extended by one month from previous deadline of 28 September).**

**3.3 The purpose of the consultation is twofold:**

- i) to inform the existing and future legislative and resource actions to enhance the role of Councils in Northern Ireland

ii) to take actions with partners in government and more widely to strengthen the sustainability and value of local government in Northern Ireland

3.4 NILGA have indicated that they will reconvene with all councils, individually and collectively, in the first quarter of 2019 in terms of a Regional Policy Framework, which will be a vital tool for the new councils beyond May 2019.

3.5 Neighbourhood services refers not to any geographic provision of services but to the overall range of different services traditionally provided by local authorities across the entire district (i.e. water safety, food safety, waste collection, waste disposal, etc.).

3.6 A list of these neighbourhood services is contained within the attached NPI report and has been separately listed at Appendix 2 to this report.

Corporate response

3.7 An initial draft corporate response was prepared for the SP&R meeting of 21 September.

3.8 Prior to the meeting NILGA advised councils of their decision to extend the deadline by one month to 26 October. The Committee decided to defer the paper to allow Members more time to consider the consultation and recommended that officers provide an updated corporate response to the October SP&R meeting.

3.9 Meetings with individual party groups has shown that there may be differences of opinions in terms of the transfer of specific functions such as social regeneration, housing functions and highways and transportation. Rather than addressing these differences in our corporate response, it may be more appropriate that individual political parties provide their own response to NILGA on those issues for which an agreed council position may not be possible.

3.10 Officers have prepared an amended draft corporate response to the NPI report (Appendix 4) taking into consideration the input received over the past few weeks. In summary the main points of the draft corporate response are as follows:

- That the Council agrees overall with the principles contained within the NPI report 'Devolution within Northern Ireland' and is supportive of the general conclusions and next steps as set out within the report.

- That the devolution of neighbourhood services will allow for a more responsive approach to communities' needs and aspirations. Councils have a greater understanding and engagement with their local communities enabling the tailoring of services, improved decision-making and the delivery of local outcomes.
- That Councils review those neighbourhood services listed in Appendix 2 where responsibility for delivery is either i) shared between local government and the NICS or ii) where responsibility is unclear. Any case for devolution of specific services should be based on greater resource, clarity of purpose and should complement the outcomes based approach set out within the community plan. A scoping exercise should be undertaken to ascertain which powers should be devolved.
- In addition to the devolution of neighbourhood services, the Council would also wish to stress the importance of the transfer of key regeneration functions during phase 2 of any devolution of powers to local government.

3.11 The Council would also recommend that responsibility for the delivery of employability and skills initiatives may be further devolved from Departments to local government. While there is a range of activity taking place across Belfast, the pervasive challenges of long-term unemployment and economic inactivity have not been addressed in any real way. The Council would wish to explore how we can work with partners to use the information we have to plan better around skills needs and training provision to meet these needs with the objective of supporting inclusive economic growth.

3.12 That there may be a need to fundamentally review local government finance if a high degree of devolution was secured. In any case, the Council would seek assurances that the level of financial resources made available for devolution to NI councils was not only cost neutral at the point of transfer but also that councils would be indemnified against any potential future shortfall in funding through an extension of the 'New Burdens Doctrine'.

Consideration should be given to the devolution of greater powers in the context of City based local authorities and unitary or quasi-unitary status. A longer-term transition plan would be required in relation to these types of authorities.

**3.13** Clearly there will be a role for NILGA in helping to develop political awareness and supporting political engagement/negotiation with central government and NI Executive regarding any future proposals for the devolution of powers in terms of ensuring that they fit-for-purpose and adequately resourced. It is important to recognise, however, that the primacy rests with local government and councils to lead this process with the support and advice of professional officers.

**3.14** **Financial & Resource Implications**

None

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

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to the response being amended to include a reference to the fact that those authorities which had demonstrated that they had a real impact on terms of delivery with those powers that had already been devolved are the ones which should get more delegated powers.

**Brexit Committee Proposed Visit to Brussels**

The Committee was reminded that the Brexit Committee, at its meeting on 20th September, had agreed *“That an all-Party delegation from the Council undertake a visit to Brussels to engage with EU officials to represent the views of the Council in relation to Special Designated Status, remaining in the single market and the Council’s position on the Backstop; and to engage with EU Funding Bodies about our future participation in EU Funding Programmes.”*

At that meeting, the Committee had noted that it did not have a budget and that any expenditure agreed by that Committee would have to be approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

That decision was ratified by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.

Subsequently, at its meeting on 11th October, the Brexit Committee had considered a report on the proposed visit and approved the proposed objectives and logistics for the all-Party delegation visit to Brussels, subject to point six being amended to include Irish cities as well as UK cities and to the Lord Mayor or Deputy Lord Mayor accompanying the delegation.

A budget of up to £9,000 was required to be approved by the Committee to enable the visit to take place, which would be covered from the existing Place and Economy departmental budget.

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**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,  
Seconded by Councillor Craig,

That the Committee agrees not to approve a budget to be made available for an all-Party delegation from the Council to undertake a visit to Brussels.

On a vote by show of hands five members voted for the proposal and ten against and it was declared lost.

**Further Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McAllister,  
Seconded by Councillor Long,

That the Committee agrees to approve the expenditure associated with an all-Party visit to Brussels to include one representative from each of the six main parties on the Council

On a vote by show of hands eight Members voted for the proposal and six against and it was declared carried.

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

The Committee approved the recommendations in respect of applications received up to 9th October, 2018 as set out in the following appendix:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
<b>2018 EVENTS</b>						
mTECH Academy	5 October 2018	<b>Smart Cities reception</b> - Presentation and networking reception for local schoolchildren and teachers to hear about City Deal, World Congress.  Numbers attending – 100	A & D	No (not for profit)	Yes - Tea Coffee and Biscuits	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception</i>

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Red Bull	3 November 2018	<b>Pre event reception for the large outdoor Red Bull Formula 1 event in the grounds of City Hall –</b> Reception for invited guests, media and VIPs.  Numbers attending -350	B	No – <i>linked to City Events Unit £300 waived due to income and tourist generated by the event.</i>	No - client providing the drinks linked to their brand	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No Room Charge No Hospitality
Pulse Smart Hub	29 November 2018	<b>Launch of Pulse Smart Hub Launch -</b> Presentation and networking reception to launch 25 smart hubs in and around city centre in partnership with Belfast City Council, charities and local stakeholders.  Numbers attending – 100	A & B	Yes - £115.00	No – commercial company	Approved No Charge No Hospitality
<b>2019 EVENTS</b>						
Helplines Network NI	6 February 2019	<b>NI Helplines Awareness Day 2019 –</b> Event to raise awareness of the work of Helplines NI – advice, counselling and range of services for most vulnerable in the community.	D	No (Community)	Yes - Tea Coffee and Biscuits	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception

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		Numbers attending – 150				
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful	12 February 2019	<b>Live Here, Love Here Community Awards –</b> Drinks reception, dinner and awards ceremony to celebrate the work of volunteers and groups who participate in Live Here Love Here campaign now in its 5 <sup>th</sup> year.  Numbers attending - 240	B & C	No (Charity)	Yes - Wine Reception	Approve No Room Charge Wine Reception
Institute of Physics	16 February 2019	Family Friendly Physic Carnival – large-scale public event with interactive activities to promote physics to children and future opportunities. This event will link in with Belfast Strategic Partnership Family Friendly Belfast Initiative. Numbers attending – 700	A	No (Charity)	No – public event taking place all day event so difficult to offer TCB reception.	Approve No Room Charge No Hospitality

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Ulster University	14 March 2019	<b>International School “Progress in Hydrogen Safety” Gala Dinner</b> – Tour of City Hall, drinks reception, dinner and speeches as part of the 5-day conference in UUJ to welcome guests to Belfast.  Numbers attending - 60	A & B	No – <i>linked to Visit Belfast £300 waived</i>	Yes - Wine Reception as linked to Visit Belfast	Approve No Room Charge Wine Reception
Ulster University	13 November 2019	<b>UK Bathing Waters Conference Dinner</b> – drinks reception, dinner and speeches as part of the 2-day conference in Titanic Belfast to welcome guests to Belfast.  Numbers attending -180	A & B	No – <i>linked to Visit Belfast £300 waived</i>	Yes - Wine Reception as linked to Visit Belfast	Approve No Room Charge Wine Reception
<b>2020 EVENTS</b>						
Royal Economic Society	6 April 2020	<b>RES Annual Conference reception</b> as part of 3-day conference hosted and held in Queens University.  Numbers attending - 350	A & B	No – <i>linked to Visit Belfast £300 waived</i>	Yes - Wine Reception as linked to Visit Belfast	Approve No Room Charge Wine Reception

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Budget and Transformation Panel**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 11th October.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Active Belfast Ltd. Board**

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Active Belfast Ltd. Board of 8th October.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
North Foreshore Steering Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the North Foreshore Steering Group of 15th October.

Chairperson

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## People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 9th October, 2018

### MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Nicholl (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Copeland, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and  
Councillors Baker, Canavan, Corr, Heading, Lyons,  
Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McReynolds, Newton,  
Pankhurst and O'Donnell.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services; and  
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors Corr Johnston and McCusker.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 4th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Magennis declared an interest in agenda item 4 (a) – Assets Report (Sally Gardens and Beechlawn Farm), in that he was associated with the Sally Gardens Management Committee.

#### **Request to Present - Front Row Union Women's Rugby**

The Committee agreed that representatives from the Front Row Women's Rugby would be invited to present to a future special meeting of the Committee, with a date to be agreed with the Chairperson.

#### **Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

#### **Greening of Derelict Spaces**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of Council on 1st October, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Kyle and seconded by Councillor Attwood, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

“Creating green spaces in cities produces significant benefits, not least in the area of mental health. Recent research has shown a 40%

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reduction in feelings of depression and a 50% reduction in feelings of worthlessness among residents, as a result of greening derelict plots of land. The benefits were even greater in areas of deprivation.

Simple interventions, such as clearing rubbish, sowing grass, planting trees and marking the boundary with a low fence, can produce health benefits, remove eyesores and reduce antisocial behaviour.

This Council will carry out an audit to identify derelict sites in public ownership. It will establish a budget in the coming year and engage with other statutory bodies in order to create a programme of work whereby derelict plots of land are cleared, grassed and fenced, thus enhancing neighbourhoods and improving wellbeing.”

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting which would take into consideration the legal duties of private owners and other statutory agencies in respect of derelict land.

**Committee/Strategic Issues**

**Minutes of Strategic Cemeteries &  
Crematorium Development Working Group**

The Committee was advised that at the meetings of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Working Group held on 5th September and 3rd October, the following key items had been considered:

- update in respect of memorial safety;
- a request, which had been declined at this time, seeking the Council to provide a headstone on the unmarked grave of Titanic survivor Mary Sloan;
- information regarding the authorisation required to erect memorial plaques;
- update in respect of the permanent memorial to mark Z1 in the City Cemetery;
- information regarding making Clifton Street Graveyard safe for public access;
- update on the implementation of Plotbox as the Bereavement Services Business System which would be operational by November;
- update report on the stream diversion in Roselawn Cemetery in order to try and avoid flooding;
- the waiver to Children’s Bereavement Charges which would be applied from 2nd October;
- update on plans to protect and enhance the existing heritage in the City Cemetery – it was noted that the Working Group would be going on a site visit in order to obtain a more detailed overview of the site;
- Storm Ali – 28 memorial trees had been destroyed and 12 had been damaged. These would be replaced as soon as was practicably possible;

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- Headstone Foundations – an update report regarding this matter would be submitted to a future meeting of the Working Group; and
- Update in respect of the proposed burial site at Dundrod.

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group held on 5th September and 3rd October.

**Restricted Item**

**The information contained in the report 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 of this item as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**Belsonic - Five Year Booking**

The Committee agreed that the matter be deferred to enable a more detailed report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee, which would give consideration as to whether social clauses could be stipulated within the terms and conditions in order to add social value.

**Review of Community Provision**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The paper presents the context and need for a review of our ‘Community’ service offer in support of integrated Neighbourhood Services and the priorities set out in the Belfast Agenda.**

**1.2 The definition of ‘community provision’ for a future integrated service delivery includes the traditional services namely:**

- **Community development and services;**
- **Community safety/ anti-social behaviour;**
- **Neighbourhood/ community cohesion/ Good Relations;**
- **Outreach/ education and awareness/ open spaces;**
- **Active living and leisure development &**
- **Health and Wellbeing.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to;**

- note the planned review of community provision across the new CNS department and
  - i. Agree the proposed governing strategic principles
  - ii. Agree the commissioning of external support as required.

**3.0 Main report**

- 3.1** Since local government reform, Council has formed the Belfast Agenda, the city's community plan, and Belfast has become a SMART & Resilient city. The City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Local Development Plan seek to enhance city infrastructure & place and continuing efforts to attract external investment and tourism along with the City Deal provides opportunity for everyone to prosper.
- 3.2** Members are shaping the Inclusive Growth framework to ensure 'no one is left behind' and this is likely to enable programmes & interventions to prevent poverty, or provide support where it may result. There is now a need to review our front line community provision to ensure it is enabled to play its significant part in achieving these goals.
- 3.3** Chief officers are forming the area framework to enable an integrated area service delivery with neighbourhood regeneration, targeted interventions and a suite of city services delivered through a robust and sustainable area planning model. This will help realise Council's original aspiration in March 2015 '*to review and modernise services to ensure they are performing at their best and that resources, processes and technology are integrated to maximise efficiency, improve performance and increase customer satisfaction*'.
- 3.4** This decision led to the formation of the City & Neighbourhood Services Department & since appointment in January 2016, the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services has led this change programme bringing all 1700 staff together across a range of services from parks & open spaces, environmental health, waste, community safety, community services and good relations, etc. into one service hub with all services settled in the CWB.

- 3.5 The pillars on which the C&NS change programme is founded are improved customer focus, support for effective neighbourhood working, fit for purpose structure and increased efficiencies. These are supported by a number of work streams with a range of transition activities emerging, for example, the onset of the new customer focus management approach and the 10 year waste strategy consultation.
- 3.6 It is now timely, as the change process continues to evolve, to seek external assistance to independently scope current community provision in order to support the design of future activity in line with the emerging 'neighbourhood/ area working' framework. The review will also consider how to improve service integration under the direction of the incoming Neighbourhood Services and City Services Managers.
- 3.7 A central aim of the Belfast Agenda is to enhance the quality of life for people in Belfast by working collaboratively to improve our services to communities. It is long accepted that community development plays an important role in promoting active involvement of local communities in addressing local problems of disadvantage, poverty and inequality. Without it the work of any organisation seeking to deliver change in local areas becomes much more difficult.
- 3.8 It is proposed the review is underpinned by a set of strategic principles and that these include the need to embed good community development practice so that our future neighbourhood support strengthens communities, fosters improved good relations and increases active and empowered citizenship. A robust stakeholder plan will ensure effective channels for elected members to inform the review from the outset. It will also engage council staff, Trade Unions and other community representatives.
- 3.9 A critical point has been reached where community provision needs transformed to sustainably meet the needs, standards & expectations of Members, staff & citizens.
- 3.10 The definition of 'community provision' for a future integrated service delivery includes the traditional services namely:
- Community development and services;
  - Community safety/ anti-social behaviour;
  - Neighbourhood/ community cohesion/ Good Relations;
  - Outreach/ education and awareness/ open spaces;
  - Active living and leisure development &
  - Health and Wellbeing.

- 3.11** The definition will bear in mind other services which may have a benefit in being delivered as part of this community offer however do not directly sit within City & Neighbourhood Services Department, for example, employability.
- 3.12** The review will capture the principled way of doing that has been adopted within services to date and will seek to confirm the strategic principles for future service delivery:
- Outcome focused
  - Community development approach
  - Community resilience
  - Stakeholder participation and engagement
  - Working with communities
  - Innovative, people centred design and delivery
  - Customer focused
  - Sustainability and increased efficiency
  - Effective neighbourhood working
- 3.13** As noted, this piece of work will have a robust underpinning stakeholder engagement plan to ensure it leads to a market leading service portfolio which returns social value and invest to save opportunities.
- 3.14** To complete phase I of the review, members are asked to agree the need for external expert opinion to complement departmental business development resources. This will provide resource support to meet the challenging time-frame and allow for independent comment.
- 3.15** The main tasks in the review will include:
- Develop a project plan and phased timeframe (up to 16 weeks)
  - Present a stakeholder engagement plan to include elected members, officers, Trade Union representatives and appropriate stakeholders
  - Scope the current range of community facing service information including the range and uptake of programmes, current resource investment, response to differential need and demand, performance management and community impact, etc.
  - Complete a best practice review, including appropriate benchmarking, to recommend the future 'community' offer which will best support council and Belfast Agenda priorities and outcomes
  - Consider delivery models in support of area working
  - Develop a range of recommendations in relation to change priorities and a related transition plan

**3.16 Next steps**

As the review progresses, further committee reports will be tabled to consider the 3 key outputs: review of current services, recommendations report on the proposed future BCC community offer and a related change plan.

**3.17** The review will form the first phase of the project. Pending committee consideration of related reports, the agreed change plan will be initiated.

**3.18 Financial & Resource Implications**

The review will be covered within existing budgets.

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

There are no implications associated with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Physical Programme & Asset Management**

**Assets Report (Sally Gardens & Beechlawn Farm)**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to asset related disposal, acquisition and estates matters.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Acquisition of roadway at Sally Gardens**

The Committee is asked to;

- approve the proposed acquisition of the roadway known as Sally Gardens Lane from the Department for Communities subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee.

**Proposed Appropriation of Beechvale Farm**

Committee is recommended;

- to approve the appropriation of Beechvale Farm from City and Neighbourhood Services to Property and Projects for holding in the Corporate Landbank, pending future decisions on the asset. The decision is subject to agreement by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as relevant committee for the receiving department.

3.0 **Main report**

3.1

(i) Acquisition of roadway at Sally Gardens

**Key Issues**

As part of LGR and following an exchange of land with Poleglass Community Association @ Sally Gardens (PCA) the Council acquired the lands. The Council leased back the Community Centre and constructed changing facilities and a 3G pitch on the land to the rear of the site.

As part of the transfer of lands, the Council were granted a right of way over Sally Gardens Lane but the ownership of the road remained with DfC.

DfC have now approached the Council seeking to transfer the ownership of the road to the Council on the basis that Council now own all the facilities at Sally Gardens and the only access to these facilities is over Sally Gardens Lane. Officers have agreed to this request subject to this Committee's approval and a report to SP&R in accordance with standing orders.

3.2 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The roadway will transfer at nil cost. The roadway is currently in good condition. C&NS will be responsible for all repair and maintenance following the acquisition of the roadway.

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

None

3.4

(ii) Proposed Appropriation of Beechvale Farm

**Key Issues**

Beechvale Farm comprises a 136.9 acre farm approximately seven miles to the south east of Belfast and is in Lisburn and

**Castlereagh Council area. It comprises a former farmhouse, bungalow, ancillary buildings, an office and commercial glasshouses. The land is mostly fields with some wooded areas, a fen wetland, a watercourse and connecting laneways. The farm was acquired for the cultivation of trees and shrubs for city parks. This is no longer undertaken as significant cost savings were achieved by Competitive Compulsory Tendering. Much of the land is let on seasonal lets and the buildings have become redundant apart from some storage use.**

**City and Neighbourhood Services holds property for operational purposes. As Beechvale Farm is no longer used for operational purposes, it would more suitably be held in the Corporate Landbank. The Corporate Landbank comprises properties which have no current operational use but which are either being safeguarded for future use or are being held pending disposal. The Corporate Landbank is managed and inspected by Estates Unit, who also appraise the assets for future options.**

**3.5 Financial & Resource Implications**

**There are no financial implications. Resource for managing the property would transfer from City and Neighbourhood Services officers to Property & Projects, Estates Unit.**

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

**None.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Tropical Ravine - Operational Plan**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that, as the Committee was aware, the Tropical Ravine had recently undergone a 3.8m refurbishment programme which had been funded by Belfast City Council (BCC), the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Friends of Botanic Gardens. The Ravine had re-opened to the public in mid-April 2018 and the number of visitors had surpassed expectations, with approximately 142,000 visits to date.

The Committee had previously agreed the operational arrangements around the opening/closing, staffing and programming of the facility but, as a result of the overwhelming response to the facility, management felt it was necessary to review the existing arrangements. The Director explained that the use of the facility to include the hire of the venue for events and hospitality needed to be developed and the appropriate resources and skills recruited in order to ensure that the facility would generate revenue and repeat visits.

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The Director advised that the HLF had finalised its contributions to the scheme and confirmed the final funding available, on the basis of an agreed operational plan to the end of March 2021. The funding would primarily be focused on ensuring the sustainability of the operations and improving the use of the venue. The Committee noted that the current operational staff included part-time Bot Crew and an Activities Officer whose role was to develop a programme of events/activities to support the community engagement and educational awareness of the Ravine. The temporary Activities Officer position was no longer required as the focus would now be on the day-to-day operations and development of the Tropical Ravine. A new job role would be required with a more commercial focus to drive events, programmes and tourism linkages and to build upon the existing work with the community and education sectors.

The Director advised that the staffing required to operate the facility would be provided from existing budgets and the balance of the grant funding, however, this would need to be mainstreamed, potentially through income generation, to ensure the sustainability of the facility going forward (after March 2021).

The Committee noted that the Department would consult with the Trade Unions representatives regarding the proposed staffing changes and seek its input.

The Committee agreed to the creation of the relevant post in line with the existing funding, with the understanding that this would require Belfast City Council funding after the end of the grant period, which would be supported by income generation opportunities.

### **Operational Issues**

#### **Dual Language Nameplates**

The Committee approved the applications to erect second nameplates in Irish at North Green and Cavendish Street.

#### **Street Naming**

The Committee approved the naming in respect of Castlegowan Park, off Quarry Hill, BT5 and Castlegowan Place, off Quarry Hill, BT5 and Ishbel Mews, off Lady Ishbel Avenue, BT8.

#### **Japanese Knotweed**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

##### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that at the People and Communities Committee meeting of 6th February 2018, Councillor McReynolds proposed a motion that the Council must do more to assist individuals whose homes are negatively impacted upon by Japanese knotweed and should write to the Northern**

Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to see if they would be content to co-fund a Belfast City Council *'not for profit'* service to treat properties across Belfast. An action arising from the Committee meeting was therefore for officers to consider the feasibility of this request.

- 1.2 An interim update report was provided to Members at the Committee meeting of 12th April 2018, advising that officers had written to their counterparts within NIEA concerning the manner of delivery of a potential Japanese knotweed treatment scheme for Belfast and regarding the potential for part-funding by NIEA for such a scheme. In addition, the report highlighted a range of complex treatment and other technical issues that would have to be overcome by the council before any Japanese knotweed treatment scheme could be commenced. The report also highlighted that the view of the City Solicitor had been sought on whether a council *'not for profit'* treatment scheme might face a legal challenge from existing commercial Japanese knotweed treatment providers.
- 1.3 Responses have been received from NIEA and the City Solicitor.
- 1.4 This report serves to provide a further update to the Committee and to seek a recommendation concerning the introduction of a Belfast City Council led *'not for profit'* treatment service, taking account of the responses received from NIEA and the City Solicitor and the anticipated resource requirements and risks associated with the introduction and operation of such a scheme.
- 2.0 Recommendations.
- 2.1 Committee is asked to
  - Note the content of this update report.
  - Consider the recommendation in paragraph 3.7 that the Council should not introduce a *'not for profit'* Japanese knotweed treatment scheme to treat properties across Belfast at this time.
- 3.0 Main report.
- 3.1 In respect of a Council offered Japanese knotweed treatment scheme, the City Solicitor has advised that Article 79 *'Council's general power of competence'* of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, empowers a council to do anything, with or without a charge, that individuals generally may do for the benefit of the council, its district or persons resident or present in its district. However, the City Solicitor has caveated

this advice by instructing that it would be important to have a form of indemnity signed off by those who are to receive a treatment service from the council in order to safeguard the council.

- 3.2 The previous Committee report of 12th April 2018 highlighted a range of technical Japanese knotweed treatment issues that, in view of the City Solicitor's advice, would have to be specifically indemnified, including, for example, the treatment approach (chemical treatment, deep burial or excavation and off site disposal), the treatment methodology, the likely treatment duration (up to 5 years), the use of external contractors and the potential implications of treatment on the sale or depreciation of properties or assets. It is additionally considered that it would be highly problematic to forecast the likely demand for a Japanese knotweed treatment scheme as there is limited information available on the incidence of invasive species across Belfast.

3.3 NIEA Response

In its response to the Council, NIEA has highlighted that the treatment and control of Japanese knotweed, and indeed other invasive plants listed in Part II of Schedule 9 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, is challenging as there are no statutory mechanisms to compel owners or occupiers of land to control invasive species or to permit others to carry out control without the owner or occupier's consent. Accordingly, NIEA has advised that in accordance with national and European legislative provisions, the Department's policy context is one of protecting the ecology of an area as opposed to safeguarding property or other commercial assets.

- 3.4 As a consequence of legislative and other competing imperatives, NIEA, who is the regulator, has advised that it is not therefore in a position to provide enhanced support beyond that which the Agency currently provides, i.e. supporting members of the public when they seek advice from NIEA on treatment methodologies and supporting training events for council staff delivered by the council's Biodiversity Officer. Members will be aware that NIEA staff have already joined with council officers to provide guidance on awareness and treatment of Japanese knotweed to the general public via the June 2017 edition of City Matters. Members are advised that officers will seek further opportunities to engage with NIEA on Japanese knotweed awareness initiatives during the 2019 growing season.

- 3.5 In respect of funding private landowners to maintain their properties, NIEA has stated that this would be outside of the remit of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).
- 3.6 Accordingly, and in view of NIEA's response, it is considered that if the Council were to introduce a '*not for profit*' treatment scheme for Japanese knotweed for Belfast, it would have to wholly devise, establish, fund, manage and operate such a scheme, whether delivered through internal resources or via an external contractor, mindful of all of the legal, financial, contractual, resource, reputational and other liabilities connected with delivering such a scheme. Members are reminded however, that the Council has no statutory remit in respect of the control of Japanese knotweed, other than on its own lands, that there are no internal staff resources available to deliver such a treatment scheme and that there are a number of established and accredited commercial Japanese knotweed treatment contractors already operating across Northern Ireland. Additionally, Members will be aware that the general public can take proactive control steps themselves through the prompt application of an appropriate herbicide to either prevent Japanese knotweed becoming established on their property or to control its ingress from an adjoining property or lands.
- 3.7 As a consequence of these numerous issues, and mindful of the various legal, financial, contractual, resource and reputational liabilities and risks associated with offering a council led treatment scheme for Japanese knotweed, the Committee is asked to consider a recommendation that the council should not introduce a '*not for profit*' Japanese knotweed treatment scheme to treat properties across Belfast.
- 3.8 Financial & Resource Implications
- The previous Committee report of 12th April 2018 highlighted that the provision of a '*not for profit*' treatment service has not been included within existing revenue estimates for the 2018/2019 financial period and that any treatment option could have significant financial impact on revenue estimates for the Council. Members are advised that provisions for the scheme have similarly not been included within 2019/2020 financial estimates.
- 3.9 The report also highlighted the potential for significant administrative and financial resource implications should the council wish to establish a commercial contractor led '*not for profit*' Japanese knotweed treatment scheme or if the council

wished to provide an equivalent scheme from 'in house' resources.

- 3.10 NIEA has confirmed that funding private landowners to maintain their properties is outside of the remit of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).
- 3.11 Equality & Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
- 3.11 The previous Committee report of 12th April 2018 advised that there would be no equality or good relations issues associated with establishing a Japanese knotweed treatment scheme for Belfast.”

During discussion several Members expressed concern at the impact that Japanese Knotweed was having on constituents throughout the City, with many people unable to sell their properties or obtain a mortgage.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Committee would seek a meeting with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for an all-party deputation to discuss the issues around Japanese Knotweed control.

#### **FSA Consultation - Proposed Approach to Retained EU Law for Food and Feed Safety and Hygiene**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

##### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 Following the United Kingdom Referendum, the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 was passed making provision for all existing EU legislation to be converted on exit into UK law. This was an essential step to ensure food safety and other legal standards are maintained on exit. In order to ensure the converted EU law continues to operate effectively as part of domestic law, the Act provided for corrections to be made by way of statutory instruments. The Food Standards Agency is consulting on the corrections which ministers propose to make to retained EU law relating to food and animal feed safety and hygiene. The consultation also invites general comments on food and feed safety and hygiene in the UK after EU exit and provides an opportunity for the Council to clarify its preferred position in that regard.
- 1.2 Members are asked to agree the response to this consultation and in particular their preferred position for food safety and hygiene in Northern Ireland after EU exit.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is invited to;**

- consider and agree the consultation response.

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 provided for all existing EU legislation to be converted on exit into UK law, so maintaining the current high standards of food safety and ensuring on day one the regulatory alignment likely to be required to negate the need for food safety checks as foods move between the UK and the EU. The latter shall be important as the government seeks to agree with the EU a good deal for both sides. However the consultation package confirms the government continues to prepare for all scenarios including the unlikely prospect of leaving the EU with no deal.**

**3.2 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has been working with officials in Northern Ireland as well as Ministers in Westminster, Scotland and Wales is now consulting on the corrections which ministers propose to make to retained EU food law to ensure it continues to operate effectively as part of domestic law.**

**3.3 The consultation package is available at:  
<https://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/consultations/proposed-approach-to-retained-eu-law-for-food-and-feed-safety-and-hygiene>**

**3.4 These corrections specifically relate to certain EU bodies and institutions which provide functions under EU law. Once the UK leaves the EU these bodies will no longer be able to perform these functions. It is proposed that these functions including risk management, risk assessment, setting of safety levels and provision of approvals shall, by way of statutory instrument, transfer from the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority to the appropriate UK authorities, including the Food Standards Agency.**

**3.5 The UK institutions will not provide these functions in isolation and, subject to negotiations with the EU, the UK government intends to redefine and formalise a close working relationship with the European Food Safety Authority based in exchange of information and expertise, contribution to scientific networks and cross-European collaboration.**

- 3.6 The draft Council response, without prejudice to potential future arrangements between the UK and the EU supports the proposals as necessary to ensure retained EU food law is operable within the UK on exit.
- 3.7 It is essential that the FSA and UK Government continue to work with Local Authorities and share information at the earliest opportunity regarding plans for day one scenarios for food law regulation, in particular in relation to export and import controls. Controls both inland and at ports must be considered.
- 3.8 Furthermore, the draft response suggests that Council consider making the following general comments confirming its preferred position on Food safety and hygiene in the UK after EU exit.
1. Any future changes to regulatory controls after the UK leaves the EU should provide the same, or an improved, level of consumer protection.
  2. Any changes to the current legislation should be commensurate with the risk posed by different activities and trades and minimise the regulatory burden on council's and food businesses.
  3. In order to avoid the need for food safety checks on imports from EU countries the UK should continue to recognise EU food safety controls, including controls carried out at EU borders on 3rd country imports. This will be particularly important for Northern Ireland considering its land border with the Republic of Ireland, the significant cross border trade including frequent crossings by small traders. This would best be done as part of a reciprocal agreement with mutual recognition, to reduce the need for both additional import and export controls, to promote regulatory alignment, and facilitate UK-EU trade.
  4. It is anticipated that some additional food safety controls/activities will be required by local authorities and port health authorities as a result of BREXIT and it is important that these should be either on a full cost recovery basis or funded by the UK Government to avoid additional financial burdens on local authorities.
  5. The current checks at UK and EU borders on third country imports should be maintained to facilitate free movement of goods within the EU, and between the EU and the UK, and the UK should seek to maintain access to existing European Union IT and rapid alert arrangements.

**3.9 The full draft response to the consultation paper includes answers to all the questions asked.**

**3.10 Finance and Resource Implications**

**There are no financial or human resource implications.**

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

**There are no equality or good relations implications, there is no requirement for rural needs assessment.”**

The Committee endorsed the Food Standards Agency Consultation, available on the Council’s website [here](#) on the proposed Approach to Retained EU Law for Food and Feed Safety and Hygiene. It was noted that, in order to meet the deadline of 14th October, it would be submitted in draft form which would be subject to ratification by the Council.

**Age Friendly Belfast**

The Committee was advised that meetings of the Reference Group on Older People had been held on 12th June and 18th September and the Director of City Services provided a brief overview of the items that had been considered, which included:

- Draft Age Friendly Belfast Plan 2018-2021, which had subsequently been agreed and ratified at the July Council meeting;
- The Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership;
- Age-friendly Belfast Summer Events;
- Positive Ageing Month 2018;
- World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy Cities Conference 2018;
- Age-Friendly Network; and
- an update in respect of ‘Be Prepared Events’;

The Director advised that an invitation had been received to attend and help deliver a workshop using Belfast as a good practise example at a symposium on demographic change to be held in Hamburg, Germany on 14th and 15th November. This event would be of particular interest to those individuals with responsibility for developing policy around the issues of ageing and demography. Attendance at the symposium was free and the organisers had offered to pay all travel and accommodation costs for three attendees. The Committee was advised that the Reference Group had considered the invitation and agreed that the Chairperson of the Reference Group would attend along with two officers, subject to the approval of the People and Communities Committee.

The Committee:

- approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of the Reference Group on Older People held on 12th June and 18th September; and
- approved the recommendation for the Chairperson of the Reference Group and two officers to attend the Korber Symposium, in Hamburg,

Germany on 14th and 15th November and noted that the organisers were paying all travel and accommodation costs for the three attendees and that booking would proceed now on this basis.

**Temporary Amendments to Guidelines Relating to the Distribution of Free Printed Material**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 Traders within the city centre have been adversely affected by the recent fire at Bank Buildings in Castle Street. The purpose of this report is to provide information relating to temporary amendments in the guidelines relating to the enforcement of the Free Printed Matter (Belfast) Designation Order 2012. These changes will allow affected businesses to distribute free printed material, such as leaflets, within the city centre under amended guidelines during the period the cordon exists at Bank Buildings.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to**

- **Agree temporary amendments in the guidelines relating to the enforcement of the Free Printed Matter (Belfast) Designation Order 2012**
- **Note the contents of the report.**

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 The current guidelines relating to the distribution of free printed material within Belfast were approved by the Health and Environmental Services Committee in September 2014. This followed a one year review resulting from Belfast City Council enacting the Free Printed Matter (Belfast) Designation Order 2012 on 4 March 2013. The 2012 Order designated the land within Belfast City Centre and the Wider University Area on which consent of the council was required to distribute free printed material. The guidelines published in September 2014 included a number of streets in the city centre which the council will not permit the distribution of free printed matter:**

- **City Hall Grounds**
- **Donegall Square North**
- **Donegal Square South**
- **Donegall Square East**
- **Donegall Square West**

- Castle Lane
- Corn Market
- Castle Arcade
- William Street South
- Arthur Square
- Arthur Street
- Arthur Place
- Callender Street
- Fountain Street
- Fountain Lane
- Ann Street

- 3.2 The guidelines also included the cost of the Annual Permit which was and remains at £450 per badge. The Council currently has 28 valid annual permits for the city centre. With regard to enforcement of the legislation the guidelines stated: *The permit conditions will be rigorously enforced by the Council. Any contraventions of the permit conditions may result in individual badges being revoked; full permits and any associated badges being revoked and/ or a refusal to grant further permits for a period of one year.*

3.3 Proposal

Following representations from traders affected by the recent fire at Primark, Bank Buildings, Castle Street, it is proposed that the current guidelines are suspended for affected traders pending the removal of the cordon around Bank Buildings, Castle Street. To support all businesses, the Council proposes to animate the street scene through street artists and entertainment who may publicise future events.

- 3.4 It is proposed that the Council will consent to the suspension of these guidelines in relation to Council approved events and affected traders and give assurances to businesses that no enforcement action would be taken against them for handing out leaflets dependent upon certain conditions:

- That they must make a written request in advance to distribute free printed material;
- The business has been identified as one of the businesses affected by the cordon;
- The business must notify the Council of the date, location and the duration/timescales of any distribution, that is to take place in advance;
- A maximum of two distributors will be allowed per business;
- That all litter generated as a result of the activity is removed during and after any distribution.

- 3.5 If all these conditions are met, the Council will consent to the suspension of the guidelines and agree not to take any enforcement action. The Council will provide written confirmation to that effect to the trader.
- 3.6 This will mean that affected traders and Council organised events do not have to fill in an application which means that no cost will be charged to the affected traders. The scheme could potentially apply to approximately 50 businesses outside the cordon whom Price Waterhouse Cooper have identified as affected by it. Relevant traders will be identified through the Economic Development Division within the Council.
- 3.7 The Council will therefore not enforce the current September 2014 guidelines in relation to affected traders who have properly notified the council during the period whilst the cordon is in place. Consent for any trader under this scheme may be withdrawn should they fail to comply with the requirements specified by the Council. If the Council does intend to withdraw its consent the business will be notified of that in writing before any enforcement action is taken.
- 3.8 The temporary scheme outlined within this report will cease to apply after the removal of the cordon in place around Bank Buildings, Castle Street.
- 3.9 Financial & Resource Implications
- There are no additional financial implications associated with the scheme as enforcement of it is currently delivered within existing budgets.
- 3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
- There are no implications associated with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### Dog Friendly Badging Scheme

The Director of City Services provided the Committee with an update in respect of the opt-in badging scheme which had been developed in collaboration with Tourism NI and Visit Belfast as a result of a Notice of Motion tabled at the meeting of Council held on 3rd July, 2017.

The Committee was advised that the following measures had been implemented to promote the scheme:

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Tuesday, 9th October, 2018**

- a new section had been developed on the Council's website to promote and provide information on the dog friendly scheme for businesses, residents and visitors to the City <https://belfastcity.gov.uk/dogfriendlybelfast> This webpage provided a link to dog control pages already established on the Council's website regarding responsible dog ownership. The website also provided advice for businesses, including guidance regarding food safety legislation, hygiene advice and an example of best practice from an established Belfast dog friendly restaurant. It also provided links to two websites that maintained up-to-date lists of dog friendly facilities;
- Visit Belfast's website <https://www.visitbelfast.com/eat-drink/discover/pubs-clubs/collections/dog-friendly-pubs> had a list of dog friendly pubs and restaurants and it would continue to add Belfast premises to this list;
- Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI) has two webpages that covered dog friendly pubs and restaurants <https://discovernorthernireland.com/about-northern-ireland/pet-friendly/dog-friendly-pubs-and-restaurants> and <https://www.discovernorthernireland.com/things-to-do/food-and-drink/food-and-drink>

The Committee noted that Belfast City Council had designed and produced 'we are dog friendly' window sticker. Visit Belfast had agreed to stock the sticker in the Visit Belfast Welcome Centre, where it would be available for distribution to dog friendly businesses.

Noted.

**List of Approved Suppliers for the Provision of Services at Events in Parks and Open Spaces**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Committee that, as part of the current internal review of the existing Parks and Leisure Events Policy, it had become apparent that, with the increasing number of events being held in parks, there was a need to encourage best practice where third party event organisers were procuring suppliers to deliver services at events. She outlined that, whilst the Council required event organisers to submit an event plan, risk assessment, evidence of public liability insurance and other relevant document for its approval, there was a growing awareness of health and safety risks around certain activities at events, such as inflatables. It was therefore recommended that the Council would compile a list of approved suppliers for the provision of the main types of services at events. These would include the provision of marquees, inflatables, fairground rides, climbing wall, petting farms, face painting, balloon modelling, food and musical performances.

The Committee was asked to note that the Council would not be recommending any specific supplier, the purpose of the list was to provide third party event organisers with a City wide list of potential suppliers that would meet certain standards. The standards would be developed for each service in accordance with the relevant legislation, best practice and guidance. Suppliers would be encouraged to sign up to the approved list of suppliers on an annual basis and to provide evidence of public liability insurance cover and other relevant certification.

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The Director outlined that the information would be available on the Council's website from March 2019. Event organisers who wished to stage events in Council parks would be encouraged to avail of the approved list of suppliers to ensure that their events were managed and delivered in a safe manner. This would also help third party organisers to improve the planning of events and would reduce the effort involved in them providing documentation and certificates.

The Committee authorised the collation of a list of approved suppliers for the provision of services at events in parks and open spaces for use by third party event organisers.

**Classification of Registered Housing Associations in Northern Ireland  
Consultation Response – The Future of the House Sales Schemes**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 In this consultation the Department for Communities (DFC) is seeking views on the future of the House Sales Scheme (HSS). The House Sales Scheme is Northern Ireland's equivalent to the 'Right to Buy' Scheme in other jurisdictions. Registered Housing Associations are currently the only organisations that develop new social homes in Northern Ireland, although the HSS also applies to existing NIHE social housing tenants.**
- 1.2 This consultation seeks views on the next stage of the Department's work in response to a decision by the Office for National Statistics in September 2016 to reclassify Registered Housing Associations in Northern Ireland from the private to the public sector. In September 2016 the Northern Ireland Executive agreed that officials should work to reverse the Office for National Statistics' decision including bringing forward options for amendments to legislation where appropriate. Any decision on whether and how to amend legislation arising from this consultation will be solely for Ministers to consider and take decisions. The purpose of the consultation exercise is to seek views on the options available so that these can be incorporated into the advice that will be provided to Ministers on the issues.**
- 1.3 This is because without changes to these schemes it is likely that the Office for National Statistics' classification of Registered Housing Associations, as being in the public sector will remain in place. This will have significant financial consequences. The House Sales Schemes are Northern Ireland's equivalent to the Right to Buy Schemes in other jurisdictions. Since introduction, around 119,000 Northern Ireland Housing Executive and 3,000 Registered Housing**

Association properties have been sold to the tenants over the past 40 years.

- 1.4 The consultation outlines different proposals for the future of the Scheme and seeks views on each option. A copy of the consultation can be found at <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/classification-registered-housing-associations-northern-ireland-consultation-two-future-house-sales>. Members should note that although the consultation closed on the 24th September 2018. Belfast City Council have been granted an extension to allow members to consider and agree the Council's response.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- consider and endorse the attached draft response.

## 3.0 Main report

### 3.1 Key Issues

A recent change in accounting rules for Registered Housing Associations is likely to significantly increase the amount of money that has to be found from the Northern Ireland Executive's budget to maintain current and planned levels of new social home provision. The consultation explains that this would mean the amount of public money available for other capital projects would be reduced by a similar amount or, if this did not happen, the new social home building programme would be significantly cut back. The Department for Communities (DFC) is therefore thinking about changing the rule that requires social housing to be sold to tenants.

- 3.2 The Office for National Statistics (ONS) determined that this compulsory application of the House Sales Scheme (HSS) to Housing Associations amounts to government control that is significant enough to warrant classification to the public sector. The decision of the ONS means that all expenditure incurred by the RHA's (including private borrowing) will count as public expenditure and thus be charged against the Northern Ireland Executive budget. It will become more expensive for the Executive to fund social housing in the future, meaning the social housing development programme either needs twice the budget to maintain the same level of delivery or will have to curtail the level of delivery.

- 3.3 The consultation therefore recommends ending the HSS in NI, with the expectation that this would allow the reclassification of Housing Associations back to private sector, meaning their private borrowing would no longer appear as public expenditure. This in turn would allow social housing delivery to continue at the same level. The consultation seeks views on changing this rule and outlines a number of possible options for achieving this.
- 3.4 The officers draft response following engagement internally with the Planning Service recommending Option 3, to end the House Sales Scheme for all Housing Association and NIHE tenants. However, it requests that this is accompanied by work to consider other options to support social tenants into home ownership. .
- 3.5 Financial & Resource Implications
- None
- 3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
- None.”

The Committee endorsed the Consultation response to the Department for Communities on the future of the House Sales Scheme, available on the Council’s website [here](#) It noted that, in order to meet the deadline of 24th September, Belfast City Council had been granted an extension and that the response would be submitted in draft form which would be subject to ratification by the Council.

#### Issues Raised in Advance by Members

##### Support for TAMHI - Mental Health Through Sport - Councillor McCusker

The Committee agreed to invite a representative from TAMHI – Mental Health Through Sport to a special meeting of the Committee to inform the Committee of its important work in the City (along with the Community Rescue Service and Front Row Women’s Rugby), with a date to be agreed in liaison with the Chairperson.

**Adventure Playground at Cavehill –  
Councillor McAllister**

The Committee agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee which would give consideration, in conjunction with the budget setting process, to the possible future removal of the current entrance fee charge to the Adventure Playground at Cavehill.

Chairperson

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## City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 26th September, 2018

### SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Lyons (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Kingston and McGimpsey; and  
Councillors Baker, Dorrian, Graham,  
Hussey, Johnston, Mullan, O'Donnell,  
O'Hara, and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Alderman Haire.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

#### **Presentation**

##### **Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC)**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Dr. E. Magennis, Senior Economist at the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre, was in attendance and he was welcomed to the meeting.

Dr. Magennis provided the Committee with an overview of the current economic conditions on a global, national and local scale.

He outlined to the Members a number of risks for Northern Ireland over the next few years, including rising interest rates and debts, as well as trade tensions in light of a potential no-deal Brexit and under President Trump's policies.

The Members were advised that Northern Ireland's economy was growing but that its growth was slower than that of the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

He provided the Committee with an economic forecast for the next decade which, in light of the outcome of the Brexit negotiations, depicted the upper, lower and baseline scenarios for Northern Ireland and Belfast. The Committee was advised that, under the central scenario, NI was likely to avoid a technical recession, that being two quarters of

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declining output for 2018-2022, but he pointed out that it was likely to see declining employment in 2020-2021, with only around 20,000 jobs added over the decade.

In terms of the economic forecast for Belfast, he explained that, under a scenario based on a trade-friendly Brexit outcome and little other policy change, around 12,000 additional jobs would be created by the year 2027, with predicted growth in the high value sectors and accelerating tourism.

He explained that while, on the one hand, Belfast was the regional driver of growth with high productivity and highly skilled jobs, on the other hand, it was the poor performer on education measures and poor skills stock. He highlighted that unemployment and inactivity levels remained high in the city, and that questions should be asked as to whether the measures which were currently in place to address those issues were working.

A Member outlined that the school curriculum did not encourage creativity and that there was too much of a focus on standardised testing.

A further Member stated that early interventions were critical and that we needed to ensure that there was another route into employment for young people who did not achieve high grades in academic subjects. A number of Members stated that, since the Council's employability programmes had been re-designed, they were providing young people with new skills and a direct route towards employment.

Dr. Magennis explained that Belfast was now the hub for ICT, Financial Services and Professional Services in Northern Ireland and that they were all growing sectors with higher skills requirements.

Dr. Magennis outlined that employment in Belfast had historically depended on traditional industries and manufacturing. He explained that an accelerated period of change in the 1980s, and a failure of the educational system to change its focus, had created a shock in the labour market which led to high inactivity and unemployment levels in the city as a result.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Economic Development explained to the Committee that the stretch goal in the Belfast Agenda, of delivering 46,000 new jobs by 2035, would be difficult due to the economic factors which had been outlined by Dr. Magennis.

During a discussion on skills, a Member stated that there needed to be more emphasis on encouraging young people to set up their own business. The Director of Economic Development stated that Belfast had seen a significant increase in new business start-ups over the past 15 years but he acknowledged that it had grown from a very low base.

In response to a Member's question as to why cooperatives and social economies were not as common in N.I. in comparison to England, Dr. Magennis indicated that N.I. was perhaps more risk averse. The Strategic Director of Place and Economy agreed, and added that he believed that the arts and cultural sector in N.I. had not faced the same

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funding pressures that organisations in England had and, as a result, hadn't been required to consider the social enterprise as an option. He indicated that there were numerous articulate and energetic arts communities in the cultural sector in N.I. and that we should be preparing them for the inevitable funding deficit which other areas of the UK were already facing.

The Strategic Director advised the Committee that a Director from Invest NI would be in attendance at the next meeting and that he hoped that the Committee would be able to learn about the work of its Social Enterprise unit as well as the inward investment which was crucial to the City.

The Committee thanked Dr. Magennis for his presentation and he retired from the meeting.

Chairperson

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# City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 10th October, 2018

## MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Lyons (Chairperson);  
The High Sheriff, Councillor Howard;  
Aldermen Haire, Kingston and McGimpsey; and  
Councillors Baker, Beattie, Corr,  
Dorrian, Hussey, Johnston, Kyle,  
Mullan, Murphy, O'Donnell, O'Hara,  
O'Neill, and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillor Attwood.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;  
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;  
Ms. G. Long, Commissioner for Resilience;  
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Lead Officer, City Regeneration  
and Development; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Graham.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 12th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

### **Expression of Sympathy**

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, expressed his sympathy and condolences to Councillor Graham on the recent death of her mother.

**Presentation**

**Invest NI**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. Steve Harper, Executive Director for International Business at Invest NI, to the meeting.

Mr. Harper explained that the International Division in Invest NI involved both attracting inward investment, from Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and promoting outward trade from Northern Ireland to the rest of the world. He outlined Invest NI's International Strategy for 2017-2021 and explained that their three key focuses internationally were supporting businesses which were exporting for the first time, assisting existing businesses in scaling up their export intensity, and working with businesses to ensure that they would stand out in international markets.

He provided the Committee with an overview of the aims of the Strategy, such as supporting and encouraging 30,000 to 40,000 additional jobs, and increasing business expenditure on Research and Development by £160million to £200million, and how they aligned with the NI Executive's Programme for Government.

The Committee was provided with the Invest NI companies' sales by sector for the Belfast City Council area, which illustrated that the top three sectors were Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing (28.7%), Agri-food (21.5%) and Financial, Professional and Business Services (21.2%).

Mr. Harper stressed to the Members that a challenge for Invest NI, and the NI economy as a whole, was encouraging more companies to export their product, as 71% of NI exports were carried out by 50 companies. He explained that 30% of its customers were selling to only one market, and that Invest NI's contacts in overseas markets were vital in that regard. He reminded the Committee that Invest NI was continuing to promote a £1billion portfolio of NI Regeneration Investment Projects to investors, with the pitch book having been launched at MIPIM UK in October 2017.

The Committee was advised that Invest NI was due to open a Trade, Investment and Innovation Hub in Dublin, London and Brussels in April 2019. He explained that the Hubs would be used to present the benefits of investing in NI to potential investors. He presented the Committee with an extensive list of the various international businesses which had made significant investments in Belfast, in sectors such as manufacturing, legal services, business services, financial services technology development, new software development and cybersecurity development.

The Members were advised that Invest NI was refocusing on its NI diaspora engagement, both through NI Connections and by increasing its relationship with the Department for International Trade (DIT), to ensure that Northern Ireland had access to investment opportunities in the UK, as well as educating potential investors on the benefits of Northern Ireland. Mr. Harper stated that, post-Brexit, Northern Ireland would be in a unique position given its proximity to both the UK and European markets.

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In response to a number of questions from the Members, Mr. Harper undertook to circulate information on the number of jobs which had been created over the past ten years in the north, south, east and west of the city.

A Member stated that it was disappointing that a site in west Belfast had been converted into allotments instead of attracting investment, and creating jobs, in the area.

Mr. Harper outlined that Invest NI sought to attract investment to the city as a whole and that, in general, large multi-national companies wanted offices in the city centre.

In response to a Member's question regarding international students who studied in Belfast, and the fact that many cannot work here after graduating due to UK immigration rules, Mr. Harper explained that Invest NI were continuing to lobby the DIT regarding the two year extension rule. He added that Invest NI now had a full-time employee in the United Arab Emirates promoting our tertiary education sector to potential students.

In relation to the organisation's preparations for Brexit, he advised the Members that Invest NI had dedicated Brexit planning information on its website and that it was in the process of organising roadshows to help NI businesses mitigate the risks and maximise the opportunities of Brexit.

After further discussion, the Chairperson thanked Mr. Harper for his attendance and he retired from the meeting.

**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 Committee meeting during discussion of the items as, due to their nature, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

**Primark/Bank Buildings – Business Recovery**

The Director of Economic Development provided the Committee with an update on the measures that the Council was taking to support the economic recovery of the city centre after the recent fire at Bank Buildings. He advised the Members of the current status of the Business Recovery programme, including the number of applications which had been received and those which had been completed.

The Committee was also advised of a proposed animation programme for the city centre in the period leading up to Christmas.

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The Commissioner for Resilience reminded the Committee that Belfast had access to significant guidance, expert knowledge and shared resources through its membership of 100 Resilient Cities.

The Committee noted the update which had been provided.

**Belfast Region City Deal - Update**

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy presented the proposed Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) negotiating position to the Committee, including the Council's financial contribution.

The Members were advised that the agreed geography for the BRCD included the Belfast Travel to Work Area and therefore included five other Council areas.

The Strategic Director explained that the agreed objective for the BRCD was "more and better jobs; inclusive growth; improved skills and growth of domestic business and Foreign Direct Investment".

The Committee noted the update, and the approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting of 21st September, for:

- the proposed Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) negotiating position;
- the Council's overall contribution to the deal of £38m for the development of the Destination Hub visitor attraction; and
- the attendance of the Lord Mayor, the Party Group Leaders and the Chairperson of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at a BRCD event in Westminster on 24th October, 2018.

**Growing Businesses and the Economy**

**Working and Learning and Growing the Economy**

The Director of Economic Development outlined to the Members the progress which had been made over the period 1st April – 30th September, against a series of targets under 'Working and Learning' and 'Growing the Economy' in the Belfast Agenda.

**Working and Learning**

He advised the Committee that officers had undertaken extensive engagement with employers to extend the Employment Academies into sectors with labour market gaps, namely hospitality, transport, childcare, health and social care and construction.

He explained that work was currently underway to pilot schools-based Employment Academies which aimed to improve outcomes for young people who were at risk of not completing their education or underachieving, by creating a pathway to a job or an apprenticeship.

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The Members were advised that a new initiative, 'Access to Opportunity', would provide financial support to address practical barriers for those who were out of work and wanted to enter employment, such as assistance for interpretation, sign language and childcare costs.

During discussion, a number of Members stated that assisting with someone's childcare costs or linguistic needs should not be underestimated.

The Director highlighted to the Committee that, as part of the Council's effort towards supporting the long-term unemployed in entering the labour market, match-funding had been awarded to five European Social Fund (ESF) projects and, since 1st April, 577 participants had achieved accredited qualifications, with 375 people having entered employment as a result of the interventions.

He provided the Members with an overview of a number of other work streams and development activities which officers were engaged in, including work on the City Youth Pledge, development of the Employability and Skills strand of the Belfast Region City Deal, and working with officers in Planning and Building Control to ensure that employability and skills provisions were integrated into the Draft Developers' Contributions Framework.

### **Growing the Economy**

The Director advised the Committee that, in conjunction with Invest NI, officers had been working to draw down European Regional Development Funding for Belfast in order to support the Council's activities to encourage more business start-ups and to help existing businesses to grow.

In respect of the Innovation Factory (IF), he pointed out that the target of 145 jobs had already been exceeded, with officers continuing to work with the IF to ensure that the target of 55% occupancy would also be achieved by December 2018.

He stated that an Enterprise Framework for the city was being facilitated by the Council in partnership with the Business Growth and Enterprise Working Group. He explained that the Framework would be discussed at Party Group Briefings later in the year and that it would shape future collaborations and initiatives, in line with the Belfast Agenda commitments.

The Members were advised that the Council would again work with its public and private partners to deliver a programme of activity during Global Entrepreneurship Week, between 12th and 18th November, including a Female Enterprise Challenge.

As well as supporting the regional 'Go for It' programme, the Director explained that the Council had also supported students in starting a business, and made specific interventions to encourage the development of new social enterprises, cooperatives and businesses with high growth potential.

He provided the Committee with an overview of the two-year pilot 'City for Investment' service which proactively worked with investors, both indigenous and Foreign

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Direct Investment, to provide connections to help their businesses succeed in Belfast. He outlined that, to date, the service had supported 50 businesses, created 1000 new jobs and attracted £1.25million investment to the city.

After discussion, the Committee noted:

- the Council's performance and contribution to delivering against the Belfast Agenda ambitions to Grow the Belfast Economy, focusing on the current support for Business Start-up and Growth, as well as Employability and Skills; and
- that, over the six-month period, the Council had directly and indirectly:
  - supported the creation of 1868 jobs;
  - 1905 individuals had been supported through employability interventions;
  - 1554 young people had engaged through career support activities; and
  - 1243 businesses had been supported to either start, grow or develop their international profile.

**Belfast - City for Investment**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 Members will be aware of work under way to support both indigenous investors and Foreign Direct Investors (FDI), in their expansion and relocation plans in Belfast. This report aims to update Members further on areas of work being advanced across a number of areas including:**

- 1. The ‘Belfast: City for Investment’ support service to investors;**
- 2. Building on our networks and partnerships in collaboration with NI Connections and Belfast Partners**
- 3. Strategic development of our lead prospecting services for business expansion and investment attraction; and**
- 4. Next steps and future models for consideration.**

**1.2 Across each of these strands, the opportunities for partnership and co-ordination with key agencies such as Invest NI, NI Connections and Belfast Partners are summarised. This report should be considered alongside the presentation being delivered to Committee by Invest NI.**

1.3 The report makes key recommendations for the continued development and expansion of Council's support in this area. These initiatives will be tested further through the current pilot period (18 months from April 2018) and evaluated and presented back to Committee at a later date for fuller consideration.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note progress of 'Belfast: City for Investment Service';
- Consider developing a Belfast Connections Network in collaboration with NI Connections and Belfast Partners. If agreed, an outline plan to be tabled back to a future meeting of Committee;
- Note that future resources towards a client management approach will be considered based on the learning developed from the Belfast: City For Investment Pilot.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The 'Belfast: City for Investment' support service to investors

A paper was tabled to August 2018 Committee framing services currently available under the 'Belfast: City for Investment Service'. These are:

- Soft landing service;
- Welcome Service and Accessing Networks;
- Support with planning;
- Sector specific support and skills academies;
- Supplier and Supply Chain opportunities; and
- Internationalisation and export opportunities.

3.2 Currently there are 50 enquiries being Client Managed by Council's Economic Development Division who are availing themselves of this menu of provision. These are categorised as Early Stage / Pre- Investor (26), Committed (11) and Established (13). This is a flexible service being delivered as an 18-month pilot concluding September / October 2019 and the learning will be used to inform the estimates setting process for 2019/20.

3.3 This service provides added-value to the support administered to clients by Invest NI. Since agreeing a 'collaborative investment support protocol' with Invest NI in March 2018, we have worked collaboratively on 12 FDI inward

visits to Belfast. One of the companies is Eirtech Aviation, an Irish-based Company with headquarters in Shannon and offices based in Dublin. In June they opened a composites repair centre on Queen's Road, Belfast with support from Invest NI. They hope to create 124 jobs over the next 4 years in the city. The Lord Mayor, Chair of Committee and Senior Management have met with four of the largest Inward Investors over the same period and civic input has contributed significantly to communicating an energised and vibrant city, helping to land the investment. Officers continue to work with Centres of Excellence such as NI Advanced Composites and Engineering Sector (NIACE) to identify sector-related investment. This led to the one key investment opportunity, which, if realised could secure £63million investment into the city and 172 jobs. Officers are currently supporting this business during phase one of the project setting up a facility in the Harbour with a launch event scheduled for 2018.

**3.4 Other activities include:**

- Collaboration with the Agents' Forum which is managed by the City Regeneration Team to develop a new guide for investors interested in identifying, setting up and establishing an office in Belfast
- The recent opening in the Council's Innovation Factory (IF) of an office by McGinnis Consulting – this tenant will create at least ten new jobs with positions that will offer an average salary of £40,000 in the financial and professional services sector.

**Building on our networks and partnerships towards a 'Belfast Connections' model**

**3.5** Following an independent review, NI Connections was brought in-house to Invest NI to maximise existing networks and relationships. It is promoted as a stand-alone network, acting as a vehicle to connect with diaspora with the aim of helping start-up businesses to start-up and scale up, sell outside of Northern Ireland, attracting inward investment and selling NI globally.

**3.6** Target Markets for trade development are demonstrated by Invest NI's International Office Network in Europe (Brussels, Dusseldorf, Dublin & London), India, Middle East and Africa (Bangalore, Dubai, Erbil, Jeddah and Mumbai), Americas (Boston, Chicago, New York and San Francisco) and Asia Pacific (Beijing, Shanghai, Singapore and Tokyo).

- 3.7 The Head of NI Connections is actively working with the Council towards a collaborative approach, which will include re-launch of a website with co-ordinated web content (estimated Oct 2018), appropriate representation on a partner forum and identifying and engaging strategic diaspora. Part of the longer-term NI Connections development will include 'coming back' to NI. NI Connections are also looking to work collaboratively with councils where there is sectoral and geographic alignment to jointly pool resources for in-market events in order to maximise impact and reduce overheads.**
- 3.8 The Council's current Sister City linkages borrow significantly from the learning gained from the Friends of Belfast Network. Each of the Sister Cities has a lead contact who acts as the liaison point for the Belfast City Council lead. The contact also agrees an annual action plan with the Council, in line with our mutually agreed areas of focus. Targets for the year are established and regularly reviewed with the lead contacts. Each of the individuals acting as lead contact point in the relevant cities is a well-networked individual and provides the Council and its partners with access to relevant contacts in the fields of economic development, education, culture and investment.**
- 3.9 The changing role and collaborative approach being adopted by NI Connections presents an opportunity to formalise a diaspora of Belfast Connections on a voluntary basis to support NI Connections activity. In addition Belfast City Council has renewed its relationship with Belfast Partners as agreed by Committee in March 2018. Belfast Partners manages a network of Belfast and N. Ireland diaspora in London and Dublin and are launching into Berlin in 2019. This diaspora resource provides connections to business opportunities for Belfast based companies to export and potential investment opportunities into Belfast. It is expected council will work with Belfast Partners and NI Connections to expand into new geographies.**
- 3.10 To initiate this process it is suggested that Officers compile a list of connections in the following locations: London, Dublin, Boston, New York, Chicago, Nashville, San Francisco and Shenyang. Belfast Connections would consist of selected individuals invited to be a strategic partner of the Council. These would each champion investment and economic growth in the key growth sectors. Secondary commitments would be secured by an email subscription service sitting within 'Belfast: City For Investment' webpage and actively promoted internationally keeping Belfast's diaspora updated on strategic development and opportunities at home.**

**Strategic development of our lead prospecting services for business expansion and investment attraction**

- 3.11 The OECD report on Belfast completed in mid-2008 recommended the need to form a new delivery vehicle that could bring together the required delivery agents and seek to overcome the fragmented position that existed at that time. However, a central question within the review was whether it was appropriate to set up such a vehicle at the time or whether it would be better to wait until the recommendations from the Review of Public Administration and other related activities had been implemented.
- 3.2 The issue of what role the Council should play in attracting and managing FDI has been looked at a number of times. In 2017, following the transfer of additional powers and in the context of growing ambitions for the Council to take a lead in city development a further review was undertaken. In 2017, OCO and Webb Advisory concluded a report, which assessed and recommended how the Council could establish a menu of city support and investment advice service. The OCO report discounted, at this time, the fully fledged service for a number of reasons;
- Perceived duplication of effort between Invest NI and Council and potential to confuse the market.
  - Availability of skills, and experience to deliver investment promotion directly at a city level; and
- 3.13 The 'Belfast: City for Investment' Service Pilot will test demand for a future evolving service and make future recommendations to committee. The development of a future service, whether that be maintaining the existing 'Belfast: City for Investment Service', enhancing it or developing it to a full Belfast Investment Vehicle must be considered based on current performance in attracting and securing investment as well as cost implications.
- 3.14 Statistical analysis completed as part of an OCO review evidenced that Belfast is performing well in terms of investment attraction. Belfast receives a significant share of FDI projects per 100,000 residents, when compared with other UK cities. Belfast ranks 2nd with a yearly average of 6.8 projects per 100,000 local residents.
- 3.15 Invest NI has repeated a strong first year in its 2017-2021 business strategy with an outturn of nearly 11,000 additional jobs within the first year. These are jobs that businesses have

already created, and two thirds of these are companies located outside of Belfast. They are half way to achieving their four-year sales target alone. In 2017/18 it supported 23 businesses to invest for the first time, one of the highest results in five years.

**Next steps and future models for consideration**

**3.16 The current Belfast: City for Investment pilot will be evaluated to inform future strategic development of the service. The principles to be considered as part of the evaluation will include:**

- **How to develop a tiered pathway of support for investors through the service**
- **The development of portfolio of support to retain investors in the city and encourage continued expansion;**
- **How to prioritise enquiries for the service aligned to the city priorities, economic and social merits of the investment;**
- **How to further develop the city proposition based on the requirements and support needs of previous enquiries.**
- **An assessment of the data gathered through the pilot to identify any gaps in service provision for investors or to identify if there is a need for a standalone or more robust service provision for investors.**

**Financial & Resource Implications**

**3.17 Progress of the initiatives detailed within this report are included within the 2018/19 Workplan for Economic Development and International Relations. Learning from the Belfast: City For Investment pilot will be factored into the estimates setting process for 20/21 service enhancement and development.**

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

**3.18 Each of the proposed projects referenced in this report is informed by statistical research, stakeholder engagement and complementary policies and strategies. New projects or service areas are equality screened and considerations given to equality and good relation impacts at the initial stages of project development. Officers will work closely with the Equality Good Relations Team on this activity.”**

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,  
Wednesday, 10th October, 2018**

During discussion, a number of Members stated that the previous Friends of Belfast approach had had some success in attracting inward investment.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted the progress that had been made with the 'Belfast: City for Investment Service';
- agreed to the development of a Belfast Connections Network in collaboration with NI Connections and Belfast Partners, and also agreed to look at the former work of the Friends of Belfast, with an outline plan to be submitted to a future meeting of Committee; and
- noted that future resources towards a client management approach would be considered based on the learning developed from the Belfast: City for Investment Pilot.

**Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure**

**East Bank Development Strategy Masterplan**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to:**

- **update Members on proposed changes to the draft East Bank Development Strategy (EBDS) as a result of comments received during the public consultation exercise and subsequent Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) and Rural Needs Impact Assessment Screening(s) of the draft Strategy;**
- **present the final draft of the East Bank Development Strategy for approval.**

**1.2 The relevant documents are available on modern.gov:**

- **Appendix 1: Strategic Impact Assessment (SEA) Adoption Statement.**
- **Appendix 2: Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Requirements Report.**
- **Appendix 3: Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) Screening Report.**
- **Appendix 4: Rural Needs Impact Assessment.**
- **Appendix 5: Summary of proposed amendments to the draft East Bank Development Strategy.**
- **Appendix 6: East Bank Development Strategy (final version for publication).**

## **2.0 Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of the SEA, HRA and EQIA adoption statement, requirements and screening reports at Appendices 1,2 and 3;
- Note the proposed amendments to the final draft of East Bank Development Strategy summarised in Appendix 4; and
- Approve the East Bank Development Strategy to support and complement existing planning policies as they apply to this part of the city centre.

## **3.0 Main report**

### **Background**

**3.1 In June 2017 Committee approved the draft East Bank Development Strategy for consultation. The 12-week consultation period commenced on 7th July and ended on 29th September.**

**3.2 In December 2017, Committee considered a report on the public consultation process which summarised the 190 responses received and provided feedback from statutory agencies. Responses from the public were generally supportive. Principle areas of concern which were expressed related to:**

- The proposal to relocate the Titanic Rail Halt in the absence of further transport modelling and feasibility being undertaken;
- The lack of a specific land allocation for affordable/social housing within the Sirocco site;
- A perception that the movement diagram and spatial plan included in the document were unduly prescriptive.

**3.3 In terms of statutory agencies, almost all were supportive. DfI Transport Strategy Division's response was non-committal subject to further traffic modelling being undertaken while DfI Rivers noted that the document needed to say more about how to address present-day flood risk to the proposed development as well as the impact of future climate change and in particular, potential sea level rise due to climate change.**

- 3.4 In light of the comments relating to flood risk and others received relating to protected habitats and environmental considerations, the Council conducted an SEA Determination (a 'screening' process) in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and has concluded that an SEA (Environmental Report) and HRA is required. It was agreed that further equality and good relations screening would be conducted in parallel with the proposed consultation processes on the SEA and HRA.

**Further Public Consultation**

- 3.5 A 12 week public consultation on the SEA, HRA and EQIA was undertaken between 12th February – 7th May 2018 using the Council's Consultation Hub (Citizenspace). One, on-line response from a member of the public was received which was broadly supportive of the findings in the consultation documents. NIEA provided a detailed response to the SEA and HRA reports and their comments have been incorporated in the SEA Adoption report available on modern.gov as Appendix 1. The Adoption report has been used to amend the finalised Strategy to place more emphasis on encouraging sustainable development and respecting the natural and historic environment.
- 3.6 The MP for East Belfast requested that a meeting be arranged with a number of community groups on 12th April 2018 to discuss the EQIA Screening document. No formal response to the consultation was submitted following the meeting. Issues discussed included the following;
- The importance of fostering Good Relations as development proposals emerge for sites on the East Bank, for example Sirocco;
  - Improved connectivity between the city centre and local communities, across the River Lagan is welcomed;
  - It was suggested that improved connections between Rotterdam Court and Bridge End would create inclusive space and provide a safe connection to the proposed footbridge;
  - Concerns were raised over the potential re-location of the Titanic rail halt. It was reiterated that this is a long-term aspiration and suitable transport studies would need to be carried out to ensure viability of the proposal;
  - Concerns were raised about the location and allocation of housing within the Sirocco site. The idea of shared space within the site was welcomed.

- 3.7 Two briefings also took place with the local councillor for Short Strand. While no formal response to the consultation was submitted following the briefings, issues raised included:
- The importance of improved connectivity between the city centre, Short Strand and other communities in East Belfast: this would include the provision of another footbridge/cyclebridge across the Lagan;
  - The provision of social and affordable housing within development sites in the EBDS area which include significant residential proposals: this is felt to be essential to create sustainable communities with a range of housing tenures and types to meet a range of housing needs.
- 3.8 On 8th August 2018, the findings of the SEA, HRA and EQIA were reported to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee and a final draft of the EBDS was presented for approval. Councillors asked that approval be deferred to allow for party group briefings to take place. These briefings have now been completed. No additional amendments to the Strategy are proposed.

#### Key Issues

##### Environmental

- 3.9 A number of the amendments to the EBDS set out in Appendix 4 arise from the SEA/HRA consultation process. These have not been reported to Committee previously and are explained in more detail below.
- 3.10 The EBDS needs to make expressed reference to the SEA Environmental Report and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) that accompany it. A sentence to this effect has been inserted at the end of the 'Context' section, p9. It reads as follows:
- 3.11 *'Furthermore, the East Bank Development Strategy has taken into account the key findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).'*
- 3.12 The EBDS refers to a range of specific projects related to the placemaking themes and conceptual proposals for this area. These include: key transport and movement projects; key development sites projects; and key public realm projects. Each of these projects was subject to strategic environmental

assessment and, where appropriate, mitigation was outlined. It is considered appropriate for the EBDS to expressly refer to the key findings of the Environmental Report within the pages of the EBDS.

- 3.13 The most significant amendment is to include a fifth placemaking theme at p14, Section 2.0 of the document order to act as a counterweight to the pro-development thrust of the four Placemaking themes in the draft document that underpin the regeneration of the area. It reads as follows:

**Encourage sustainable development and respect the natural and historic environment.**

- safeguarding against any deterioration in water quality at the Lagan Estuary and Belfast Harbour by reviewing wastewater treatment capacity and, if appropriate, phasing growth.
- Protecting against the threat of pollution to marine life in the harbour and birdlife in the designated Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in Belfast Lough by incorporating effective storm drainage management measures such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).
- Ensuring that potential on-site and adjacent off-site sources of contamination do not pose an unacceptable risk to environmental receptors, notably groundwater, surface water and future site users.
- Striking a balance between the desire to energise the waterfront with new development/activities and the requirement to respect the aquatic environment. This chiefly relates to: the protection of biodiversity from noise and disturbance; safeguarding water quality from spillages; and preventing marine litter.
- Promoting a modal shift from use of the car to walking, cycling and travel by public transport. This is necessary in order to improve air quality and to reduce noise levels for people living and working in and near this area.
- Ensuring that the new urban grain proposed for this area acknowledges its industrial heritage.
- Emphasising the need for new development to reduce emissions by various means, including use of gas energy, renewable energy (solar panels, biomass, CHP) and heat efficient design in the construction of buildings.

- 3.14 In addition to the new theme, The wording of the first placemaking theme has been modified to read as follows:

***'facilitating the optimum development of key sites.'*** This is to replace the wording ***'maximising the potential of development sites'***, which could lead some to interpret that maximum development in this area is the overriding goal at all costs, even at the expense of the environment.

- 3.15 To reflect NIEA comments related to waste-water capacity, the following text after the final sentence in the 'Phased Implementation' subsection of Section 4.0, p14 has been added.

***'If appropriate, this will include addressing wastewater treatment capacity in the East Bank via review and phasing of growth.'***

**Planning Considerations**

- 3.16 The Council recently approved the progression of the draft LDP Plan Strategy for public consultation. However, it will still be some considerable time before we are in a position to bring forward the site specific Local Policies Plan (LPP) setting out details at a more local level and a providing significant element of the spatial articulation to the adopted policy.
- 3.17 The process for the development of the LPP is likely involve a review of documents and frameworks, such as the East Bank Development Strategy. The LDP Plan Strategy may then provide a container for such documents to be brought forward as a form of Supplementary Planning Guidance and thereby give weight to the principles or elements of the Strategy as a more detailed articulation of LDP policy. This, subject to a consultation and adoption process at that stage, would provide for more weight to be afforded to the document in the decision making process for planning.
- 3.18 Until the adoption of the Plan Strategy the EBDS and similar documents have limited statutory weight in formal planning decision making. However, it should be recognised that they can, in common with other documents, still be material to and enhance the consideration of development proposals especially where additional or more up to date data informs the context for a decision.
- 3.19 In recognition of the timing of the approval of the EBDS in relation to the imminent public consultation process on the LDP Plan Strategy, it is proposed to amend the 'Forward Planning' section of the Strategy. The following text has been included:

*'Following the adoption of the LDP Plan Strategy, the Council will be in a position to review the East Bank Development Strategy with a view to bringing it forward as more formal planning guidance. This would provide the East Bank Development Strategy with greater weight in the decision-making process as a more detailed articulation of LDP policy'.*

**Affordable Housing**

- 3.20 Amongst the supportive comments received from NIHE part of the public consultation exercise during summer 2017, was a suggestion that a reference be included in the final version of the Strategy that an indicative proportion of affordable housing (20%) should be required in residential proposals across East Bank.
- 3.21 The inclusion of an indicative target for affordable housing will be considered as part of the imminent public consultation on the LDP Plan Strategy. To avoid predetermining the outcome of further consideration on this issue, it is proposed that the final EBDS does not include a defined percentage for affordable housing at this time. As stated in paragraph 3.14 above, the Council will be in a position to review this issue following the adoption of the LDP Plan Strategy with a view to bringing it forward as more formal planning guidance.
- 3.22 In terms of planning applications received before that point, NIHE's input will be sought as a statutory consultee with regard to the appropriate level and type of affordable housing required and negotiated with the applicant during the planning application process.

**Equality, Good Relations, Rural Needs**

- 3.23 The EQIA screening exercise which addresses Section 75 and Good Relations considerations concluded that all necessary adjustments and accommodations in relation to Section 75 have been made to the Strategy to this stage of its development. Should any matters arise from the consultation or during successive stages of implementation then appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that appropriate mitigation is applied and Section 75 issues will be mainstreamed into the fabric of the policy. The screening document also notes that 'proposals will be brought forward under the scheme mindful of the need to be sensitive to any traditions or events associated with local communities. Section 75 scrutiny will be applied as and when appropriate to avoid an adverse impact on good relations locally and including any proposed housing developments'.

- 3.24 The Rural Needs Impact Assessment found that the strategy involves the development of an inner city area and will have no direct impact in rural areas. By improving transport links to the city centre there will be indirect benefits for those from rural communities.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

- 3.25 None. The cost of publication and promotion of the EBDS will be met from existing budgets.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications**

- 3.26 Equality, Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment have been considered through the screening exercises available as Appendices 3 and 4 on modern.gov and the results explained in paragraphs 3.22-23 above.”

In response to a Member’s request, the Committee agreed that the Council would engage with Translink to discuss the potential relocation of the bus depot from the Short Strand, with a report to be submitted to a future meeting.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

**Positioning Belfast to Compete**

**International Relations Update and 6 Month Forward Plan**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to:**

- Update Members on the delivery of the International Relations Framework, focusing on activity over the last six months since March 2018;
- Seek approval to engage in early planning activity for a potential second Nashville in Belfast programme to take place in June 2019, subject to financial resources and partner buy-in; and
- Seek the approval for the attendance of the Chair of the Committee and the Director of Economic Development (or their nominees) as well as the Lord Mayor (who has been officially invited by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh), at the EUROCITIES AGM in Edinburgh on 28-30 November 2018.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the range of activities and outputs associated with the International Relations Action Plan for the current financial year, covering the period April 2018 to September 2018**
- **Approve officer engagement in the early planning activity for a potential second Nashville in Belfast programme to take place in June 2019, subject to approval of financial resources as part of the 2019/20 estimates process, and subject to partner buy-in and collective agreement on objectives and outcomes**
- **Approve the attendance of the Chair of Committee and the Director of Economic Development (or their nominees) at the EUROCITIES AGM in Edinburgh on 28-30 November 2018**
- **Note that the Lord Mayor has also been invited to attend the event by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and agree that the Lord Mayor attends as part of the Belfast delegation**
- **Note that the costs associated with attendance at the event will not exceed £1,500.**

## **3.0 Main report**

**3.1 In March 2018, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the International Relations Action Plan for the financial year 2018/19. This report provides an update on the high-level outputs over the last six months, focusing on activity with our Sister Cities of Shenyang, Boston and Nashville.**

## **3.2 Shenyang**

**Key activities with the Sister City of Shenyang in China include:**

- **Delivery of a tourism showcase in Shenyang in early September 2018. This was the first time that the city had undertaken in-market tourism promotion activity in the city. The Council was supported by our partner Visit Belfast who had organised the event in conjunction with a local partner on the ground. A full report on the outcomes from the event including leads and key opportunities is currently being compiled and will be shared with the Committee at future date, as part of the future planning work.**

- The city recently hosted two Summer Schools connected to the Belfast-Shenyang Sister City arrangement. The China Medical University-Queen's University of Belfast Joint College and Ulster University welcomed 14 students into its Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. In addition, the Lord Mayor of Belfast sent a congratulatory message to the first cohort of graduates from the China Medical University which is a QUB campus, based in Shenyang.

### 3.3 Boston

- The first ever Belfast – Mass Challenge pilot programme took place in Spring 2018. Ten companies in the fields of analytics, life sciences and the creative and digital sectors participated. For many of the businesses, this was their first entry into the US market and they all benefitted from significant insights into both trade and export development opportunities. In addition to the three-day intensive programme based in Mass Challenge, companies learned from experts about how they would need to tailor their products to the US market. They also met with representatives of the Mayor's office in Boston. These companies now have access to business networks and contacts across the global network of Mass Challenge locations. The Council is currently working with Catalyst Inc and Invest NI to consider the next steps for participating companies and, based on the evaluations from the participating businesses, is considering the merits of engagement in the programme for additional businesses
- In May 2018, Belfast hosted an inward business mission from Boston which has led to strong investment interest (still in the pipeline but confidential at this stage). During the visit, the British American Business Council of New England announced their intention to bring a business mission to Belfast in April 2019. Belfast City Council will work with Invest NI to support this visit and organise a range of business-to-business meetings as well as briefings with city leaders
- Belfast City Council led a delegation to Boston in April 2018, which included representatives from Ulster University, QUB, real estate investment companies and a number third sector organisations. This mission led to the endorsement of the Sister City relationship by the British Consul General. The programme also

included the launch of the inaugural Women's Friendship Four tournament which will come to Belfast in January 2019 and there were additional meetings to explore the potential of developing a Boston-Belfast Sister City philanthropic fund.

- Plans are at an early stage of development with a view to connecting the city's two teacher training institutions with schools in Boston, focusing on the teaching STEM subjects in the primary school curriculum.

#### 3.4 Nashville

- A special deputation to Belfast by elected representatives and representatives from academia and the business community in Nashville took place in May 2018. The inward delegation at this time was the biggest to date with 44 participants. The focal point of the activity was the 'Nashville in Belfast' programme. The purpose of this activity was to promote the city's longest standing Sister City relationship. Sister Cities Nashville invested \$60,000 in the project and Belfast City Council also allocated £20,000 towards the programme. A full Return on Investment report has been compiled on the project but key outputs are noted below:
  - 18 public events across a number of cultural disciplines (film, music, food, art and heritage) developed and delivered by city stakeholders
  - Extensive media coverage through Radio Ulster (including 5 live broadcastings) and pre-event publicity through interviews with Nashville delegates.
  - Delivery of Study Abroad seminar in partnership with all main tertiary education providers to an audience of 70 young people from across the region informing them of financial support available to enable studying in the United States
  - Delivery of 'Doing Business in the US' seminar by Invest NI to promote and provide information as to how local businesses can access and export to the American market.
  - Side programmes developed for the Nashville delegation with representatives from the business, tourism and education sectors
  - Development of a chef bursary scheme with direct financial intervention from Nashville chef Michael King, being administered through Food NI.

- 3.5** Based on the success of the initial event, partner organisations have expressed a willingness to work with the Council in a follow-up event. Plans are at a very early stage, with additional work required in order to be clear about the objectives of the event and the expected outcomes. However it is expected that, where possible, the Council will encourage partners to fund activities within their own resources where it meets their objectives, with the Council funding focusing on the promotion and marketing of the activities in order to drive footfall and maximise PR coverage for the city. Given that the budgets for the next financial year have not been approved, there has been no financial commitment to this work by the Council at present but it will be considered as part of the estimates process. An indicative date of June 2019 is being considered, as this ties in with music convention which a Nashville-based promoter is planning for Belfast at that time. Additional information on these proposals will be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee for information and approval.
- 3.6** One other area of collaboration between organisations in Belfast and Nashville is in the field of legal services. Work continues in establishing formal links between the Law Society and the Nashville Bar Association and both associations are keen to progress educational exchanges for legal sector representatives.
- 3.7** Proposed attendance at EUROCITIES AGM (28-30 November 2018)
- Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been a very proactive member of the EUROCITIES network for over 15 years. This network comprises over 140 cities across the European Union and has good access to the European Institutions. It offers member cities the opportunity to benefit from those connections in order to understand and influence policy, and can help identify transnational partners for engagement on areas of mutual interest.
- 3.8** Although our direct engagement in the network has reduced as the interest in international relations has expanded, the network remains a useful mechanism for maintaining a watching brief on key European urban policy developments.
- 3.9** EUROCITIES hosts its AGM in one of the member cities each year. The 2018 event takes place in Edinburgh on 28-30 November 2018. The theme for the event is 'Creative Competitive Cities'. City representation and network voting rights at this event are restricted to senior elected officials.

It is proposed that the Chair of Committee and the Director of Economic Development (or nominees) attend the AGM. The Committee is asked to note that the Lord Mayor has also been invited to attend this event by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh. The Lord Mayor has indicated that she would be available to attend the event. The costs associated with attendance for three delegates will not exceed £1,500 and this has been accounted for in the current International Relations budget.

**3.10 With regard to priority activities for the coming six months, the key activities in the diary to date include:**

- Support in progressing the delivery of the fourth Friendship Four ice hockey tournament (incorporating a business and education showcase). This event will take place on 23 and 24 November 2018 and will attract an estimated 1,000 visitors travelling to Belfast from America, Canada and the rest of UK. The event typically generates 4,000 bed nights in the city – made up principally of the teams and officials.
- Support in progressing the delivery of the second Basketball Hall of Fame competition. This event will take place on 29 November – 1 December 2018. With 8 teams participating in this year's event, there will be 210 players and officials with an estimated 5,000 out of state visitors anticipated. In addition to event participants and supporters, there will be an inward delegation from Boston. Details of those participating are currently being finalised but they are likely to include legal, government and business representation.
- Council engagement in the fourth UK-China Regional Leaders Summit. This will take place in Dalian in mid-October 2018. Dalian is a city in Liaoning Province – the same province that Belfast's Sister City of Shenyang is located. Derry City and Strabane District Council will sign a Sister City Agreement with Dalian at this time. The purpose of this event is to further cement economic, academic, tourism and cultural links between NI and the Liaoning Province under the MOU signed by First Minister Foster in December 2016.

**3.11 Financial & Resource Implications**

Costs associated with attendance of the Chair and the Director of Economic Development (or their nominees) as well as the Lord Mayor are contained within the existing International Relations budget. Costs associated with the 2019 Nashville in

**Belfast programme and other future activities will be built to the 2019/2020 estimates, and will be considered as part of the estimates process.**

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

**The International Relations Framework 2016-2021 has been equality screened. Activity undertaken by the International Relations Unit does not have a direct rural impact and activity within Nashville in Belfast 2019 will take into consideration accessibility of and promotion to the city's urban and rural populations."**

During discussion, a Member requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting detailing the reasons why the agreed outward delegation to attend a conference on Health and Life Sciences in Nashville in August, 2018, did not go ahead, in order that lessons could be learned for the future.

After further discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations as outlined in the report and further agreed that a report be submitted to the next meeting, providing a review of why the outward trip to attend the conference in Nashville did not proceed.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Airport Security –  
Councillor Mullan to raise**

At the request of a Member, the Committee agreed to invite representatives from both the George Best Belfast City Airport and the Belfast International Airport to attend a future meeting, in order to discuss the recent reports in the media relating to long security queues at the International Airport, and also to discuss the impact that Brexit would have on both airports.

**Youth Employment Academy –  
Councillor O'Hara to raise**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor O'Hara requested that the Committee considered the following proposal:

"The Committee commends the employability and skills initiatives adopted by the Council to help people gain employment. Those initiatives included sectoral Employment Academies which, in partnership with employers, trained people who were out of work to apply for specific job vacancies.

In line with this successful model, and as part of the City Youth Pledge, it agreed to pilot a Youth Employment Academy to support people aged 16+ to access part time employment (8-16hour posts) in retail and hospitality."

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,  
Wednesday, 10th October, 2018**

The Committee agreed to adopt the motion.

The Committee agreed to the proposal.

Chairperson

## Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 17th October, 2018

### MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor O'Hara (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Spence and Copeland; and  
Councillors Boyle, Clarke, Craig, Dudgeon,  
Groves, Hutchinson, McConville, McReynolds  
and Nic Biorna.
- In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control;  
Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;  
Miss N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor  
Mr. J. Cunningham, Regulatory Services Manager;  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer, and;  
Miss C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of the High Sherriff (Councillor Howard), Alderman L. Patterson and Councillor Magennis.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 19th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October, 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 interested were reported.

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

#### **Applications Approved under Delegated Authority**

The Committee noted a list of licences and permits which had been issued under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

**Applications for the Renewal of Seven-Day  
Annual Entertainments Licences –  
Flame Restaurant/Red Devil Bar**

The Committee was reminded that, under the terms of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, it had a duty, when considering any application for the grant, renewal or transfer of an Entertainments Licence, to take into account any convictions of the applicant relating to an offence under the Order which had occurred within a five-year period immediately preceding the date on which the application had been made.

Accordingly, the Building Control Manager drew its attention to applications which had been received for the renewal of the Annual Indoor Entertainments Licences in respect of Flame Restaurant, 46 Howard Street and the Red Devil Bar, 194-198 Falls Road.

He reported that the licensee of Flame Restaurant had, on 3rd February, 2015, been fined £150 and instructed to pay costs of £69, following an inspection by Council officers, which had found that entertainment was being provided without an Entertainments Licence. In terms of the Red Devil Bar, the licensee had, on 11th February, 2014, been convicted of having a locked roller shutter on a final exit and of failing to have the log book for recording pre-event checks available for inspection and been fined £500 and ordered to pay £69 in costs.

He pointed out that the Committee had, in subsequent years, agreed to renew the Entertainments Licences and that, on the two occasions over the past year on which each of the premises had been inspected, officers had found that all management procedures were being implemented effectively.

He confirmed that no written representations had been received in relation to the applications and that the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland had offered no objections.

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to renew the Annual Indoor Entertainments Licences in respect of Flame Restaurant, 46 Howard Street and the Red Devil Bar, 194-198 Falls Road, Belfast.

**Review of Stationary Street Trading Licences –  
Fountain Lane and Fountain Street**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th May, it had agreed that it was minded to revoke two Stationary Street Trading Licences held by Mr. J. Kerr for designated sites in Fountain Lane and Fountain Street, on the basis that he had failed to pay the annual licence fee for each site and that he be invited to make representation to the Committee regarding that decision.

The Committee was reminded further that, at its meeting on 15th August and 16th September, it had, due to Mr. Kerr's inability to attend on each occasion, agreed to defer the matter.

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The Building Control Manager informed the Members that Mr. Kerr had, again, been invited to address the Committee. However, he had, that afternoon, submitted an email stating that, due to ill health, he would be unable to attend and setting out the reasons for the delay in paying the fees for his two licences and not utilising his sites fully. The Building Control Manager pointed out that Mr. Kerr's debt now stood at £2515.06 and that he had, in his email, stated that, should the Committee be minded to allow him to continue trading, he would seek to establish a payment plan to eradicate the arrears and to keep up to date with future payments.

In response to questions raised by the Members, the Regulatory Services Manager confirmed that the Street Trading Licences for Fountain Street and Fountain Lane were due to be renewed on 18th January, 2019 and 20th March, 2019 respectively. He pointed out that should the Committee decide to revoke a licence, other traders could apply to trade at that site.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to revoke the Stationary Street Trading Licence for Fountain Street, on the basis that it was the least utilised of Mr. Kerr's two sites; and
- (ii) agreed to defer, until its meeting in November, consideration of the site in Fountain Lane, to allow Mr. Kerr to establish a plan for the repayment of his outstanding licence fees.

The Committee noted that Mr. Kerr could, at any time before the expiration of the period of twenty-one days from the date on which notice of the decision was given by the Council, appeal the decision through the Magistrates' Court.

**Licensing Committee Protocol and Overview of Licensing**

Following the conclusion of the meeting, the Building Control Manager, the Regulatory Services Manager and the Divisional Solicitor delivered a training session for Members which focused primarily upon the following topics:

- an overview of the different types of regulatory functions for which the Committee was responsible;
- the Licensing Committee protocol and representation process;
- the legal principles governing the decision-making process; and
- alcohol licensing matters and its relationship to entertainments licensing.

Chairperson

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## Planning Committee

Tuesday, 16th October, 2018

### MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);  
Alderman McGimpsey;  
Councillors Carson, Dorrian, Hussey,  
Hutchinson, Johnston, Lyons, Magee,  
McAteer, Nicholl and Mullan.

In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building  
Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;  
Mr. E. Baker, Development Engagement Manager;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor McDonough-Brown.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 11th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October, 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.

### **Special Planning Committee Request**

The Committee agreed to hold a special meeting between 23rd and 26th October, in relation to planning application LA04/2018/2393/LBC - Conservation led works to Bank Buildings involving the taking down, recording and assessment for restoration purposes of the building above the fourth floor cornice line to the Bank Street, Castle Street and Castle Place elevations of the building for off-site storage.

### **Committee Site Visits**

Pursuant to its decision of 11th September, it was noted that the Committee had undertaken a site visit on 25th September in respect of planning applications LA04/2017/1153/F - 10 Lorne Street, 4 Storey apartment development, comprising 31 apartments, car parking, amenity space and associated and LA04/2017/2811/F - 81-87 Academy Street and 2-6 Exchange Street - Demolition of existing building and erection of 16 storey residential building.

**Issues Raised in Advance by Members**

**Site Visit Request - Modern Methods of Construction (Councillor Lyons to raise)**

The Committee considered a request from Councillor Lyons to visit a Clanmil Housing Scheme which intended to manufacture homes via off-site construction methods in Lisburn for a housing project in Carrickfergus.

The Committee agreed to undertake a site visit to the Clanmil Housing Scheme in Carrickfergus.

**Planning Appeals Notified**

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission.

**Planning Decisions Issued**

The Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Director of Planning and Building Control, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 10th September and 9th October, 2018.

**Miscellaneous Item**

**Restricted Item**

**The information contained in the following report 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 of this item 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.

**Planning Portal Update**

(Councillors Carson and Lyons had left the room whilst the item was under consideration.)

The Committee was reminded that the Council was participating in a joint project with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the other 10 council areas to examine the options to replace the Planning Portal.

The Development Engagement Manager explained that, further information had been received from DfI relating to governance and legal issues. He indicated that options

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on the replacement Planning Portal would be submitted to the Planning Committee and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration in due course.

Noted.

(Councillors Carson and Lyons returned to the Committee table at this point.)

**Withdrawn Items**

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

- LA04/2017/2726/A light emitting diode (LED) display unit 510 South of Broadway Roundabout;
- LA04/2017/2727/A light emitting diode (LED) display unit 50m North of Grosvenor Bridge over Westlink;
- LA04/2017/2731/A light emitting diode (LED) display unit on M2 when travelling South;
- LA04/2017/2732/A light emitting diode (LED) display unit 145m West of Dee Street junction on Sydenham Bypass when travelling west; and
- LA04/2017/2733/A - Light emitting diode (LED) display unit located at the footbridge at the former airport access point.

**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)**

**(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2017/1153/F - 10 Lorne Street, 4 Storey apartment development, comprising 31 apartments, car parking, amenity space and associated works**

The case officer reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 11th September, before presentation of the application had commenced, the Committee had agreed to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken.

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that, as the application had not been presented at the previous meeting, all Members present would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.

The case officer informed the Committee that, after the agenda had been published, three amended drawings had been received from the architect on 12th October, to illustrate the following changes:

- Omission of lift access to fourth floor amenity area. It appeared that the lift shaft would remain internally with access as far as the 3rd floor;

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- Elevations amended – detailing and materials on the third floor amended (Slate tiling to mansard roof with standing seam zinc cladding to dormers over windows); and
- Amendments to third floor window details.

She also advised that the following correspondence had been received from various political representatives:

- Email from Councillor Craig requesting a meeting between the applicant and the Planning Service following the scheduling of the application as a refusal;
- Email from Claire Hanna MLA which sought information on the planning application; and
- Letter of support from Paula Bradshaw MLA: Support for social housing, redevelopment of vacant site, adequate parking provision and no overshadowing. Letter also supported a meeting between the applicant and the Planning Service.

The case officer outlined the response of the Planning Department to the aforementioned issues raised, as set out in the Late Items Report Pack.

She explained that, after assessment, the application had been recommended for refusal on the grounds that:

- The proposal was contrary to the SPPS and Policy QD1 of Planning Policy Statement 7 in that the development would not, if permitted, respect the surrounding context and was inappropriate to the character of the site in terms of layout, excessive scale and massing and appearance of buildings;
- The proposal was contrary to the SPPS and Policy QD1 of Planning Policy Statement 7 in that the design of the development did not draw upon the best local traditions of form, materials and detailing and an inadequate landscaping scheme had been provided which did not soften the visual impact of the development or assist integration with the surrounding area;
- The proposal was contrary to the SPPS and Policy QD1 of Planning Policy Statement 7 in that the development would, if permitted, have an unacceptable adverse effect on the proposed property in terms of loss of light, overshadowing and poor outlook for potential residents;
- The proposal was contrary to Policy LC1 of Planning Policy Statement 7 Addendum in that the pattern of development was not in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the area;
- The proposal was contrary to the SPPS and Policy FLD 3 of Planning Policy Statement 15 in that the applicant had failed to submit information as requested to demonstrate that adequate measures would be put in place to effectively mitigate the flood risk to the development and from the development elsewhere; and

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- The proposal was contrary to the SPPS and Policy ATC 2 of Planning Policy Statement 6 Addendum as the proposed development did not maintain the overall character or respect the built form of the area.

The Committee received a representation from Councillor Craig in objection to the case officer's recommendation for refusal. He suggested that the current warehouse structure on site did not enhance the character of the area and the site was located close to a commercial area which led onto the Lisburn Road. He suggested that there was no consistency in the application of policy as a similar scheme had been approved on Windsor Road.

The Committee received a representation from Mr. T. Wilson, agent, representing the applicant. Mr. Wilson raised the following points of objection to the case officer's recommendation for refusal:

- Suggested scale and massing was not an issue;
- The current building on the site was derelict and vacant;
- Consideration should be given to context and surrounding commercial buildings;
- The 4th storey was contained within the roof;
- The drawings shown in the case officer's presentation were not a true representation of the proposal;
- The design was a horse shoe arrangement and was on a sun path;
- Refusal was unjustified as proposal would enhance the area from what's currently on site;
- Flooding issues and control of discharge had been dealt with in the application;
- The proposal was intended for social housing for elderly persons;  
and
- The proposal would maintain the character of the area.

During points of clarification, Mr. Wilson explained the lift access to the fourth floor and suggested that the Planning Service had declined to meet with him to discuss their recommendation for refusal.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Hussey, and  
Seconded by Alderman McGimpsey,

That the Committee, given the issues which had been raised regarding the outstanding information, agrees to defer consideration of the application to enable clarification of the issues to be provided in an amended report at the next meeting.

On a vote by show of hands seven Members voted for the proposal and five against and it was declared carried.

**LA04/2017/2728/A - Light emitting diode (LED) display unit located on the M1 Motorway (Northbound) 145m Southwest of Blacks Road; and**

**LA04/2017/2730/A - Light emitting diode (LED) display unit located 430m North Of Duncrue Street offslip**

The Committee agreed to consider the aforementioned applications together.

The case officer outlined the applications for the erection of 11.2m high by 4.3m wide advertisement supporting structures containing 6.7m high by 3.8m wide LED screens at both locations.

The case officer informed the Committee that, after the agenda had been published, technical information had been submitted to address the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads concerns and the refusal reason, but no amendments had been made to the proposed scheme.

The case officer outlined the response of the Planning Department to the aforementioned issues raised, as set out in the Late Items Report Pack.

The case officer explained that, after assessment, both applications had been recommended for refusal on the grounds that:

- The proposals were contrary to Planning Policy Statement 17 (PPS17): Control of Outdoor Advertisements; Policy AD1, Amenity and Public Safety, in that the applicant had failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not prejudice public safety; and
- The proposals were contrary to Planning Policy Statement 17 (Control of Outdoor Advertisements) Policy AD 1 in that the proposed LED display units would, if permitted, be unduly visually prominent at these locations due to inappropriate scale and massing and, lead to an undesirable precedent for other similar signs along this main traffic route.

The Committee received a representation from Councillor Craig in objection to the case officer's recommendations for refusal. He suggested that similar proposals had been approved elsewhere in the UK and that the applicant had worked on the site specific project with DfI Roads. He advised that the applicant had submitted additional information on 12th October, however, the applicant had not had the opportunity to review or consider the response from DfI Roads.

The Committee received a representation from Mr. C. Bryson, agent, representing the applicant. Mr. Bryson raised the following points of objection to the officer's recommendations for refusal:

- In consideration of the proposal, weight should be given to the Department for Infrastructure Memorandum (2015) in relation to advertisements which stated "*there is no conclusive proof that the*

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*presence of advertisements is a contributing factor in the cause of road traffic collisions”;*

- The proposals formed part of a wider Dfl pilot scheme, where 7 locations would be proposed for such advertisements on a trial basis, which had not been mentioned in the report;
- The case officer’s report had not outlined the socio-economic benefits of the proposal, which included revenue for the Council;
- Information submitted to the Council had not been available on the Planning Portal;
- The applicant had not been made aware of additional consultation information received by the Planning Service; and
- Requested a deferral so that all matters could be considered.

During point of clarification, Mr. Wilson confirmed that similar LED Advertisements had been installed in Birmingham, Milton Keynes and Glasgow.

The Committee received a representation from Mr. L. Walsh, Department for Infrastructure Roads. Mr Walsh advised that research indicated that digital advertisements had a dwell time that would distract drivers and suggested that the M1 and M2 should not have any additional distractions. He suggested that the pilot scheme was subject to suitable locations of the proposed LED advertisements and confirmed that he had concerns with the locations of the two proposals.

**LA04/2017/2728/A**

The recommendation to refuse the application was put to the Committee when eleven Members voted in favour and one against and it was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Committee refused the application for the reasons as set out in the case officer’s report.

**LA04/2017/2730/A**

The recommendation to refuse the application was put to the Committee when eleven Members voted in favour and one against and it was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Committee refused the application for the reasons as set out in the case officer’s report.

**LA04/2017/2811/F - 16 storey residential building comprising 90 units and ancillary ground floor uses 81 - 87 Academy Street and 2 - 6 Exchange Street**

(Councillor Nicholl had left the room whilst the item was under consideration.)

The Committee considered the application for the demolition of an existing vacant three storey building on the site (under accompanying application LA04/2017/2783/DCA) and the erection of a 16 storey residential building comprising of 90 units (30 x one bed and 60 x two bed), ancillary ground floor uses including management suite, café, servicing

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(refuse/recycling/cycle storage/general storage), plant room, substation and associated public realm works.

The Development Engagement Manager informed the Committee that, after the agenda had been published, the following points of objection had been submitted:

- The impact of a 19 storey building in a conservation area;
- The impact on the setting of St. Anne's Cathedral and Library Service Head Quarters, which were listed buildings;
- The height would set a precedent for tall buildings in city centre;
- The proposal was contrary to Planning Policy Statement 6 and it would not respect the 3 storey height of adjoining buildings;
- Questioned if consultation had been carried out with other environment and heritage bodies;
- Questioned what comments the conservation officer and urban design officer had made in relation to the proposal as they had not been contained in the Development Management Report;
- The demolition of a building sympathetic to height and scale of conservation area, and replacement with a 16 storey building was contrary to policy;
- Suggested there were other sites within/ near city centre, outwith conservation areas and away from listed buildings that were more suited to high-rise development; and
- The proposed building would be inappropriate to the genius loci of the surrounding area.

The Development Engagement Manager outlined the response of the Planning Department to the aforementioned issues raised, as set out in the Late Items Report Pack.

He advised that a consultation response had also been received from Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads on 10th October which suggested that 25-45 car parking spaces were required and highlighted the subsequent impact on amenity of local residents and businesses. However, a meeting had taken place on 15th October between DfI Roads, Officers and the applicant in which a 5 year travel card pack for residents to use public transport had been proposed, together with the submission of a travel plan. He advised that, on that basis, DfI Roads would withdraw their requirement for on-site parking. He explained that DfI Roads agreement on this needed to be confirmed in writing and the requirements would need to be secured if the proposal was approved.

He pointed out that a condition regarding the proposed Public Realm Works would also be applied, which required proposed public realm improvement works in the vicinity of the site to be completed prior to occupation of the first residential unit, if the proposal was approved.

He informed the Committee that the agent had also submitted a briefing statement to the Committee, however, all information had previously been included within supporting documents submitted to the Council during the processing of the planning application.

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The Committee received a representation from Mr. D. Flinn, representing the Belfast Civic Trust in objection to the proposal. He raised concerns in relation to the height of the proposal in the conservation area and the proposed materials and its contrast to the rest of the conservation area. He suggested that the proposal would, if approved, set a precedent in the area and be in breach of CC013 Policy as set out in BMAP. He suggested also that the tall building examples given in the case officer's presentation weren't logical as they were located outside of the conservation area. He pointed out that, paragraph 9.23 of the case officer's report stated a '*red bricked finish*', however, the building proposed would be white. He questioned paragraph 9.38 of the case officer's report which stated '*the vertical emphasis*' and its relationship to the Education and Library Board (ELB) building which would be 32m higher and suggested that the comparisons were challengeable. He suggested that the Council should preserve the area, the proposal was contrary to policy and would interfere with the sustainable economic benefits of the conservation area.

The Committee received a representation from Mr. M. Gordon, Mr. S. Tyler and Mr. S. Levrant representing the applicant. They raised the following points, in support of the application:

- The proposal would bring investment to the area;
- The proposal would assist the Belfast agenda as it would provide diverse housing and increase the city centre population;
- The proposal would balance heritage and each application should be considered on its own merits;
- The proposal was designed to be a bespoke response to the location;
- BMAP predated the University decision in relation to transforming the area;
- The proposal would strengthen the character of the area and balance the dominance to the roads;
- The proposal would add to the cluster of tall buildings and would be set back from the ELB building;
- The design was an elegant scheme and proposed to use cladded brick, aluminium and glass with active entrances and retail/cafe space on the ground floor; and
- Suggested a Travel Plan and Ticket Scheme for residents to use Public Transport as no car parking had been proposed.

During points of clarification, the agents explained the travel ticket scheme, the viability of the proposal, the height of the building, cycle provision and potential public realm enhancement.

During discussion, the Director also clarified the responses from the Urban Design Officer and the Conservation Officer. He also advised that an approach to how residents with disabilities could be accommodated in relation to the travel package could also be considered as part of the aforementioned discussions on the travel plan.

After discussion, the Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report and delegated power to the

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Director of Planning and Place for the final wording of the conditions, subject to clarification of the consultation response from DfI Roads, satisfactory amendments to the design of the public realm enhancements, the submission of a satisfactory travel plan and securing travel cards for five years. The Committee also noted that the Department for Infrastructure would be notified.

(Councillor Nicholl returned to the Committee table at this point.)

**(The meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes.)**

**LA04/2018/1321/F - Change of use from call centre to vehicle storage including new external vehicle access ramp and associated site works, Unit 2-6 Apollo Space Building, Apollo Road**

(Councillors Carson and Lyons had left the room whilst the item was under consideration.)

The Committee was apprised of the principal aspects of the application.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Place for the final wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2017/1012/F - 22 dwellings (12 apartments in 1 block, 8 semidetached and 2 bungalows) associated planting and new access onto Beersbridge Road on lands to the west of Owen O'Cork Mill, 288 Beersbridge Road**

The Committee considered the aforementioned application.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Place for the final wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2018/0916/F - 45 apartments within 3 three storey buildings including access, parking, cycle bays, open space, landscaping and associated site works on land adjacent to East of 1-13 Lewis Park and 2-20 Lewis Mews**

The Committee considered the application for the erection of 3 apartment blocks comprising of 45 two bedroom apartments, including communal circulation and ancillary areas along with associated site works, car parking, roads and landscaping.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Place for the final wording of the conditions.

**LA04/2018/1676/F - Conversion of existing dwelling to an HMO at 107 Donegall Avenue**

The case officer explained that, after assessment, the application had been recommended for refusal on the grounds that the proposal was contrary to Policy HMO 5 of the HMO Subject Plan, in that the 10 percent limit for HMO's within 300m either side of 107 on Donegall Avenue had already been exceeded.

The Committee refused the application for the reason as set out in the case officer's report.

**LA04/2018/1912/F - Change of Use of single dwelling to a HMO at 30 Thorndale Avenue**

The Committee considered the aforementioned application.

The case officer highlighted that the application site fell within a HMO Policy Area (HMO 2/20) as designated within the HMO Subject Plan for Belfast. The Policy stated that planning permission would only be granted where the number of HMO dwellings units did not as a result exceed 30 percent of all dwelling units within the Policy Area. The Council's records indicated that this figure had been exceeded.

The case officer explained that, after assessment, it had been recommended for refusal on the grounds that:

- The proposal was contrary to Policy HMO 1 of the HMO Subject Plan for Belfast City Council Area 2015 in that the 30% limit for HMOs within the Thorndale HMO Policy Area (Designation HMO 2/20) had already been exceeded. Approval of this proposal would therefore be contrary to policy as it would contribute to an unacceptable concentration and proliferation of HMO use in the area; and
- The proposal was contrary to HMO 6 of the HMO Subject Plan for Belfast City Council Area 2015 in that it was within a HMO Policy Area and would exceed 4 bedrooms.

The Committee refused the application for the reason as set out in the case officer's report.

**LA04/2018/1807/F - Change of use from a private dwelling to a 5 bed HMO at 427 Springfield Road**

The Committee considered the application for the change of use from a private dwelling house to a 5 bed House of Multiple Occupation.

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The case officer confirmed that the application site was not within an HMO Policy Area or Development Node as designated in the HMO Subject Plan 2015 and complied with the HMO Policy Area and was acceptable in terms of the 10% threshold.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report.

**LA04/2018/1672/F - Conversion of existing dwelling to a HMO at 163 Broadway**

The case officer confirmed that the application site was not within an HMO Policy Area or Development Node as designated in the HMO Subject Plan 2015 and complied with the HMO Policy Area and was acceptable in terms of the 10% threshold.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report.

**LA04/2018/1457/F - Installation of 6m high lighting to Carpark at Recreational grounds at Blanchflower Playing Fields, Hollywood Road**

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the Council was the applicant.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report.

Chairperson

# Planning Committee

Friday, 26th October, 2018

## SPECIAL MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);  
Councillors Carson, Dorrian, Hutchinson,  
Johnston, Magee, McAteer, Mullan and Nicholl.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building  
Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;  
Mr. E. Baker, Development Engagement Manager; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies were reported from Alderman McGimpsey and Councillors Hussey and McDonough-Brown.

### Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### 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)**

**LA04/2018/2393/LBC - Conservation led works to Bank Buildings involving the taking down, recording and assessment for restoration purposes of the building above the fourth floor cornice line to the Bank Street, Castle Street and Castle Place elevations of the building for off-site storage.**

The Committee was informed that the site related to Bank Buildings, a Category B1 Listed Building and, was located within the city centre on the corner of the junction of Royal Avenue and Castle Street, within the City Centre Conservation Area.

The Committee was reminded that the building had been severely damaged by a fire that started on 28th August and continued for 3 days. A significant proportion of the internal structure had burnt away, had collapsed or had been severely damaged with the external facades subject to further damage. In its present condition, the building's physical fabric remained very vulnerable and posed a threat to public health and safety.

The Development Engagement Manager advised that the application sought Listed Building Consent for conservation led works involving the taking down, recording and assessment of the building above the fourth-floor cornice line to Bank Street, Castle Street and Royal Avenue, including the 6 chimneys.

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He informed the Committee that, after the agenda had been published, the following representations of support had been received:

Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA)

- The proposal struck the appropriate balance between the conservation of the building, public safety and wider considerations around economic, social and cultural life in the city centre;
- Supported the orderly removal of stonework to facilitate assessment and an authentic reconstruction;
- Sets out the importance of conserving the city's built heritage;
- Welcomed the engagement by Primark, Belfast City Council and Historic Environment Division and suggested that the combined expertise would lead to a positive outcome for the city;
- If permission was granted works should start the next day in order to reduce the safety cordon;
- The impact of the fire on city centre life had been severe. It was equally important that steps were taken by the Council and government departments to attract people back to the city centre; and
- RSUA had encouraged the public to share their views and were running an ideas competition for early career architects on the same theme.

Ulster Architectural Heritage (UAH)

- Agreed with the updated Outline Conservation Statement and reiterated its support for the proposal;
- Supports the final substantive reply from the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division, including the recommended conditions, particularly in relation to the methodology for the works;
- The methodology should refer to "dismantling" rather than "demolition";
- Commented on the potential use of shipping containers as a basis for both the protection of pedestrian corridors and to form a base for shoring structures. UAH had previously suggested prefabricated steel pedestrian corridor sections could be craned into place and linked safely under their own cover as a quick and safe alternative solution;
- Regarding the comments from the Council's Economic Development team, the proposal had the potential to satisfy both traders and those who wish to see the building retained. This was arguably the fastest route to reopening the footfall corridors;
- Suggested that the Economic Development team did not consider the potential impact and focused on the current situation on the ground. This was of no apparent relevance to the application per se;

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- The comments confirm that most UK cities were suffering considerable loss of footfall due to the rise of online retail and 'homogenisation'. This countered, to an extent, those who simply choose to 'blame' Bank Buildings for much wider ingrained problems;
- Suggested that there had been no acknowledgement of the economic value of heritage and the fact that the two were not exclusive; and
- Agreed that the longer the cordon remained in place, the greater the likelihood that user habits within the city centre fundamentally change. They suggested that the best way to facilitate both the early reduction of the cordon and the preservation of the integrity of the city's valuable built heritage was to firmly support this application.

**Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC)**

- BCTC, who represented over 400 local businesses, recognised the urgent need for action and was supportive of this application for survival of the city;
- Supported the proposed reduction in the cordon to allow pedestrian access between Royal Avenue and Donegall Place safely;
- Suggested that the situation was urgent, severing the city's retail core, deterring many shoppers and was having a devastating effect on trade and business. The city and businesses lose hundreds of thousands of pounds of lost revenue each day; and
- Suggested that the work was completed with the utmost urgency, including 7 days per week operations and night working. Logistical movements should also be scheduled at night times, to avoid unnecessary disruption during retail trade business hours.

**Northern Ireland Environment Link**

- Bank Buildings was one of the most prominent heritage buildings in Belfast City Centre;
- The case for protecting and restoring our relatively small stock of heritage buildings was further supported by the economic value that is derived from built heritage;
- It was recognised that the longer the safety cordon remained in place, the greater the potential impact on user habits with the city centre; and
- The best way to facilitate both the early reduction of the cordon and preservation of the city's valuable built heritage was to support this application.

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Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in Ireland (SPAB)

- Commented on the rich heritage and history of Bank Buildings and suggested that the protection and retention of the structure was appropriate to the significance of the site and building;
- Welcomed the applicant's approach to record precarious structural elements at high level and to take down and store for future analysis and possible reinstatement. This would minimise the risk of progressive collapse, which would also result in reducing the safety cordon on surrounding buildings;
- The SPAB Briefing Document on 'Disaster and Recovery' recommended that protective works should be carried out to the damaged building to stabilize its condition and prevent further deterioration. The current proposal was in keeping with this strategy; and
- SPAB advocated sensitive new design over reconstruction or restoration and recommended the next phase of works to the surviving structure followed this approach. Future proposals should be sympathetic to the surviving historic fabric while clearly of our time.

Four individual representations

- It was critical that Bank Buildings were retained and restored, not demolished;
- The building was extremely important and utterly irreplaceable. Its loss would be devastating for the city centre;
- Given the building's significance, it represented an important landmark at this junction;
- There had been too many buildings damaged and demolished through 'modernisation' or neglect – There were too few and each lost cumulatively impacted on the history and character of the city; and
- The heritage led approach was supported.

The Development Engagement Manager outlined the response of the Planning Department to the aforementioned issues raised, as set out in the Late Items Report Pack.

The Committee received a representation from Councillor Craig, in support of the application. He suggested that the Building meant a lot to the people of Belfast and that the public should continue to shop on Castle Street to support the traders which had been affected by the safety cordon. He suggested that the conservation led approach, outlined in the application, was appropriate and the Council had a legal duty to protect the building. He suggested further that the programme of work, previously agreed by the Council to animate the City, would also help to support the traders.

The Committee received a representation from Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. P. Stinson, and Mr. S. Douglas, representing the applicant.

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Mr. O'Connor explained that Primark had been trading in the location since 1980 and that they realised the historic significance and cultural importance of the Building to the City. He suggested that the situation to recover the building was very complex and they had explored multiple possibilities to restore the Building as fast as they could. He suggested that this application was the important first step to start the recovery of the Listed Building as a future Primark Store.

Mr. Stinson thanked the Council for their engagement and fast processing of the Planning Application. He outlined a range of support for the case officer's recommendation for approval and suggested that the report reflected the competing public interest between the relevant planning policy and associated impacts on the City Centre. He suggested that the method of works outlined in the application had the support of the Historic Environment Division and the proposed works were required to facilitate further investigation on the structural integrity of the facades of the building.

Mr. Douglas explained that he was the Conservation Architect, working with a wider team on the application. He suggested that most of the interior of the building had been destroyed, however, it was hoped that much of the three external walls could be restored. He highlighted that the application only referred to the 'taking down' of the unstable elements of the building that would enable the restoration to begin.

He explained that complex issues, such as the façade retention and the reduction of the safety cordon, would proceed in parallel with the application works and they would be working with the Council's Building Control Service to take these issues forward.

He suggested that they would be following best practice and international standards of conservation and that the application was the first in a series of planning applications to complete the project.

During points of clarification, the representatives explained further their approach for health and safety, schedule of works and their anticipated timeline for completion of works. They suggested that they intended to work on site 7 days a week, however, as the project was complex and unpredictable, they would keep the Council updated on their progress. Mr. O'Connor explained that they had construction teams on standby to start building works next week, subject to the Committee's approval of the application.

During discussion, the Director highlighted that although the first condition outlined in the case officer's report stated that "*The works granted must commence within 1 year from the date of this Consent*" the informative attached to this, advised the applicant that the works should commence as soon as practically possible.

After discussion, the Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report and delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

Chairperson

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## Brexit Committee

Thursday, 11th October, 2018

### MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Walsh (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Kingston, McGimpsey and Spence;  
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Campbell, Canavan,  
Carson, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Hutchinson, Lyons, McAllister,  
Nichol, O'Hara and Pankhurst.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms K. Walsh, Business, Research and Development  
Manager;  
Ms G. Long, Commissioner for Resilience;  
Mr J. Greer, Economic Development;  
Ms. C. Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and  
Miss C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend was reported from Councillors Dorrian, Reynolds and Dudgeon.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 20th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

### CBI – Skills Shortages Following Brexit

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**The purpose of this report is to bring to the attention of Members the analysis that CBI NI has undertaken of NI migration and the publication of UK Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) report on EEA migration in advance of the CBI presenting to the Brexit Committee. A representative from**

the CBI is in attendance and will address the Committee on this issue, if they so wish.

## 2.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report.

## 3.0 Main report

### Key Issues

The CBI (Confederation of British Industry) Northern Ireland have been carrying out research and analysis to understand the potential impact of migration as a result of the UK's decision to leave the EU. They recently launched a new report '*All Together Better: Accessible Labour – a Necessity for Regional Economic Prosperity*' which provides an analysis on how restricting migration would impact population growth and subsequent real GDP in Northern Ireland. It highlights the acute need for local private and public-sector employers to have continued access to the people and skills they need to succeed post-Brexit.

The CBI also provided an analysis of the UK's Migration Advisory Committee's report on European Economic Area (EEA) migration which was published on 18 September.

(the MAC report is available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-mac-report-eea-migration> and the CBI analysis and summary of key findings is available at: <http://www.cbi.org.uk/cbi-prod/assets/File/pdf/cbi-mac-analysis.pdf>)

The CBI has been engaging with multiple UK Government departments, across all levels, to influence the upcoming White Paper on migration (due in the Autumn). Key messages which the CBI has been making include:

- ***Any new system must be easily accessible to all firms***– The current Tier 2 non-EU immigration system is highly bureaucratic and hard for firms to navigate, but particularly difficult for small and medium sized business, which constitute most of Northern Irish industry. Radically reforming the existing process of 'employer sponsorship' is required to have a global system which is accessible.
- ***Firms require access to all levels of skill, not only 'the brightest and best'***– The £30,000 salary threshold is a major barrier preventing firms from accessing both mid

and lower-skilled roles. The MAC's own analysis shows 60% of mid-skilled jobs wouldn't qualify; this is a figure that would be exacerbated in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, lower-skilled migrant labour supplies industries in Northern Ireland that have a relatively high multiplier effect, such as agriculture and agri-food. Firms must be able to recruit workers from overseas below this salary level under any new system.

- *Migration should be part of trade negotiations, starting with the EU* – Despite media coverage focussing on an end to preferential treatment for EU nationals, the MAC made clear it was not making a decision on including migration as part of future trade deals. If Government chooses to implement a single global system, having this flexibility to take a more open approach to migration where we have close trade and economic relations is key.
- *Any new system must work from 'Day 1'*– If the Government decides to establish a single global system, it will take time to make the radical changes required for it to meet business needs. Government must commit to ensuring the system delivers for the economy from its first day of operation, rather than the promise of future reforms – even if this means an extension of the current immigration arrangements beyond December 2020.

The CBI is seeking feedback on the MAC's recommendations and is keen to engage with the council about the issues raised.

#### Financial & Resource Implications

There are no financial implications relating to this report.

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

There are no implications relating to this report.”

The Committee invited representatives from CBI, who were in attendance, to present the findings of their analysis of NI migration and the publication of UK Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) report on EEA migration. The deputation provided a detailed presentation on the findings, following which, they answered a number of questions from the Members.

Noted.

**Update on Proposals for the External Workshop  
on the Potential Impact of Brexit**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it agreed to the holding of a workshop to host external stakeholders in order to help identify the potential impact of Brexit on the Council, community organisations, the business and other sectors.

A list of potential invitees to the workshop was tabled at the meeting. The Committee noted the date and details for the external workshop and noted that additions could be made to the invite list via the Business Research and Development Manager.

**Brexit Considerations – Article 56  
‘Freedom to Provide Services’**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it was agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting considering possible scenarios for the Belfast services industry if Article 56 ‘freedom to provide services’ of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU does not apply to that sector following the UK’s departure from the European Union.

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 Trade in services increasingly dominates the global economy and there is recognition of the inter-connectedness of the financial, legal and professional services markets. The Committee is aware that a full understanding of the potential implications of Brexit remains uncertain while negotiations between the UK government and EU continue to determine the future relationship.**

**1.2 As requested by the Committee, given the importance of the services sector for the Belfast and the regional economy, this report summarises the main considerations if Article 56 ‘freedom to provide services’ of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU does not apply to that sector following the UK’s departure from the European Union.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to note the content of this report.**

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 Key Issues**

**At the initial meeting of the Brexit Committee, the Committee requested further information on the options to be considered**

in the event of Article 56 'freedom to provide services' of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU not applying to that sector when the current negotiations between the UK government and the EU conclude.

- 3.2 Article 56 of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU states that restrictions on 'freedom to provide services' within the Union are prohibited in respect of nationals of Member States who are established in a State other than that of the person for whom the services are intended. This paper summarises the proposals and main considerations identified in the existing policy documents.**
- 3.3 The HM Government white paper 'The Future Relationship between the UK and EU' (July 2018) proposes that a new relationship between the UK and EU will be structured around an economic partnership, which will see the UK leave the Single Market and the Customs Union and be broader in scope than existing relationships between the EU and a third country. It notes that this will be informed by the UK and EU meeting their shared commitments to NI, by protecting the peace process and avoiding a hard border.**
- 3.4 The white paper proposes the establishment of a free trade area for goods that would sit alongside new arrangements for services, acknowledging that 'there will be more barriers to the UK's access to the EU market than is the case today'. These proposals would allow the UK to negotiate new international trade agreements in line with its priorities and interests covering goods, services, investment etc.**
- 3.5 In terms of the services and digital sectors, the HM Government's vision for the economic partnership is outlined as:**
- 'New arrangements for services and digital, providing regulatory freedom where it matters most for the UK's services-based economy ... while recognising that the UK and the EU will not have current levels of access to each other's markets;**
  - New economic and regulatory arrangements for financial services, preserving the mutual benefits of integrated markets and protecting financial stability while respecting the right of the UK and the EU to control access to their own markets – noting that these arrangements will not replicate the EU's passporting regimes**
  - Continued co-operation on energy and transport – preserving the Single Electricity Market in NI and ROI,**

seeking broad co-operation on energy, developing an air transport agreement and exploring reciprocal arrangements for road hauliers and passenger transport operators;

- a new framework that enables UK and EU citizens to continue to travel to each other's countries and businesses and professionals to provide services – in line with the arrangements that the UK might want to offer to other close trading partners in the future'. The report notes that the Migration Advisory Committee is due to report on patterns of EU migration and the role of migration in the wider economy in September 2018.

A copy of the white paper is attached at Appendix 1 and available at: [The Future Relationship between the UK and EU](#)

### 3.6 EU Directorate General Report

A report produced by the EU Directorate General for Internal Policies (July 2017) acknowledges the uncertainty around how Brexit will affect trade in services and outlines different scenarios for exit and future co-operation on services and establishment (attached at appendix 2 and available at [European Parliament \(DG for Internal Policies\) - Different Scenarios](#)).

- 3.7 The report notes that trade in services is growing faster than trade in goods and to facilitate the freedoms in services through Article 56, also requires the implementation of a wide range of EU secondary legislation. Trade in services on a cross-border basis requires regulation, such as common standards for licenses or diplomas. This enables the application of mutual recognition of standards or waiving supervision of trade in services (i.e. passporting).
- 3.8 The report considers a number of trade agreement options. It concludes that the option of the UK applying European Economic Area (EEA) would, in essence, allow for passporting in regulated sectors and minimise the disruption to the service industry as EEA law is largely aligned to the EU single market law. However, the UK would have to transpose single market law into domestic law and would be without representation in the European Parliament.
- 3.9 The report notes that there are limitations with using other existing trade agreements as a blueprint for a future UK-EU agreement. Other trade agreements considered in the report are described as being more limited in scope or not providing

enforceable rules and therefore less integrated in terms of setting common standards. The following trade agreements have been included:

- EU-Ukraine Association Agreement
- Customs Union (EU-Turkey Customs Union)
- Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (EU-Canada)
- Free Trade Agreement (EU-Korea)
- General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) (World Trade Organisation)

**3.10** The report notes that the current alignment and integration between EU and UK law and standards creates positive ‘starting conditions’ and that cross border trade in services is likely to be affected more from differences between legal orders and a lack of right to temporary presence. It suggests that any UK-EU ‘Trade Agreement should grant market access’ and agree ‘a mechanism to ensure and monitor common standards as condition for far reaching rights to market access’. This would be considered feasible as long as standards are approximated; with the potential for the suspension of market access and mutual recognition if either party changes standards unilaterally. However, it would require the development of a mechanism to monitor the alignment of standards between the UK and EU.

**3.11** The main issues to be considered in the negotiations for a future EU-UK Trade Agreement have been summarised as:

- A common standard setting mechanism
- The importance of agreeing mutual recognition and enforcement mechanisms
- Clarifying whether service providers and established persons in an EU-UK relationship can rely on ‘acquired rights’ post-Brexit

**3.12** The Belfast Context

The EU and UK have recognised the economic importance of the trade in services, particularly the financial sector. Belfast is the regional economic driver, with 30% of the region’s jobs. The Belfast economy is dominated by the service sector (93% of people are employed in the services sector in Belfast; 83% in the region<sup>1</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> Invest NI: Belfast City Council Profile 2018

- 3.13 The Belfast City region accounts for around 50% of the NI business base with strengths in the knowledge economy<sup>2</sup>. Financial Services employs 33,000 in Northern Ireland, with 55% employed in Belfast, around one third of whom are employed by major international financial services companies with centres in the region<sup>3</sup>; technology companies employ 28,000 & is the top sector for inward investment projects (40%)<sup>4</sup>.**
- 3.14 The NI Draft Industrial Strategy<sup>5</sup> (Economy 2030) identifies the key growth sectors where Northern Ireland has world class capabilities. This includes financial, business and professional services, creative and digital technologies and life and health sciences. The City Region Industrial Strategic Framework recognises the Belfast Region's strengths in these sectors and for Belfast, financial services and related professional services such as legal services, as well as digital technologies (for example, cyber security) are high-value, high growth sectors which tend to cluster in the city. The City Growth & Regeneration Committee, have previously noted the potential for Belfast to build on these strengths in order to strengthen its role and strategic relationships with both London and Dublin.**
- 3.15 It is worth noting that previous research indicates that the limited data on services sector exports for the region adds a further complexity when assessing any potential impacts (Nevin Economic Research Institute 2016). However, as previously noted by the Committee, the key interests for business in terms of considering Brexit, lie in potential changes to labour mobility and talent/workforce availability, access to supply chains, regulation and compliance, tax, customs and tariffs.**
- 3.16 The Committee should note that in August 2018, HM Treasury updated their publication outlining the proposed approach to taking forward the statutory requirements for financial services, as part of the wider programme of work in preparation for the UK's exit from the EU. This states that the implementation period will be from 29 March 2019 – 31 December 2020 and gives a commitment 'to a workable legal regime being in place regardless of the current negotiation outcome'. It confirms that during the implementation period, common rules will continue to apply. The UK will continue to implement new EU law that comes into**

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<sup>2</sup> UUEPC: Belfast City Region Economic Opportunities - Draft Report July 2017

<sup>3</sup> The City UK: Key Facts about UK-Based Financial and Related Services 2018

<sup>4</sup> MATRIX: NI Digital ICT Report 2016

<sup>5</sup> Department of Economy, Economy 2030

effect and the UK will continue to be treated as part of the EU's single market in financial services. Businesses will therefore be able to continue to trade on the same terms until 31 December 2020 and comply with any new EU legislation that becomes applicable during the implementation period.

- 3.17 The need to provide certainty and continuity for businesses and consumers has been acknowledged. HM Treasury has expressed an intention to introduce transitional regimes for those operating cross-border and outside the passporting framework. It also notes the intention to provide the financial services regulators with a general power to phase in post-exit requirements, allowing flexibility for firms to transition to a fully domestic UK regulatory framework.
- 3.18 Given the current position, businesses have emphasised the importance of sufficient transition arrangements to help plan, manage and maximise the potential impacts of growth, competitiveness and financial stability. An Invest NI sector-briefing note for financial services (2017) identifies the importance of a sufficient transition period and explains that impacts will depend on a number of factors:
- The nature of the withdrawal agreement between the UK and the EU;
  - The extent to which UK-based financial firms move operations before any agreement is concluded;
  - The overall resilience of the sector, through its broader global relationships and position.
- 3.19 As previously noted, it is vital that efforts remain focused on the city's priorities to grow the economy and build economic resilience by diversifying and strengthening the local economy, continuing to attract investment and tourism and building on the city's strengths to position the city as an internationally relevant, attractive and competitive location of choice.
- 3.20 Financial & Resource Implications
- There are no resource implications attached to this report.
- 3.21 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
- None."

Noted.

**Update on Provision of Technical Notices  
from the UK and Irish Governments**

The Committee noted the content of the report and that further updates would be provided to future meetings of the Committee.

**Update on Site Visit to Port Health Unit**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th August, it was agreed that Members would undertake a study visit to the Port Health Unit and that a report be submitted on the potential impact of Brexit on the Port Health Unit.

The Members had visited the Port Health Unit facility on Friday 28th September at 12 noon and an update was provided to the Committee regarding the tour of the facility.

Noted.

**Update on Proposed Programme for  
All-Party Delegation to Brussels**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 20th September, it was agreed that an all-Party delegation from the Council undertake a visit to Brussels to engage with EU officials to represent the views of the Council in relation to Special Designated Status, remaining in the single market and the Council's position on the Backstop, and to engage with EU funding bodies about our future participation in EU funding programmes.

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**The purpose of this report is to outline for Members the proposed objectives and logistics for a delegation to visit Brussels.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**Members are asked to consider the proposals for the visit, as outlined in this report, and recommend it to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for agreement.**

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

**Members are reminded that at the September meeting of this Committee it was agreed:**

*'That an all-Party delegation from the Council undertake a visit to Brussels to engage with EU officials to represent the views of the council in relation to Special Designated Status, remaining in the single market and the Council's position on the Backstop; and to engage with EU Funding Bodies about our future participation in EU Funding Programmes.'*

Following on from this agreement the Council's Commissioner for Resilience met with the Head of NI Executive Office in Brussels, while in the city for the EU Week of Regions and Cities, and discussed a proposed approach for the visit.

#### Objectives of a Delegation to Brussels

The following objective are proposed for the visit:

- To receive an update on negotiations on UK withdrawal for EU – meeting with the UK representation on the negotiations.
- To gain an understanding - from an EU perspective - on the options for a future relationship with the UK, following withdrawal.
- To discuss in detail the particular issues concerning the withdrawal agreement for Northern Ireland, and for Belfast in particular.
- To meet members from EFTA countries and the EEA and discuss management of the relationship with the EU e.g. Canton delegation in Switzerland, embedded in the mission from Switzerland.
- To meet senior staff from the EU Committee of the Regions.
- To meet lead staff from other UK cities with a permanent presence in Brussels, regarding preparation for Brexit at city level.

#### Logistics

- It is proposed that the delegation travel in early December - at this point it is expected that negotiations will have passed a critical milestone. The visit will be well timed irrespective of the outcome of negotiations - if the EU and UK have agreed terms, it will allow the delegation the opportunity to consider the detail of those terms and what it might mean for city planning. If terms have not been agreed, members will be in a position to discuss potential implications for the UK and for the city of Belfast.

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- It is hoped that the NI Executive Office in Brussels will help to host meetings and arrange introductions at agency level. During this period we will also seek to meet NI MEPs who we hope will also host relevant introductions and meetings.
- It is expected that the delegation will take place across three working days, with two nights spent in Brussels.
- Flights and accommodation will be arranged to facilitate maximum opportunity for meetings to take place.

It is proposed that the all-party delegation will be made up of the Chair and Deputy Chair, or their nominees, and a representative from each of the other four parties. The delegation will be accompanied by two officers.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

It is expected that return flights plus two nights' accommodation and cost of meals and transport will be approximately £1000 per delegate. Formal approval will be sought from Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

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

**There are no implications relating to this report.”**

Arising out of discussion in the matter, it was

Moved by Councillor Carson,  
Seconded by Councillor O'Hara,

That the Committee approves the proposed objectives and logistics for the all-Party delegation visit to Brussels, subject to point six being amended to include Irish cities as well as UK cities and to the Lord Mayor or Deputy Lord Mayor accompanying the delegation.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor McAllister,  
Seconded by Councillor Nicholl,

That the Committee agreed to the proposed objectives and logistics for the all-Party delegation visit to Brussels, as set out in the report.

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

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The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Carson and seconded by Councillor O'Hara was put to the meeting when, on a vote by show of hands, nine Members voted for the proposal and five against, and it was declared carried.

**Request for Members of Senate  
to Meet with Brexit Committee**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer informed the Committee that he had received information that representatives of the Senate would be in Belfast on 8th October and would be seeking to meet with the Council's Brexit Committee.

Pending an official request, it was felt appropriate to make Members aware of the potential visit, in order to seek Committee's view on whether it would wish to accede to a request from the Senate, should it be received.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

Chairperson

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