

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 4th February, 2019
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 (Alderman Sandford), Aldermen Browne, Convery, Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Baker, Beattie, Black, Boyle, Bunting, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, 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 for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Howard and McCusker.

Declarations of Interest

Motion – Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships

The following Members declared an interest in respect of the motion under the heading "Motion – Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships" and left the meeting whilst the matter was being discussed:

- Councillor Beattie – in that he was a member of the Blackie River Community Group and a member of the West Belfast Partnership Board;
- Councillor Campbell – in that her salary was paid through Neighbourhood Renewal;
- Councillor Garrett – in that he was a member of the Andersonstown Neighbourhood Partnership;
- Councillor Carson – in that he was a Member of the West Belfast Partnership Board;
- Councillor McAteer – in that she was a Member of the West Belfast Partnership Board;

- Councillor O'Donnell – in that her salary was paid through the Neighbourhood Renewal programme;
- Councillor Black – in that she worked for an organisation which was part funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy;
- Councillor Groves – in that she was a member of the Andersonstown Neighbourhood Partnership;
- Councillor Magennis - insofar as he was a member of the West Belfast Partnership Board and Colin Neighbourhood Partnership;
- Councillor Corr – in that he was a member of the West Belfast Partnership Board and was also a member of the Black Mountain Shared Spaces Project;
- Alderman Kingston – in that he was a member of the Greater Shankill Partnership;
- Councillor Hutchinson – insofar as he was an employee of Mount Vernon Community Development Forum which was funded through Neighbourhood Renewal and was a member of the Black Mountain Shared Spaces Project; and
- Councillor Murphy – insofar as he was a Board member of the Ligoniel Improvement Association which was funded through Neighbourhood Renewal.

Councillor Attwood also declared an interest in the motion, in that he was a member of the West Belfast Partnership Board and of the Andersonstown and Lenadoon Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships, but did not leave the meeting during discussion of the item.

Social Investment Fund (SIF)

The following Members declared an interest in respect of the minute of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee minute of 25th January, under the heading "Social Investment Fund" but, as the matter did not become the subject of debate, the Members did not get an opportunity to leave the meeting.

- Councillor Reynolds – in that he was a member of the North Belfast Social Investment Fund Panel;
- Councillor Graham – insofar as she worked for Gems NI, which was the delivery agent for a Social Investment Fund programme;
- Councillor Garrett - in that he was a member of the West Belfast Partnership Board, which had received funding from the Social Investment Fund;
- Councillor Beattie – in that he was a member of the West Belfast Partnership Board
- Councillor Carson – in that he was the manager of an organisation (Tar Anall) which had benefitted directly from the SIF Programme in terms of staff and programmes and that he was a Member of the West Belfast Partnership Board;

- Councillor McAteer – in that her organisation delivered education programmes which were funded by SIF;
- Councillor Magee – in that he was a member of the North Belfast SIF Board;
- Councillor O'Donnell – in that she was a member of the Short Strand Partnership who had benefitted through the SIF education programme;
- Councillor Walsh - insofar as he was a manager of the Tar Anall Committee, which had employees which had been funded through the Social Investment Fund;
- Alderman Kingston – in that he was a member of the West Belfast Steering Group and a member of the Argyle Business Centre Board of Directors;
- Councillor Corr Johnston – in that her wife was on the Board of Directors of the McDonald Centre, which had received funding from the Social Investment Fund;
- Councillor Hutchinson – insofar as he was a member of the Greater Shankill Partnership Board which had received SIF funding prior to him joining and was also a member of the Black Mountain Shared Spaces Project;
- Councillor Johnston – insofar as he was a member of the East Belfast Partnership Board which received SIF funding;
- Councillor Long– in that he was a member of the East Belfast Partnership Board which received SIF funding;
- Alderman McGimpsey– insofar as he was a member of the East Belfast Partnership Board which received SIF funding;
- Councillor Dudgeon - in that he was a member of the South Belfast SIF Committee;
- Alderman Haire insofar as he was a member of the East Belfast Partnership Board which received SIF funding;
- Councillor Armitage - in that he was a member of the East Belfast Partnership Board which received SIF funding;
- Councillor Lyons – insofar as he was a member of the South Belfast Partnership;
- Councillor Mullan – in that she was a member of the South Belfast SIF Board;
- Councillor Newton - insofar as he was a member of the East Belfast Partnership Board which received SIF funding;
- The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford) – in that he was a member of EastSide Learning, a SIF programme;
- Councillor Dorrian – in that he was a member of the East Belfast Partnership Board which received SIF funding;
- Alderman Rodgers – in that he was a member of EastSide Learning, a SIF programme; and
- Alderman Browne – insofar as he was a member of the Westland Community Centre Management Committee.

**Progression of the Cultural Programme –
Festivals and Events Update**

The following Members declared an interest in respect of the minute of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee minute of 9th January, under the heading “Progression of the Cultural Programme – Festivals and Events Update” and left the meeting whilst the matter was being discussed:

- Councillor Baker – in that his brother was a Director in Feile an Phobail; and
- Councillor Corr – in that his son worked for Feile an Phobail.

Minutes of the Council

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

That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 7th January be taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

At the request of the High Sheriff, Alderman Sandford, the Council agreed to vary the minute of 7th January, under the heading “Declarations of Interest”, to state that he was a member of Eastside Learning, not Eastside Partnership.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing variation, the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 7th January were approved and adopted.

Change of Membership on Committees

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

- Councillors McAllister and Nicholl to replace Councillors Howard and O’Neill on the City Growth and Regeneration Committee;
- Councillor O’Neill to replace Councillor McAllister on the People and Communities Committee; and
- Councillor Armitage to replace Councillor Nicholl on the Brexit Committee.

The Council approved the changes.

Official Announcements

Condolences

The Lord Mayor referred to the death of the former Lord Mayor, Dr. Ian Adamson OBE, and extended her deepest condolences to his wife, Kerry, and to his wider family circle. A number of Members also paid tribute to him and reflected on the numerous contributions he had made to the City.

A Member paid tribute to the Belfast poet, Mr. Padraic Fiacc, who had passed away aged 94.

A number of Members referred to the murder of Mr. Ian Ogle and extended condolences to his family. A Member requested, and the Council agreed, that a letter conveying the Council's sympathy be sent to his family.

Congratulations

A Member congratulated St. Enda's Glengormley GAA Club who had reached the Football All-Ireland Intermediate Club Championship Final. The Lord Mayor agreed to send a letter to congratulate St. Enda's on their achievement.

A Member praised the work of the Ulster Boxing Association and the Irish Athletic Boxing Association, in conjunction with the Council, for the recent Ulster Elite Boxing Championships which had been held in the Ulster Hall. The Lord Mayor advised Members that she would be hosting a reception for the boxers in the coming months.

Council Photograph

The meeting was adjourned for a short period to allow a photograph to be taken of all Members of the Council.

Filming of Proceedings

The Council approved a request from the BBC to film the proceedings of the meeting.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Johnston,
Seconded by Councillor Campbell,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th January be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Contracts for Award

At the request of Councillor Garrett, the Chief Executive agreed that a report be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee outlining how the Council's procurement process, including pre-agreed criteria, are set in relation to the awarding of contracts.

Changes to Current Catering Arrangements

Moved by Councillor Carson,
Seconded by Councillor Collins and

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th January, under the heading "Changes to Current Catering Arrangements in so far as it relates to the Business Model Options" be rejected and instead the Council agrees to adopt Option One, that is, to make no changes to the existing structures, practices or scale of the Catering Unit's operations.

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

<u>For 20</u>	<u>Against 36</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Hargey); and Councillors Baker, Beattie, Black, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, Murphy, Nic Biorna, O'Donnell, O'Hara and Walsh.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough Brown); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Boyle, Bunting, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Long, Lyons, McAllister, McReynolds, Mullan, Newton, Nicholl, O'Neill, Pankhurst and Reynolds.

Amendment

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2019-2020

Moved by Councillor McAllister,
Seconded by Councillor O'Neill,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th January, under the heading "Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2019-2020", be amended to provide that the £500k set aside for the Summer Community Diversionary Festival Programme not be included in the Revenue Estimates and that the rise in rates be set at 1.67%.

On a recorded vote, sixteen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-seven against, with three "no votes" and it was declared lost.

<u>For 16</u>	<u>Against 37</u>	<u>No Vote 3</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough Brown); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Copeland, McGimpsey and Rodgers; and Councillors Armitage, Boyle, Dudgeon, Johnston, Long, McAllister, McReynolds, Mullan, Nicholl and O'Neill.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Hargey); The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, L. Patterson and Spence; Councillors Baker, Beattie, Black, Bunting, Campbell, Canavan, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dorrian, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hussey, Hutchinson, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, Murphy, Newton, Nic Biorna, O'Donnell, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Reynolds and Walsh.	Councillors Attwood, Heading and Lyons.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition in relation to Contracts for Award, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 25th January were thereupon approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Nicholl,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers and

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 8th and 21st January be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Robinson Centre

Moved by Councillor Attwood,
Seconded by Councillor Reynolds,

That the decision of the People and Communities Committee of 8th January, under the heading "Robinson Centre", be rejected and accordingly a report on a range of options be submitted to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

On a vote by show of hands, thirty-five Members voted for the amendment and twenty Members voted against and it was declared carried.

Responsible Dog Ownership

At the request of Councillor Boyle, it was agreed that the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services would consider sending an officer to attend an upcoming meeting in relation to the cleansing of, and removal of dog fouling from, the park on Nubia Street in the Village area of the City.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition and amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 8th and 21st January were thereupon approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Lyons,
Seconded by Alderman Kingston,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 9th and 23rd January be approved and adopted.

Amendment

**Progression of the Cultural Programme –
Festivals and Events Update**

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

That the decision of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 9th January, under the heading "Progression of the Cultural Programme – Festivals and Events Update" be rejected and that the funding continues as recommended within the report.

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

At the request of a number of Members, the Chief Executive agreed that the Festival and Events International (FEI) report would be circulated to all Members.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 9th and 23rd January were thereupon approved and adopted.

Licensing Committee

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 16th January, 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 15th and 17th January, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

**Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.
Shareholders' Committee**

Moved by Alderman Haire,
Seconded by Councillor Johnston and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee of 14th January be approved and adopted.

Brexit Committee

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor McAteer and

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 10th January be approved and adopted.

Brussels Trip

At the request of Alderman Spence, the Council agreed that a report be submitted to the Brexit Committee detailing the achievements from the trip and including a breakdown of the associated costs.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 10th January were thereupon approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

The Council agreed to change the order of business and take the three Motions which were to be debated first, followed by the Motions which were being referred to Committee.

Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships

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

“This Council believes that Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships have provided vital services and projects to tackle poverty, disadvantage and regeneration in hard-pressed communities across Belfast.

The Council notes that Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships are facing significant funding cuts.

The Council notes also that the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme used to be the central anti-poverty strategy of the Northern Ireland Executive and that its funding was protected.

The Council calls on the Department for Communities to reverse cuts to the Neighbourhood Renewal budget and agrees to arrange a meeting with the Permanent Secretary of that Department to discuss the budget for Neighbourhood Renewal.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Attwood.

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

Supermarket Plastic Return Scheme

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

“This Council acknowledges the damage caused by single use plastics across the earth; welcomes the leadership of Iceland in introducing a plastic return scheme here in Belfast; acknowledges, with the responsibility of waste collection under our remit, that we must come up with innovative ways to reduce the use of single use plastics; and agrees to write to the major supermarkets in Belfast to ask that they introduce similar schemes.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor McAllister.

The Council agreed, at the request of the proposer, to the replacement of the last line of the motion with the following:

“and, agrees to write to the major supermarkets in Belfast to ask what steps they are taking to manage, reduce and reuse single use flexible plastics.”

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

Traffic Calming

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

“This Council recognises that many of Belfast’s citizens are having their health and wellbeing severely impacted by living in streets which are clearly used as short cuts by heavy volumes of traffic travelling at speed, including HGV vehicles and buses. Currently, the Department for Infrastructure will carry out speed and traffic volume tests to ascertain if traffic calming measures are required. However, it does not also take into consideration the qualitative evidence of local residents and families in making decisions about traffic management.

This Council calls on the Department for Infrastructure to broaden its criterion in relation to traffic management decisions in highly congested

streets, to include an assessment of both empirical and local qualitative research, and further calls on the Council to request a cross party meeting to recommend reviewing the criteria.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor O'Donnell.

The Council agreed, at the request of the proposer, to the insertion of the following wording in the second paragraph, after The Department for Infrastructure:

“and the PSNI”

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

Cycling Infrastructure - North Foreshore

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

“Given the ambitious plans behind the North Foreshore and the Giants Park, in particular around the enhancement of tourism and leisure in Giants Park, it is of vital importance that connectivity of active travel between North Belfast and the Giants Park is maximised in the immediate future.

As the Council will continue to have ownership of roads in the area, this is an opportunity to provide leadership to enhance cycling infrastructure in this part of the City, with the long term ambition to better connect North Belfast to the City centre, and beyond.

Therefore, the Council agrees to establish plans to work alongside the Active Travel unit within the Council that will oversee the creation of cycling infrastructure and will write to the Department for Infrastructure calling upon it to enhance the neglected cycling infrastructure in the surrounding area of the North Foreshore and wider North Belfast.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor McReynolds.

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

Enterprise Zones

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

“This Council:

- notes that Enterprise Zones, Manufacturing Zones and Simplified Planning Zones have been used in Scotland and England to promote housing, business and industry;
- notes that these zones can offer business rates discounts and additional tax breaks, backed by a simplified local planning process which can support businesses, help budding entrepreneurs to start and assist established companies to grow; and

- notes that the first 'Enterprise Zone' in NI, the Atlantic Link Campus in Coleraine, has attracted the global data centre firm 5NINES, following a £20 million investment.

The Council agrees to research, scope out and develop options for the development of enterprise, manufacturing and simplified planning zones in Belfast, which will include the possible development of an enterprise zone along the interface corridor from West to North Belfast.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

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

Climate Change

In accordance with notice on the agenda, the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McDonough Brown, proposed:

“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 prepare a report into establishing the carbon footprint of the Council and recommend steps to work towards reducing this.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor McReynolds.

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

Statues in City Hall Grounds

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

“This Council agrees to address the imbalance of statues in the grounds of Belfast City Hall, as set out in the EQIA.

The current statues largely represent the Unionist/British tradition, with no reflection afforded to the Republican tradition.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions proposed in writing to the Chief Executive on 2nd March, 2016 that a statue of Winifred Carney be installed, due to her history and success in Belfast.

Accordingly, the Council agrees that a permanent statue of Winifred Carney be installed to address that imbalance.”

The motion was seconded by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Hargey.

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

Homelessness in Belfast

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

“This Council recognises that issues relating to homelessness in the city of Belfast are complex, multi-faceted and that they require interventions and solutions from a wide range of statutory organisations, delivery agents, charities and the community and voluntary sector.

The work that all these organisations carry out is to be welcomed and commended at the highest level, however, no single agency working on its own in isolation, including this Council, will solve the many complex issues relating to homelessness.

Too often, we tragically hear about people dying on our city streets and, as leaders of this city, we must do everything that we can to try to help those who are vulnerable and feeling desolate.

The Council can play a pivotal role to enable partnership action and our City’s Ard Mhéara/Mayor, as first citizen, can be a convener and facilitator in taking decisive action to address these issues in partnership with others.

The Council agrees, through the office of the Mayor, to convene a statutory and non-statutory multi-agency task group that will seek to take further partnership actions in addressing all facets of homelessness. This would include those people who find themselves on the streets with complex needs, those suffering from addiction and mental health issues and those who have no place to call home. The task group should seek to increase support services, scope out available and suitable facilities for extra supported bed provision in the city and any further issues which the task group identifies.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Magee.

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

Street Furniture

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

“This Council recognises that it is difficult to contact those responsible for the maintenance of street furniture, utility boxes, phone boxes and masts,

post boxes, advertising facilities and any other structure that sits on or in the footpath or in a public place throughout the City.

The Council supports the need for people to be able to contact those responsible for the cleaning and maintaining of these structures. Accordingly, the Council will undertake a piece of work to identify whose ownership these are in and will encourage those responsible for maintaining and cleaning same to put their details on these structures and ensure their details remain on these structures so that they can be contacted when needed. Furthermore, the Council agrees that any future planning approvals for street furniture, boxes etc. as listed above, will include a condition requiring the contact details of those responsible for cleaning and maintaining and servicing them to be prominently displayed.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Dudgeon.

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

Recycling in Colin Neighbourhood

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

“Noting Belfast City Council’s commitment to waste prevention and minimisation and the resulting benefits to the economy in terms of jobs and investment back into community;

Noting Belfast City Council’s commitment to the exploration of opportunities for further reducing waste including the feasibility of a circular economy approach to generate more value and jobs for the local economy through innovative waste solutions;

Noting the contribution of a circular economy to climate change mitigation and a healthy urban environment;

Noting the absence of any dedicated recycling and associated amenities in the Colin neighbourhood;

The Council agrees to immediately commission a report to examine the following:

1. initiate steps to design and procure a circular economy community hub including a repair cafe to facilitate education and participation in a transition to the circular economy in the Colin neighbourhood;
2. incorporate best practice and innovative design principles, including:

- circular economy education, and training for citizens and interested organisations/businesses;
 - a serviced repair café;
 - a serviced social enterprise business start-up and support hub with a view to enabling and clustering existing eco-enterprises and start-ups (e.g. cycle repair, associated social enterprises linked to greenway/tourism); and
 - comprehensive recycling, repair and remanufacturing facilities, including incentive schemes;
3. initiate an engagement with Lisburn Castlereagh Council, to investigate the replacement of current facilities in Dunmurry's Recycling Centre at The Cutts and to investigate the statistics on origin of users of this site; and
 4. initiate a multi-agency collaboration, led by Belfast City Council in consultation with community-based organisations in the Colin neighbourhood, to design, commission, build and service Belfast's first Circular Economy Community Enterprise Hub and Repair Café."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Baker.

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

Mental Health

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

"This Council notes the sterling work conducted by a number of youth organisations across Belfast in attempting to break the stigma around mental health by supporting those suffering from illnesses such as depression and anxiety.

The Council agrees to support and promote these youth organisations through providing events, seminars and funding, when required, in order to help combat mental ill-health in Belfast.

The Council understands that the Department for Education is now considering implementing resilience training as part of the school curriculum. The Council welcomes this and agrees to write to the Department for Education to encourage it to implement this as a matter of urgency.

The Council also calls upon the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to consider adopting safe spaces in Accident and Emergency centres, including a pathway of care, for those suffering from severe mental health difficulties who feel suicidal and need urgent care.

Finally, the Council agrees to convene a meeting between these youth organisations and other statutory agencies to try and establish a pilot online chat platform operated by trained staff for those suffering from mental ill-health. This platform will also be available in phone applications, should it be successful, making it much more accessible to young people in particular.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Murphy.

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

Lord Mayor
Chairperson